

Tree of Life Bible

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Genesis

Genesis Introduction

Genesis (Greek for “origins”), written by Moses, is the first book of the Pentateuch or Hebrew —with being a word meaning “teaching” or “instruction.” the Hebrew title of Genesis, means “in the beginning,” or, most literally, “in the beginning of...” This Hebrew title captures the theological notion that history begins with God, and is an ongoing journey between humankind and God, walking through time in a covenant relationship. It’s thus God’s story, not simply ours—His story, or history.

‘begins’ by describing God’s work during the first six days of creation, including placing Adam in a perfect Paradise—the Garden of Eden. God tells Adam, “Be fruitful and multiply, fill the land, and conquer it” (Gen. 1:28). Humankind, created in the image of God, is directed to fashion creation to mirror the very image of God! But instead, Adam disobeys God’s command and eats from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Creation falls, and humankind falls with it. The very human question, “Why aren’t things perfect?” is readily answered by Adam’s disobedience to God’s command. In fact, the consequences of sin—sorrow, suffering, plague, disease, and death—are everywhere, for all to see. Instead of resting with God in the Garden, humankind is exiled and spread throughout the earth.

The story continues, (Gen. 5-11) however, as God starts anew—first with Noah and his sons, who eventually unite the world in idolatry and secular governance, and ten generations later with Abraham, the world’s first monotheist, who differs from the fallen world.

The rest of the book of Genesis (Gen. 12-50) describes intimate details of how the faith covenant family is created and united—first by walking in the “saving faith” of Abraham (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:16-25); walking to and through the “Promised Land”; walking later in the repentance of a sacrificial, God-honoring love (Gen. 44:30-34); and by maintaining their religious-oriented tribal distinctive all the while. This kind of sacrificial, loving unity testifies to an unbelieving world, and will testify of God’s love all the more (John 17:20-23; note also Matt. 22:37-40), when it’s realized through ‘s work in all the families of the world, fulfilling the promise that “all the families of the earth will be blessed” (see Gen. 12:1-3). Through this Messianic vision, the Genesis narrative models the saving faith and brotherly unity essential not only to those of the First Covenant, but also to those of the “saving faith” who are this day grafted into Messiah’s everlasting community (Rom. 11:24).

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Parashat Bereshit

Creation in Six Days

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ¹² Now the earth was chaos and waste, darkness was on the surface of the deep, and the *Ruach Elohim* was hovering upon the surface of the water. ^{††}

³ Then God said, "Let there be light!" and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good. So God distinguished the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light "day," and the darkness He called "night." So there was evening and there was morning—one day.

⁶ Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water! Let it be for separating water from water." ⁷ So God made the expanse and it separated the water that was below the expanse from the water that was over the expanse. And it happened so. ⁸ God called the expanse "sky." So there was evening and there was morning—a second day. ⁹ Then God said, "Let the water below the sky be gathered to one place. Let the dry ground appear." And it happened so.

¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land," and the collection of the water He called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

¹¹ Then God said, "Let the land sprout grass, green plants yielding seed, fruit trees making fruit, each according to its species with seed in it, upon the land." And it happened so. ¹² The land brought forth grass, green plants yielding seed, each according to its species, and trees making fruit with the seed in it, each according to its species. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ So there was evening and there was morning—a third day.

¹⁴ Then God said, "Let lights in the expanse of the sky be for separating the day from the night. They will be for signs and for seasons and for days and years.

¹⁵ They will be for lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the land." And it happened so. ¹⁶ Then God made the two great lights—the greater light for dominion over the day, and the lesser light as well as the stars for dominion over the night. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to shine on the land ¹⁸ and to have dominion over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ So there was evening and there was morning—a fourth day.

²⁰ Then God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures! Let flying creatures fly above the land across the expanse of the sky." ²¹ Then God created the large sea creatures and every living creature that crawls, with which the water swarms, according to their species, as well as every winged flying creature, according to their species. And God saw that it was good. ²² Then God blessed them by saying, "Be

fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas. Let the flying creatures multiply on the land." ²³ So there was evening and there was morning—a fifth day.

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the land bring forth living creatures according to their species—livestock, crawling creatures and wild animals, according to their species." And it happened so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their species, the livestock according to their species, and everything that crawls on the ground, each according to its species. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness! Let them rule over the fish of the sea, over the flying creatures of the sky, over the livestock, over the whole earth, and over every crawling creature that crawls on the land." ²⁷ God created humankind in His image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. ^{‡28} God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the land, and conquer it. Rule over the fish of the sea, the flying creatures of the sky, and over every animal that crawls on the land."

²⁹ Then God said, "I have just given you every green plant yielding seed that is on the surface of the whole land, and every tree, which has the fruit of a tree yielding seed. They are to be food for you. ³⁰ Also for every wild animal, every flying creature of the sky and every creature that crawls on the land which has life, every green plant is to be food." And it happened so. ³¹ So God saw everything that He made, and behold it was very good.

So there was evening and there was morning—the sixth day.

Shabbat For Rest

2 So the heavens and the earth were completed along with their entire array. ² God completed—on the seventh day—His work that He made, and He ceased—on the seventh day—from all His work that He made. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, for on it He ceased from all His work that God created for the purpose of preparing.

Humanity in Gan-Eden

⁴ These are the genealogical records of the heavens and the earth when they were created, at the time when *ADONAI Elohim* made land and sky. ⁵ Now no shrub of the field was in the land yet, and no green plants of the field had sprouted yet. For *ADONAI Elohim* had not caused it to rain upon the land, and there was no one to work the ground. ⁶ But a mist came up from the land and watered the whole surface of the ground.

⁷ Then *ADONAI Elohim* formed the man out of the dust from the ground and He breathed into his nostrils a breath of life—so the man became a living being. ⁸ Then *ADONAI Elohim* planted a garden in Eden in

† cf. John 1:1-2. †† cf. "Spirit of God"

‡ cf. Matt. 19:4.

the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹ Then *ADONAI Elohim* caused to sprout from the ground every tree that was desirable to look at and good for food.

Now the Tree of Life was in the middle of the garden, and also the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became four riverheads. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon, the one that winds around the whole land of the Havilah, where there is gold.

¹² The gold of that land is good—bdellium and lapis lazuli stones are also there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon—it winds around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris—it runs east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

¹⁵ Then *ADONAI Elohim* took the man and gave him rest in the Garden of Eden in order to cultivate and watch over it. ¹⁶ Then *ADONAI Elohim* commanded the man saying, "From all the trees of the garden you are most welcome to eat. ¹⁷ But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil you must not eat. For when you eat from it, you most assuredly will die!"

¹⁸ Then *ADONAI Elohim* said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. Let Me make a well-matched helper for him." ¹⁹ *ADONAI Elohim* had formed from the ground every animal of the field and every flying creature of the sky, so He brought them to the man to see what he would call them. Whatever the man called them—each living creature—that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all of the livestock, and to the flying creatures of the sky, and to all the animals of the field; but for the man He did not find a well-matched helper for him. ²¹ *ADONAI Elohim* caused a deep sleep to fall on the man and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² *ADONAI Elohim* built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman. Then He brought her to the man.

²³ Then the man said,

"This one, at last, is bone of my bones
and flesh from my flesh.

This one is called woman,
for from man was taken this one."

²⁴ This is why a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife; and they become one flesh. †

From Innocence to Shame

²⁵ Now both of them were naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.

3 But the serpent was shrewder than any animal of the field that *ADONAI Elohim* made. So it said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from all the trees of the garden?'"

² The woman said to the serpent, "Of the fruit of the trees, we may eat. ³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You must not eat of it and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "You most assuredly won't die! ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ Now the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a thing of lust for the eyes, and that the tree was desirable for imparting wisdom. So she took of its fruit and she ate. She also gave to her husband who was with her and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made for themselves loin-coverings. ⁸ And they heard the sound of *ADONAI Elohim* going to and fro in the garden in the wind of the day. So the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of *ADONAI Elohim* in the midst of the Tree of the garden.

⁹ Then *ADONAI Elohim* called to the man and He said to him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ Then he said, "Your sound—I heard it in the garden and I was afraid. Because I am naked, I hid myself."

¹¹ Then He said, "Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the Tree from which I commanded you not to eat?"

¹² Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me—she gave me of the Tree, and I ate."

¹³ *ADONAI Elohim* said to the woman, "What did you do?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me and I ate."

¹⁴ *ADONAI Elohim* said to the serpent, "Because you did this,

"Cursed are you above all the livestock
and above every animal of the field.

On your belly will you go,
and dust will you eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put animosity
between you and the woman—
between your seed and her seed.

He will crush your head,
and you will crush his heel." ††

¹⁶ To the woman He said,
"I will greatly increase your pain from conception to labor.

In pain will you give birth to children.
Your desire will be toward your husband,
yet he must rule over you."

¹⁷ Then to the man He said, "Because you listened to your wife's voice and ate of the tree which I commanded you, saying, 'You must not eat of it':

Cursed is the ground because of you—
with pain will you eat of it all the days of your life.

¹⁸ Thorns and thistles will sprout for you.

You will eat the plants of the field,

¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow will you eat food,
until you return to the ground,

† cf. Matt. 19:5.

†† cf. Rom. 16:20.

since from it were you taken.

For you are dust,
and to dust will you return."

²⁰ Now Adam named his wife Eve because she was the mother of all the living. ²¹ *ADONAI Elohim* made Adam and his wife tunics of skin and He clothed them. ²² Then *ADONAI Elohim* said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. So now, in case he stretches out his hand and takes also from the Tree of Life and eats and lives forever." ²³ *ADONAI Elohim* sent him away from the Garden of Eden, to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ And He expelled the man; and at the east of the Garden of Eden He had *cheruvim* dwell along, with the whirling sword of flame, to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

Cain and Abel's Blood

4 Now the man had relations with Eve his wife and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "I produced a man with *ADONAI* ." ² Then she gave birth again, to his brother Abel. Abel became a shepherd of flocks while Cain became a worker of the ground. ³ So it happened after some time that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to *ADONAI* , ⁴ while Abel—he also brought of the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions. Now *ADONAI* looked favorably upon Abel and his offering, ⁵ but upon Cain and his offering He did not look favorably. Cain became very angry, and his countenance fell.

⁶ Then *ADONAI* said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷ If you do well, it will lift. But if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the doorway. Its desire is for you, but you must master it."

⁸ Cain spoke to Abel his brother. While they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. ⁹ Then *ADONAI* said to Cain, "Where is Abel, your brother?"

"I don't know," he said. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

¹⁰ Then He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to Me from the ground. ¹¹ So now, cursed are you from the ground which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² As often as you work the ground, it will not yield its crops to you again. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

¹³ Cain said to *ADONAI* , "My iniquity [†] is too great to bear! ¹⁴ Since You expelled me today from the face of the ground and I must be hidden from Your presence, then I will be a restless wanderer on the earth—anyone who finds me will kill me!"

¹⁵ But *ADONAI* said to him, "In that case, anyone who kills Cain is to be avenged seven times over."

So *ADONAI* put a mark on Cain, so that anyone who found him would not strike him down. ¹⁶ Then Cain left *ADONAI* 's presence and dwelled in the Land of Wandering, east of Eden.

† cf. 1 John 3:12. †† Or, punishment

¹⁷ Cain was intimate with his wife and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. And he was building a city, and he named the city after the name of his son, Enoch. ¹⁸ And to Enoch was born Irad. Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech.

¹⁹ Now Lamech took for himself two wives. The name of the first one was Adah, and the name of the second one was Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal—he was the pioneer of tent dwellers with livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal—he was the pioneer of all who skillfully handle stringed instruments and wind instruments. ²² Now Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-Cain, the forger of every kind of bronze and iron tools; Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives,
"Adah and Zillah: Hear my voice!

Lamech's wives: Listen to my speech!
For I have killed a man for wounding me,
and a boy for bruising me.

²⁴ If Cain is to be avenged seven times,
then Lamech—77 times!"

²⁵ Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and she named him Seth, "For God has appointed me another seed in place of Abel—since Cain killed him." ²⁶ To Seth, also was born a son. He named him Enosh. Then people began to call on *ADONAI* 's Name.

Book of Genealogies

5 This is the Book of the Genealogies of Adam: When God created Adam, in the likeness of God He made him. ² Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and called their name "Adam" when He created them. ³ Adam lived 130 years, then fathered a son in his likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. ⁴ Then the days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years, and He fathered other sons and daughters. ⁵ So all Adam's days that he lived were 930 years, and then he died.

⁶ Seth lived 105 years, then fathered Enosh. ⁷ Seth lived 807 years after he fathered Enosh, and he fathered sons and daughters. ⁸ So all Seth's days were 912 years, and then he died.

⁹ Enosh lived 90 years, then fathered Kenan. ¹⁰ Enosh lived 815 years after he fathered Kenan, and he fathered sons and daughters. ¹¹ So all of Enosh's days were 905 years, and then he died.

¹² Kenan lived 70 years, then fathered Mahalalel. ¹³ Kenan lived 840 years after he fathered Mahalalel, he fathered sons and daughters. ¹⁴ So all of Kenan's days were 910 years, and then he died.

¹⁵ Mahalalel lived 65 years, then fathered Jared. ¹⁶ Mahalalel lived 830 years after he fathered Jared, and he fathered sons and daughters. ¹⁷ So all of Mahalalel's days were 895 years, and then he died.

¹⁸ Jared lived 162 years, then fathered Enoch. ¹⁹ Jared lived 800 years after he fathered Enoch, and he fa-

thered sons and daughters. ²⁰ So all of Jared's days were 962 years, and then he died.

²¹ Enoch lived 65 years, then fathered Methuselah.

²² Now Enoch walked with God continually for 300 years after he fathered Methuselah, and he fathered sons and daughters. ²³ So all of Enoch's days were 365 years.

²⁴ And Enoch continually walked with God—then he was not there, because God took him.

²⁵ Methuselah lived 187 years and fathered Lamech.

²⁶ And Methuselah lived 782 years after he fathered Lamech, and he fathered other sons and daughters.

²⁷ So all of Methuselah's days were 969 years, and then he died.

²⁸ Lamech lived 182 years and he fathered a son.

²⁹ And he named him Noah saying, "This one will comfort us from our work and from the pain of our hands because of the ground which *ADONAI* cursed."

³⁰ Lamech lived 595 years after he fathered Noah, and he fathered sons and daughters. ³¹ So all of Lamech's days were 777 years, and then he died.

³² And Noah was 500 years old when he fathered Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Evil Inclination of All Humanity

6 Now when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground and daughters were born to them, ² then the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were good and they took for themselves wives, any they chose. ³ Then *ADONAI* said, "My Spirit will not remain with humankind forever, since they are flesh. So their days will be 120 years." ⁴ The *Nephilim* were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, whenever the sons of God came to the daughters of men, and gave birth to them. Those were the mighty men of old, men of renown.

⁵ Then *ADONAI* saw that the wickedness of humankind was great on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil all the time. ⁶ So *ADONAI* regretted that He made humankind on the earth, and His heart was deeply pained. ⁷ So *ADONAI* said, "I will wipe out humankind, whom I have created, from the face of the ground, from humankind to livestock, crawling things and the flying creatures of the sky, because I regret that I made them."

⁸ But Noah found favor in *ADONAI*'s eyes.

Parashat Noah

⁹ These are the genealogies of Noah. Noah was a righteous man. He was blameless among his generation. Noah continually walked with God. ¹⁰ Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. ¹¹ Now the earth was ruined before God, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² God saw the earth, and behold it was ruined because all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

Instructions for the Ark

¹³ Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh is coming before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Behold, I am about to bring ruin upon them along with the land. ¹⁴ Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood. You shall make the ark with compartments and smear pitch on it, both inside and out. ¹⁵ Now this is how you shall make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. ¹⁶ You shall make a roof for the ark, and you shall finish it to within a cubit from the top. You shall put the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third stories. ¹⁷ Now I am about to bring the flood—water upon the land—to destroy all flesh in which is the spirit of life from under the sky. Everything that is on the land will perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish My covenant with you. So you shall come into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ Also of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of everything—male and female—into the ark to keep alive with you. ²⁰ Of the flying creatures according to their kind, of the livestock according to their kind, of all the crawling creatures of the ground according to their kind—two of everything will come to you to keep them alive. ²¹ As for you: take for yourself every kind of edible food and gather it to yourself. It will be food for you and for them."

²² So Noah did according to all that God commanded him; he did so exactly.

Deliverance Through the Flood

7 Then *ADONAI* said to Noah, "Come—you and all your household—into the ark. For you only do I perceive as righteous before Me in this generation. ² Of every clean animal you shall take with you seven of each kind, male and female; and of the animals which themselves are not clean two, male and female; ³ also of the flying creatures of the sky seven of every kind, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of the whole land. ⁴ For in seven more days, I am going to make it rain upon the land forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe out all existence that I made from the face of the ground." ⁵ So Noah did all just as *ADONAI* commanded him.

⁶ Now Noah was 600 years old when the flood came—water upon the land. ⁷ So Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, entered the ark because of the floodwaters. ⁸ Of the clean animals and unclean animals, the flying creatures and everything that crawls on the ground, ⁹ two by two they came to Noah, into the ark, male and female, just as God commanded Noah.

¹⁰ After the seven days, the floodwaters were upon the land. ¹¹ In the six-hundredth year of Noah's life, in

† Or, skylight

the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on this day, all the water sources of the great deep burst open, and the windows of the sky were opened. ¹² Then there was rain upon the land forty days and forty nights.

¹³ On that same day Noah, along with Noah's sons Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's wife and the three wives of Noah's sons with them, entered the ark, ¹⁴ they and every animal according to its kind, and all the livestock according to its kind, and every crawling creature that crawls on the land according to its kind, and every flying creature according to its kind, every bird, every winged creature. ¹⁵ So to Noah and into the ark they went by twos—all flesh in which was the spirit of life. ¹⁶ Those that came, male and female of all flesh, came just as God commanded him. Then *ADONAI* shut him in.

¹⁷ The flood was forty days upon the land, and the waters increased and lifted the ark, so that it rose above the land. ¹⁸ The waters overpowered and became very mighty over the land, and the ark drifted on the surface of the water. ¹⁹ The waters completely overpowered the land so that all the high mountains beneath the entire sky were covered. ²⁰ The waters rose 15 cubits higher, as the mountains were covered. ²¹ All flesh perished—those that crawl on the land, the flying creatures, livestock, wild animals, all creatures that swarm upon the land, and all humankind. ²² Everything that had the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils—everything on dry land—died. ²³ So He wiped out all existence that was upon the surface of the ground, everything from people to livestock, to crawling creatures, and to flying creatures of the sky. They were wiped out off the land. Only Noah and those with him in the ark survived. ²⁴ The waters overpowered the land for 150 days.

8 Then God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. So God caused a wind to pass over the land and the water subsided. ² Also the sources of the deep and the windows of the skies were closed up, and the rain from the sky was held back. ³ The waters kept receding gradually from upon the land and the waters decreased by the end of 150 days. ⁴ The ark came to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ The waters went on decreasing until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

⁶ It was at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made. ⁷ Then he sent out a raven and it kept going back and forth until the waters were drying up from the land. ⁸ Then he sent out a dove to see whether the waters had receded from the surface of the ground. ⁹ But the dove did not find a resting place for the sole of her foot. She returned to him in the ark because water covered the surface of the whole land. He stretched out his hand

and he took her, and brought her to him into the ark.

¹⁰ So he waited yet another seven days and again he sent the dove out from the ark. ¹¹ The dove came to him at evening, and surprisingly—a freshly plucked olive leaf was in its mouth. So Noah knew that the waters had receded from the land. ¹² After he waited seven more days, he sent out the dove, but she did not return to him again.

¹³ It was in his six-hundred-and first year—in the first month, on the first day of the month—that the waters had dried up from the land. Then Noah removed the cover of the ark and he looked, and behold, the surface of the ground had dried up. ¹⁴ By the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the land was dry.

Noah's Soothing Sacrifice

¹⁵ Then God spoke to Noah, saying, ¹⁶ "Come out of the ark, you and your wife, your sons and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁷ Every animal that is with you of all flesh, including the flying creatures, livestock and every crawling creature that crawls on the land, bring out with you, and let them swarm in the land and be fruitful and multiply upon the land."

¹⁸ So Noah came out, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives. ¹⁹ Every animal—every crawling creature, every flying creature, everything that crawls upon the land—came out from the ark in their families.

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to *ADONAI* and he took of every clean domestic animal and of every clean flying creature and he offered burnt offerings on the altar.

²¹ When *ADONAI* smelled the soothing aroma, *ADONAI* said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, even though the inclination of the heart of humankind is evil from youth. Nor will I ever again smite all living creatures, as I have done.

²² While all the days of the land remain, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease."

Covenant with Noah's Descendants

9 God blessed Noah and his sons, and He said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the land.

² The fear and terror of you will be on every wild animal, and on every flying creature of the sky, with everything that crawls on the ground and with all the fish of the sea—into your hand they are given. ³ Every crawling thing that is alive will be food for you, as are the green plants—I have now given you everything. ⁴ Only flesh with its life—that is, its blood—you must not eat! ⁵ Surely your lifeblood will I avenge. From every animal and from every person will I avenge it. From every person's brother will I avenge that person's life.

⁶ The one who sheds human blood,

by a human will his blood be shed,
for in God's image He made humanity.

⁷ But as for you, be fruitful and multiply! Flourish in the land and multiply in it."

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, ⁹ "Now I, behold, I am about to establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, including the flying creatures, the livestock, and every wild animal with you, of all that is coming out of the ark—every animal of the earth. ¹¹ I will confirm My covenant with you—never again will all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again will there be a flood to ruin the land."

¹² Then God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I am making between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you for all future generations.

¹³ My rainbow do I place in the cloud, and it will be a sign of the covenant between Me and the land.

¹⁴ Whenever I bring clouds over the land and the rainbow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember My covenant that is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the rainbow is in the cloud, I will look at it, to remember the perpetual covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the land."

¹⁷ Then God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have confirmed between Me and all flesh that is on the land."

Dispersion of Noah's Family

¹⁸ Noah's sons who came out from the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth, and Ham was the father of Canaan. ¹⁹ These three were Noah's sons, and from these the whole earth dispersed.

²⁰ Then Noah, a man of the soil, was first to plant a vineyard. ²¹ He drank some of the wine, got drunk, and was uncovered in his tent. ²² Then Ham, Canaan's father, saw his father's private parts and told his two brothers outside. ²³ So Shem and Japheth took the cloak and laid it over both their shoulders and walked backwards and with it covered their father's private parts. But their faces were turned away, so they did not see their father's private parts.

²⁴ When Noah woke up from his wine, he learned what his youngest son had done to him. ²⁵ So he said, "Cursed is Canaan: the lowest slave will he be to his brothers."

²⁶ He also said,
"Blessed be *ADONAI*, God of Shem,
and let Canaan be his servant.

²⁷ May God enlarge Japheth,
may he dwell in the tents of Shem,
and may Canaan be his slave."

²⁸ Now Noah lived 350 years after the flood. ²⁹ So all Noah's days were 950 years. Then he died.

10 And these are the genealogical records of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

² Japheth's sons were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras. ³ Gomer's sons were Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah. ⁴ Javan's sons were Elishah and Tarshish, the Kittites and the Dodanites.

⁵ From these the coastlands of the nations spread out in their lands, each one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

⁶ Ham's sons were Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan. ⁷ Cush's sons were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. And Raamah's sons were Sheba and Dedan.

⁸ Now Cush fathered Nimrod. He started to become mighty in the land. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before *ADONAI*. This is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before *ADONAI*." ¹⁰ The beginning of his kingdom included Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. ¹¹ From that land he went out to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rechoth-ir, Calah ¹² and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah—it is the great city.

¹³ Mizraim fathered the Ludites, the Anamites, the Lehabites, the Naphtuhites, ¹⁴ the Pathrusites, the Casluhites—from whom came the Philistines—and the Caphtorites.

¹⁵ Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn, Heth, ¹⁶ the Jebusite, the Amorite, the Girgashite, ¹⁷ the Hivite, the Arkite, the Sinite, ¹⁸ the Arvadite, the Zemarite and the Hamathite—and afterwards, the Canaanite families were scattered. ¹⁹ Now the Canaanite border was from Zidon, as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, as far as Lasha.

²⁰ These are Ham's sons according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, in their nations.

²¹ Sons were also born to Shem, who was Japheth's older brother and the father of all the sons of Eber.

²² Shem's sons were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram. ²³ Aram's sons were Uz, Hul, Gether and Mash. ²⁴ Arpachshad fathered Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eber. ²⁵ Two sons were born to Eber. The name of the first was Peleg—because in his days the land was divided—and his brother's name was Joktan.

²⁶ Joktan fathered Elmodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹ Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All of these are Joktan's sons. ³⁰ Their dwelling place was from Mesha till you come toward Sephar, the eastern hill country. ³¹ These are Shem's sons, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

³² These are the families of the sons of Noah according to their genealogies in their nations, and from these the nations were dispersed on the earth after the flood.

Tower of Babel

11 Now the entire earth had the same language with the same vocabulary. ² When they traveled eastward, they found a valley-plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ They said to one another, "Come! Let's make bricks and bake them until they're hard." So they used bricks for stone, and tar for mortar.

⁴ Then they said, "Come! Let's build ourselves a city, with a tower whose top reaches into heaven. So let's make a name for ourselves, or else we will be scattered over the face of the whole land."

⁵ Then *ADONAI* came down to see the city and the tower that the sons of man had built. ⁶ *ADONAI* said, "Look, the people are one and all of them have the same language. So this is what they have begun to do. Now, nothing they plan to do will be impossible.

⁷ Come! Let Us go down and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand each other's language."

⁸ So *ADONAI* scattered them from there over the face of the entire land, and they stopped building the city.

⁹ This is why it is named Babel, because *ADONAI* confused the languages of the entire world there, and from there *ADONAI* scattered them over the face of the entire world.

From Shem to Abram

¹⁰ These are the genealogical records of Shem: Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arpachshad—two years after the flood. ¹¹ Shem lived 500 years after he fathered Arpachshad, and he fathered sons and daughters. ¹² Arpachshad lived 35 years when he fathered Shelah. ¹³ Arpachshad lived 403 years after he fathered Shelah, and fathered sons and daughters. ¹⁴ Shelah lived 30 years and he fathered Eber. ¹⁵ Shelah lived 403 years after he fathered Eber, and fathered sons and daughters. ¹⁶ Eber lived 34 years and he fathered Peleg. ¹⁷ Eber lived 430 years after he fathered Peleg, and he fathered sons and daughters. ¹⁸ Peleg lived 30 years and he fathered Reu. ¹⁹ Peleg lived 209 years after he fathered Reu, and he fathered sons and daughters. ²⁰ Reu lived 32 years and he fathered Serug. ²¹ Reu lived 207 years after he fathered Serug, and he fathered sons and daughters. ²² Serug lived 30 years and fathered Nahor. ²³ Serug lived 200 years after he fathered Nahor, and he fathered sons and daughters. ²⁴ Nahor lived 27 years and he fathered Terah. ²⁵ Nahor lived 119 years after he fathered Terah, and he fathered sons and daughters. ²⁶ Terah lived 70 years when he fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.

²⁷ These are Terah's genealogies: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. Haran fathered Lot. ²⁸ Haran died before Terah his father, in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans. ²⁹ Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai,

and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah—the daughter of Haran, father of Milcah and Iscah. ³⁰ Sarai was barren; she did not have a child.

³¹ Terah took Abram his son and Lot, Haran's son, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and he took them out of Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there.

³² Terah's days were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran.

Parashat Lech Lecha

Abram Obeys the Calling

12 Then *ADONAI* said to Abram, "Get going out from your land, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you.

² My heart's desire is to make you into a great nation, to bless you, to make your name great so that you may be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you, but whoever curses you I will curse, [†] and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." ^{††}

⁴ So Abram went, just as *ADONAI* had spoken to him. Also Lot went with him. (Now Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.) ⁵ Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions that they had acquired, and the people that they acquired in Haran, and they left to go to the land of Canaan, and they entered the land of Canaan. ⁶ Abram passed through the land as far as the place of Shechem, as far as Moreh's big tree. (The Canaanites were in the land then.) [‡]

⁷ Then *ADONAI* appeared to Abram, and said, "I will give this land to your seed." So there he built an altar to *ADONAI*, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved to the mountain to the east of Beth-El and erected his tent (with Beth-El to the west and Ai to the east). There he built an altar to *ADONAI* and called on the Name of *ADONAI*. ⁹ So Abram kept on journeying southward. ^{‡†}

Abram and Sarai in Egypt

¹⁰ Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to live as an outsider there, because the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹ Just as he was about to enter Egypt he said to Sarai his wife, "Look, please, I know that you are an attractive woman. ¹² So when the Egyptians see you they'll say, 'This is his wife.' And they'll kill me; but you, they'll let live. ¹³ Please say that you are my sister, so that I'll be

[†] Or, reviles ^{††} cf. Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8. [‡] Or, terebinth oak ^{‡†} Or, to the Negev

treated well for your sake, and my life will be spared because of you.”

¹⁴ When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians did see that the woman was very beautiful. ¹⁵ Indeed, Pharaoh’s officials saw her and they raved about her to Pharaoh. Then the woman was taken into Pharaoh’s house. ¹⁶ But Abram was treated well for her sake, and he got sheep, cattle, male donkeys, male and female slaves, female donkeys and camels.

¹⁷ But *ADONAI* struck Pharaoh and his household with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. ¹⁸ So Pharaoh called Abram and said, “What’s this that you did to me? Why didn’t you tell me that she is your wife? ¹⁹ Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now, here is your wife. Take—and go!” ²⁰ Then Pharaoh instructed men concerning him, and they expelled him, with his wife, and everything that belonged to him.

13 So Abram went up from Egypt—he and his wife and everything that belonged to him, and Lot with him—to the Negev. ² Now Abram was very rich in livestock, silver and gold. ³ He proceeded by stages from the Negev as far as Beth-El—to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-El and Ai, ⁴ to the place of the altar that he had made there at first, and there Abram called on the Name of *ADONAI*.

Lot Separates From Abram

⁵ Now Lot, who was going with Abram, also had sheep and cattle and tents, ⁶ so that the land could not support them living together, because their possessions were many, and they were not able to stay together. ⁷ So there was a quarrel between the shepherds of Abram’s livestock and the shepherds of Lot’s livestock. (Now the Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land then.)

⁸ So Abram said to Lot, “Please, let there be no strife between me and you, or between my shepherds and yours, since we are relatives. ⁹ Isn’t the whole land before you? Please separate yourself from me. If to the left, then I’ll go to the right, and if to the right, then I’ll go to the left.”

¹⁰ Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the whole area surrounding the Jordan was well watered in its entirety (before *ADONAI* destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah)—like *ADONAI*’s garden, like the land of Egypt—till you come to Zoar. ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself the whole area surrounding the Jordan. Lot journeyed to the east, and they separated from each other. ¹² Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the valley. And he moved his tent from place to place near Sodom. ¹³ But the people of Sodom were evil—very great sinners against *ADONAI*.

¹⁴ After Lot separated himself from him, *ADONAI* had said to Abram, “Lift up your eyes, now, and look from the place where you are, to the north, south, east and west. ¹⁵ For all the land that you are looking at, I will

give to you and to your seed forever. ¹⁶ I will make your seed like the dust of the earth so that if one could count the dust of the earth, then your seed could also be counted. ¹⁷ Get up! Walk about the land through its length and width—for I will give it to you.”

¹⁸ So Abram moved his tent from place to place, and came and dwelt by Mamre’s large trees, which are in Hebron, and there built an altar to *ADONAI*.

Abram Rescues Lot

14 Now it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, ² that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (this is Zoar). ³ All of these kings joined forces in the Valley of the Siddim (this is the Salt Sea). ⁴ For twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. ⁵ In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer came with the kings who were with him, and they defeated the Rephaim in Ashterot-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh-kiryataim, ⁶ and the Horites in the hill country of Seir as far as El-Paran, which is beside the wilderness. ⁷ Then they came again to Enmishpat (this is Kadesh), and they subdued all the territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who live 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 (this is Zoar) went out and lined themselves up for battle with them in the Valley of the Siddim, ⁹ against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar: four kings against five. ¹⁰ Now the Valley of the Siddim was full of tar pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell into them, and those who remained fled to the hills. ¹¹ So they took all of Sodom and Gomorrah’s possessions and their food and left. ¹² They also took Lot, Abram’s nephew, and his possessions, and they left (as he was living in Sodom).

¹³ Then a survivor came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was dwelling by the large trees belonging to Mamre the Amorite, the brother of Eschol and the brother of Aner—they were Abram’s allies. ¹⁴ When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he rallied his trained men, those born in his household, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵ Then he divided his servants against them at night, and he defeated them and pursued them as far as Hovah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶ He brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot and his possessions, as well as the women and the other people.

Melech-Tzedek, King of Salem

¹⁷ Now after he returned from defeating Chedor-laomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (this is the King's Valley). ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine—he was a priest of *El Elyon*. ¹⁹ He blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram by *El Elyon*,
Creator of heaven and earth,
²⁰ and blessed be *El Elyon*,
Who gave over your enemies into your hand.”
Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

²¹ Then the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people—the possessions take for yourself.”

²² But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I raise my hand in oath to *ADONAI*, *El Elyon*, Creator of heaven and earth. ²³ Not a thread or even a sandal strap of all that is yours will I take, so you will not say, ‘I’ve made Abram rich!’ ²⁴ I claim nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me—Aner, Eschol, and Mamre—let them take their share.”

Cutting a Covenant

15 After these things the word of *ADONAI* came to Abram in a vision saying,

“Do not fear, Abram.

I am your shield,
your very great reward.”

² But Abram said, “My Lord *ADONAI*, what will You give me, since I am living without children, and the heir of my household is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ Then Abram said, “Look! You have given me no seed, so a house-born servant is my heir.”

⁴ Then behold, the word of *ADONAI* came to him saying, “This one will not be your heir, but in fact, one who will come from your own body will be your heir.”

⁵ He took him outside and said, “Look up now, at the sky, and count the stars—if you are able to count them.” Then He said to him, “So shall your seed be.”

⁶ Then he believed in *ADONAI* and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷ Then He said to him, “I am *ADONAI* who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans, in order to give you this land to inherit it.”

⁸ So he said, “My Lord *ADONAI*, how will I know that I will inherit it?”

⁹ Then He said to him, “Bring Me a three year old young cow, a three year old she-goat, a three year old ram, a turtle-dove and a young bird.”

¹⁰ So he brought all these to Him and cut them in half, and put each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. ¹¹ Then birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

† Meaning, King of Righteousness

¹² When the sun was about to set and a deep sleep fell on Abram, behold, terror of great darkness was falling upon him! ¹³ Then He said to Abram, “Know for certain that your seed will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and they will be enslaved and oppressed 400 years. ¹⁴ But I am going to judge the nation that they will serve. Afterward they will go out with many possessions. ¹⁵ But you, you will come to your fathers in peace. You will be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ Then in the fourth generation they will return here—for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” ¹⁷ When the sun set and it became dark, behold, there was a smoking oven and a fiery torch that passed between these pieces.

¹⁸ On that day *ADONAI* cut a covenant with Abram, saying, “I give this land to your seed, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River: ¹⁹ the Kenite, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Raphaites, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

Hagar and Ishmael

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not borne him children. But she had an Egyptian slave-girl—her name was Hagar. ² So Sarai said to Abram, “Look now, *ADONAI* has prevented me from having children. Go, please, to my slave-girl. Perhaps I'll get a son by her.”

Abram listened to Sarai's voice. ³ So Sarai, Abram's wife, took her slave-girl Hagar the Egyptian—after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan—and gave her to Abram her husband to be his wife. ⁴ Then he went to Hagar and she became pregnant. When she saw that she was pregnant, in her eyes her mistress was belittled.

⁵ So Sarai said to Abram, “The wrong done to me is because of you! I myself placed my slave-girl in your embrace. Now that she saw that she became pregnant, so in her eyes I am belittled. May *ADONAI* judge between you and me!”

⁶ Abram said to Sarai, “Look! Your slave-girl is in your hand. Do to her what is good in your eyes.”

So Sarai afflicted her, and she fled from her presence. ⁷ Then the angel of *ADONAI* †† found her by the spring of water in the wilderness, next to the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ He said, “Hagar, Sarai's slave-girl, where have you come from and where are you going?”

She said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.”

⁹ The angel of *ADONAI* said, “Return to your mistress and humble yourself under her hand.” ¹⁰ Then the angel of *ADONAI* said to her, “I will bountifully multiply your seed, and they will be too many to count.” ¹¹ Then the angel of *ADONAI* said to her,

Behold, you are pregnant
and about to bear a son,
and you shall name him Ishmael—

†† Or, Messenger

for *ADONAI* has heard your affliction.

¹² He will be a wild donkey of a man.

His hand will be against everyone,
and everyone's hand against him,
and away from all his brothers will he dwell.

¹³ So she called *ADONAI* who was speaking to her, "You are the God who sees me." For she said, "Would I have gone here indeed looking for Him who looks after me?" ¹⁴ That is why the well is named, the Well of the Living One Who Sees Me. (Behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.)

¹⁵ Then Hagar gave birth to a son for Abram, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

¹⁶ Abram was 86 years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael for Abram.

Covenant of Circumcision

17 When Abram was 99 years old, *ADONAI* appeared to Abram, and He said to him, "I am *El Shaddai*. Continually walk before Me and you will be blameless. ² My heart's desire is to make My covenant between Me and you, and then I will multiply you exceedingly much."

³ Abram fell on his face, and God spoke with him, saying, ⁴ "For My part, because My covenant is with you, you will be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer will your name be Abram, but your name will be Abraham, because I make you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶ Yes, I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings will come forth from you. ⁷ Yes, I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, in order to be your God and your seed's God after you. ⁸ I will give to you and to your seed after you the land where you are an outsider—the whole land of Canaan—as an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

⁹ God also said to Abraham, "As for you, My covenant you must keep, you and your seed after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰ This is My covenant that you must keep between Me and you and your seed after you: all your males must be circumcised. ¹¹ You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and this will become a sign of the covenant between Me and you. ¹² Also your eight-day-olds must be circumcised, every male, throughout your generations, including a house-born slave or a slave bought with money from any foreigner who is not of your seed. ¹³ Your house-born slave and your purchased slave must surely be circumcised. So My covenant will be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ But the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin—that person will be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

¹⁵ God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her by the name Sarai. Rather, Sarah is her name. ¹⁶ And I will bless her, and moreover, I will

give you a son from her. I will bless her and she will give rise to nations. Kings of the peoples will come from her."

¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to his heart, "Will a son be born to a 100-year-old man? Or will Sarah—who is 90 years old—give birth?" ¹⁸ So Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live before you!"

¹⁹ But God said, "On the contrary, Sarah your wife will bear you a son and you must name him Isaac. So I will confirm My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. ²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard you. See, I have blessed him and I will make him fruitful, and I will multiply him very very much. He will father twelve princes and I will make him a great nation. ²¹ But My covenant will I establish with Isaac whom Sarah will bear to you at this set time next year."

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

²³ Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all of his house-born slaves and all his purchased slaves—every male among the men of Abraham's house—and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskin on this very same day, just as God had spoken with him. ²⁴ Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, ²⁵ and his son Ishmael was 13 years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ On this very same day Abraham and Ishmael his son were circumcised. ²⁷ Also all the men of his house, house-born slaves and slaves purchased from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

Parashat Vayera

The Promise of a Son

18 Then *ADONAI* appeared to him at Mamre's large trees while he was sitting in the entrance of his tent during the heat of the day. ² When he lifted up his eyes to see, suddenly, three men were standing right by him. When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed down to the ground. ³ Then he said, "My Lord, if now I have found favor in your eyes, please do not pass by your servant. ⁴ Please let a little water be brought so you can wash your feet, and make yourselves comfortable under the tree. ⁵ And let me bring a bit of bread so that you can refresh yourselves—then you can pass on—since you have passed by your servant."

They said, "Do just as you have said." ⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Knead three measures of fine flour and prepare bread loaves!" ⁷ Then to the herd Abraham ran and took a young ox, tender and good, and he gave it to the servant, who prepared it quickly. ⁸ Then he took butter and milk and the young ox that he had prepared and

set it before them. While he was standing by them under the tree, they ate.

⁹ Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" "There, in the tent," he said.

¹⁰ Then He said, "I will most surely return to you in about a year's time, surprisingly, Sarah your wife will have a son."

Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind Him. ¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years—Sarah had stopped having the way of women. ¹² So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I've grown decrepit, can I have desire—and my lord so old?"

¹³ Then *ADONAI* said to Abraham, "Why is it that Sarah laughed, saying, 'Can I really give birth when I am so old?' ¹⁴ Is anything too difficult for *ADONAI*? At the appointed time I will return to you—in about a year—and Sarah will have a son."

¹⁵ Sarah denied it saying, "I didn't laugh!" For she was afraid.

But He said, "No—for you did laugh."

Abraham Intercedes

¹⁶ Then the men got up from there and looked down over Sodom. Abraham was walking with them to send them off, ¹⁷ when *ADONAI* said, "Should I keep secret from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸ seeing that Abraham will most certainly become a great and mighty nation and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? ¹⁹ For I have made myself known to him so that he will command his sons and his household after him to keep the way of *ADONAI* by doing righteousness and justice, so that *ADONAI* may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."

²⁰ Then *ADONAI* said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great indeed, and their sin is very grievous indeed. ²¹ I want to go down now, and see if they deserve destruction, as its outcry has come to Me. And if not, I will know."

²² Then the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham was still standing before *ADONAI*. ²³ Abraham drew near and said, "Will you really sweep away the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴ Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you really sweep away and not spare the place for the sake of fifty righteous who are in it? ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing—to cause the righteous to die with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked share the same fate! Far be it from You! Shall the Judge of the whole world not exercise justice?"

²⁶ Then *ADONAI* said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous people within the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake."

²⁷ Then Abraham answered and said, "Look, pray, I have decided to speak to my Lord, though I am dust and ashes. ²⁸ Suppose the fifty righteous people are lacking five. Will You destroy the whole city for lack of five?"

And He said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there."

²⁹ So he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Perhaps forty will be found there?"

And He said, "I will not do it for the sake of the forty."

³⁰ Then he said, "Please, let my Lord not be angry, so I may speak. Perhaps thirty will be found there?"

And He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

³¹ Then he said, "Look, pray, I have decided to speak to my Lord: Perhaps twenty will be found there?"

And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty."

³² Then he said, "Please, let not my Lord be angry, so I may speak once more. Perhaps ten will be found there?"

And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."

³³ Now when He had finished speaking to Abraham, *ADONAI* left, and Abraham returned to his place.

Sodom and Gomorrah

19 Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, while Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he got up to meet them, and bowed down with his face to the ground. ² Then he said, "Here, please my lords, please turn aside to your servant's house, spend the night and wash your feet. Then you can get up early and go on your way."

But they said, "No. We will spend the night in the open plaza."

³ But he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and they came into his house. He prepared a feast for them and baked *matzot*, and they ate. ⁴ They had not yet lain down when the men of the city (the men of Sodom) surrounded the house—from youth to elderly, all the people without exception. ⁵ And they called out to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have relations with them!"

⁶ But Lot went out to them at the doorway and shut the door behind him, ⁷ and said, "Please, my brothers, don't act wickedly. ⁸ Look, I have two daughters who haven't been intimate with a man. Please let me bring them out to you—do to them whatever is good in your eyes! However, do nothing to these men—since they have come under the protection of my roof."

⁹ "Get out of the way!" they said, and they said, "This one came as an outsider and dares to judge! Now we'll treat you worse than them!"

So they strongly pressed against the man, Lot, and moved in close to break the door down. ¹⁰ But the men reached out their hands, brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹ Then they struck the men at the doorway of the house with blindness—from youth to elderly—so that they gave up trying to find the doorway.

¹² Then the men said to Lot, "Who else related to you is still here? A son-in-law, your sons and your daugh-

ters, whoever else is related to you in the city—bring them out of the place! ¹³ For we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before *ADONAI* that *ADONAI* has sent us to destroy it.”

¹⁴ So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law who were going to marry his daughters, “Get up!” he said, “Get out of this place! For *ADONAI* is about to destroy the city!” But in the eyes of his sons-in-law, he was like a joker.

¹⁵ So when morning dawned the angels rushed Lot, saying, “Get up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or else you will be swept away with the city’s iniquity!” ¹⁶ But he hesitated. So the men grabbed his hand, his wife’s hand and his two daughters’ hands—because of *ADONAI*’s compassion for him—and they brought him out and left him outside the city.

¹⁷ When they brought them outside, one said, “Flee for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stop anywhere in the surrounding area! Escape to the hills, or else you’ll be swept away!”

¹⁸ But Lot said to them, “No, my Lord, please! ¹⁹ Look, please, your servant has found favor in Your eyes and You have magnified Your merciful loyalty, which You have shown me by letting me live. But I can’t escape to the hill country—for the disaster will overtake me and I’ll die! ²⁰ Look, please, this city is close enough to flee there, and it’s little. Please let me escape there. Isn’t it small? And let me live!”

²¹ So He said to him, “Behold, I will grant your request concerning this matter too—not to demolish the city of which you have spoken. ²² Hurry! Flee to safety there, because I cannot do anything until you arrive there.” (This is why the town is named Zoar.)

²³ The moment the sun rose upon the land, Lot entered Zoar, ²⁴ and *ADONAI* rained sulfur and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah from *ADONAI* out of the sky.

²⁵ So He demolished these cities and the whole surrounding area, all the inhabitants of the cities and the vegetation of the ground.

²⁶ But his wife looked behind him and she turned into a pillar of salt.

²⁷ Now Abraham rose early in the morning to the place where he had stood before *ADONAI*, ²⁸ and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward the entire land of the surrounding area, and saw, behold, the smoke of the land ascended like smoke from a furnace. ²⁹ So it was, as God destroyed the cities of the surrounding area, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the upheaval, when He demolished the cities where Lot had dwelt.

Lot Fathers Moab and Ammon

³⁰ Then Lot went up from Zoar and dwelled on the mountain, his two daughters with him, because he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. So he lived in a cave—he and his two daughters.

³¹ Then the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man in the land to come to us as is the custom of the whole land. ³² Come on! Let’s make our father drink wine so that we can lie with him and keep the seed from our father alive. ³³ So they made their father drink wine that night, and the firstborn came and lay down with her father. Yet he did not know that she lay down and got up. ³⁴ On the following day, the firstborn said to the younger, “See! I slept with my father last night. Let’s make him drink wine tonight as well. Come on! Sleep with him so that we’ll keep the seed from our father alive.” ³⁵ So they made their father drink wine that night as well, and the younger got up and lay down with him and he did not know that she lay down and got up. ³⁶ So Lot’s two daughters become pregnant by their father. ³⁷ Then the firstborn gave birth to a son and named him Moab: he is the ancestor of the Moabites to this day. ³⁸ The younger also gave birth to a son and named him Ben-Ammi: he is the ancestor of the sons of Ammon to this day.

Sarah Renewed

²⁰ Then Abraham journeyed from there to the land of the Negev and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While he was dwelling as an outsider in Gerar, ² Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” So King Abimelech of Gerar sent for and took Sarah. ³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream at night and said to him, “Behold, you are as good as dead, because of the woman whom you have taken—since she is a married woman.”

⁴ Now Abimelech had not come near her. So he said, “My Lord, will You slay a nation, even though innocent? ⁵ Didn’t he say to me, ‘She’s my sister’? And she herself even said, ‘He’s my brother.’ I did this with integrity of my heart and guiltlessness of my hands.”

⁶ Then God said to him in a dream, “Yes, I myself knew that you did this with integrity of your heart, so I, yes I Myself prevented you from sinning against Me. That is why I did not allow you to touch her. ⁷ So now, return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet. And let him pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, know that you will surely die—you and all who are yours.”

⁸ Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants and spoke all these words in their ears—and the men were very frightened. ⁹ Then Abimelech called to Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us, and how have I sinned against you, that you brought great sin upon me and my kingdom? You’ve done to me things that should not be done!” ¹⁰ Abimelech also said to Abraham, “What motivated you to do this thing?”

¹¹ Abraham said, “Because I thought, ‘There is certainly no fear of God in this place, so they’ll kill me, because of my wife.’ ¹² And besides, she really is my sister. She’s my father’s daughter, though not my moth-

er's daughter. Then she became my wife. ¹³ So when God made me wander away from my father's house, I said to her, 'This is your loyalty that you must show me: in every place we go, say of me, 'He is my brother.'"

¹⁴ Then Abimelech took sheep, cattle, male slaves and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and returned his wife Sarah to him. ¹⁵ Then Abimelech said, "Look, my land is before you. Dwell wherever it pleases you." ¹⁶ At the same time he said to Sarah, "Look, I've given a thousand shekels to your brother. Look, it is compensation for everything that happened—so to everyone with you, you are vindicated."

¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God and God healed Abimelech, his wife and his female slaves so that they could bear children. ¹⁸ For *ADONAI* had completely locked up every womb in Abimelech's household because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Birth of Isaac

21 Then *ADONAI* visited Sarah just as He had said, and *ADONAI* did for Sarah just as He had spoken.

² So Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time that God had told him. ³ Abraham named his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore for him—Isaac. ⁴ Then Abraham circumcised Isaac, his eight-day-old son, just as God had commanded him. ⁵ Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac his son was born to him.

⁶ So Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me! Everyone who hears will laugh with me." ⁷ She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham, 'Sarah has nursed children?' For I have given birth to a son in his old age!"

Ishmael Banished, Yet Delivered

⁸ The child grew and was weaned—Abraham made a big feast on the day Isaac was weaned. ⁹ But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian whom she had born to Abraham—making fun. ¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, "Drive out this female slave and her son, for the son of this female slave will not be an heir with my son—with Isaac."

¹¹ Now the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's eyes on account of his son. ¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not be displeased about the boy and your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, listen to her voice. For through Isaac shall your seed be called. ¹³ Yet I will also make the son of the slave woman into a nation, because he is your seed."

¹⁴ So Abraham got up early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away. She went and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

¹⁵ When the water from the skin was finished, she abandoned the child under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then

she went and sat herself down opposite, about a bow-shot away, for she had said, "I can't bear to see the child dying!" So she sat down opposite and lifted up her voice and wept.

¹⁷ Then God heard the boy's voice and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and He said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, because God has heard the boy's voice where he is. ¹⁸ Get up! Lift the boy up, and hold on to him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation."

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled the water skin, and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy and he grew. He dwelled in the wilderness and became an archer. ²¹ He dwelled in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Covenant of Abimelech and Abraham

²² Now it came about at that same time that Abimelech—with Phicol the commander of his army—said to Abraham, "God is with you in all that you do. ²³ So now, make a pledge to me here, by God, that you will not violate your word with me or with my descendants or with my offspring. As I have shown loyalty to you, show the same to me, and to the land in which you have lived as an outsider."

²⁴ Abraham said, "I make a pledge." ²⁵ Now Abraham had rebuked Abimelech because of the well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized. ²⁶ So Abimelech said, "I don't know who did this thing. Nor did you tell me, nor did I hear about it until today."

²⁷ Then Abraham took a flock of sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant. ²⁸ Abraham set seven young ewe-lambs apart from the flock of sheep by themselves. ²⁹ Abimelech said to Abraham, "What do these seven ewe-lambs that you've set by themselves mean?"

³⁰ He said, "You are to accept the seven ewe-lambs from my hand, so that they may be a witness for me that I dug this well." ³¹ That is why that place is named Beer-sheba, because there both of them made a pledge, ³² and they made a covenant in Beer-sheba. Then Abimelech got up, with Phicol the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines.

³³ Then he planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba and called there on the Name of *ADONAI*, the Everlasting God. ³⁴ He lived as an outsider in the land of the Philistines for many days.

The Binding of Isaac

22 Now it was after these things that God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham." [†] "Hineni," he said.

[†] cf. Heb. 11:17-19.

² Then He said, "Take your son, your only son whom you love † —Isaac—and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains about which I will tell you."

³ So Abraham got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. He split wood for the burnt offering, and got up and went to the place about which God had told him. ⁴ On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from a distance. ⁵ Abraham said to his young men, "Sit yourselves down here with the donkey. As for me and the young man, we'll go over there, worship and return to you."

⁶ Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on Isaac his son. In his hand he took the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.

⁷ Then Isaac said to Abraham his father, "My father?" Then he said, "Here I am, my son."

He said, "Look. Here's the fire and the wood. But where's the lamb for a burnt offering?"

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

The two of them walked on together. ⁹ Then they came to the place about which God had told him, and Abraham built the altar there, laid out the wood, bound up Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ^{††10} Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

¹¹ But the angel of *ADONAI* called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham! Abraham!"

He said, " *Hineni!* "

¹² Then He said, "Do not reach out your hand against the young man—do nothing to him at all. For now I know that you are one who fears God—you did not withhold your son, your only son, from Me."

¹³ Then Abraham lifted up his eyes and behold, there was a ram, just caught in the thick bushes by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ Abraham named that place, *ADONAI Yireh*, —as it is said today, "On the mountain, *ADONAI* will provide."

¹⁵ The angel of *ADONAI* called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, "By myself I swear—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —because you have done this thing, and you did not withhold your son, your only son, ^{‡17} I will richly bless you and bountifully multiply your seed like the stars of heaven, and like the sand that is on the seashore, and your seed will possess the gate of his enemies. ¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed—because you obeyed My voice." ^{‡†}

¹⁹ Then Abraham returned to his young men and they got up and went together to Beer-sheba. Then Abraham dwelled in Beer-sheba.

† cf. Matt. 12:10; John 3:16-18. †† cf. Ps. 105:9; Luke 1:73; Heb. 6:13-20. ‡ cf. Ps. 105:9; Luke 1:73; Heb. 6:13-20. ‡† cf. Acts 3:25.

²⁰ Now it was after these things that it was told to Abraham, "Look, Milcah has also borne sons to Nahor your brother: ²¹ Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, ²² Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Yid-laph and Bethuel." ²³ Then Bethuel fathered Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. ²⁴ His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash and Maacah.

Parashat Chayei Sarah

Abraham Purchases Machpelah

23 Now Sarah's life was 127 years—the years of Sarah's life. ² Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), in the land of Canaan. Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

³ Then Abraham rose from before his dead one and spoke to the sons of Heth saying, ⁴ "I am an outsider and a sojourner among you. Give me a gravesite among you so that I may bury my dead from before my presence."

⁵ The sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, ⁶ "Listen to us, my lord. You are a prince of God among us. Bury your dead in the best of our graves. None among us will withhold his grave from you, to bury your dead one."

⁷ Then Abraham got up and bowed down to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth, ⁸ and spoke with them saying, "If you are of a mind to let me bury my dead from before my presence, listen to me. Plead with Ephron son of Zophar on my behalf, ⁹ that he may give me the cave of Machpelah that belongs to him, that is at the end of his field. At the full price let him give it to me in your midst for a gravesite."

¹⁰ Now Ephron was sitting in the midst of the sons of Heth. And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the ears of the sons of Heth, all those who enter the gate of his city, saying, ¹¹ "No, my lord, listen to me. The field—I hereby give it to you. Also the cave that is in it—I hereby give it to you. In the eyes of the sons of my people, I hereby give it to you. Bury your dead one."

¹² Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land, ¹³ and spoke to Ephron in the ears of the people of the land saying, "But if only you would please listen to me. I hereby give the price of the field. Accept it from me that I may bury my dead one there."

¹⁴ So Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, ¹⁵ "My lord, listen to me. A land worth 400 shekels of silver—what is that between me and you? Bury your dead one."

¹⁶ Abraham heard Ephron. So Abraham weighed out to Ephron the silver that he had spoken of in the ears of the sons of Heth—400 shekels of silver at the merchant's rate. ¹⁷ Now Ephron's field that is in Machpelah next to Mamre—the field and the cave that is in it, and all the trees that are in the field in all its surrounding

territory—was handed over ¹⁸ to Abraham as a purchased possession in the eyes of the sons of Heth, before all those who enter the gate of his city.

¹⁹ Afterward, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah next to Mamre (that is, Hebron), in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ So the field and the cave that was in it were handed over to Abraham as a gravesite from the sons of Heth.

Courting of Rebekah

24 Now Abraham was old, advanced in years, and *ADONAI* blessed Abraham in everything. ² Then Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household who managed everything that belonged to him, “Now put your hand under my thigh, ³ so that I may make you take an oath by *ADONAI*, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from among the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I am dwelling. ⁴ On the contrary, to my land and to my relatives you must go and get a wife for my son Isaac.”

⁵ But the servant said to him, “Suppose the woman were unwilling to follow after me to this land? Should I then have your son go back to the land you came from?”

⁶ Abraham said to him, “See to it that you don’t return my son there. ⁷ *ADONAI*, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from my native land and who spoke to me and made a pledge to me saying, ‘To your seed I will give this land’—He will send His angel before you and you will take a wife for my son from there. ⁸ If the woman is not willing to follow after you, then you will be free from this oath of mine. Nevertheless, you must not return my son there.” ⁹ So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and he made a pledge to him concerning this matter.

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and left with all the best of his master’s things in his hand. Then he arose and went to Aram-Naharaim, to Nahor’s city. ¹¹ Then he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time for the going out to draw water.

¹² “*ADONAI*, the God of Abraham my master,” he said, “please make something happen before me today, and show loyalty to Abraham my master. ¹³ Look, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are going out to draw water.

¹⁴ Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, ‘Please tip your jar so that I may drink,’ and she will say, ‘Drink—and I’ll also water your camels’—let her be the one You have appointed for your servant Isaac. So by this I’ll know that You have shown graciousness to my master.”

¹⁵ Now before he had finished speaking, behold there was Rebekah (who was born to Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother) going out with her jar on her shoulder. ¹⁶ Now the young

woman was very good looking, a girl of marriageable age, and she was a virgin. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. ¹⁷ Then the servant ran to meet her and said, “Please let me sip a little water from your jar.”

¹⁸ So she said, “Drink, my lord,” and she quickly lowered her jar onto her hand and gave him a drink.

¹⁹ Now when she finished giving him a drink, she said, “I’ll also draw water for your camels until they’ve finished drinking.” ²⁰ So she quickly poured out her jug into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew water for all his camels, ²¹ while the man continued to pay close attention to her, keeping silent in order to know whether or not *ADONAI* had made his way successful.

²² Now after the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a nose ring of gold weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets on her hands weighing ten shekels of gold. ²³ “Whose daughter are you?” he said. “Please tell me. Is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?”

²⁴ She said to him, “I’m the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.” ²⁵ She also said to him, “There’s both straw and plenty of feed with us, as well as room to spend the night.”

²⁶ Then the man bowed down and worshiped *ADONAI*, ²⁷ and he said, “Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His loyalty and His truth toward my master. As for me, *ADONAI* has guided me in the way to the house of my master’s brothers.”

²⁸ Then the young woman ran and told her mother’s house these things.

²⁹ Now Rebekah had a brother and his name was Laban, and Laban ran outside to the man at the spring. ³⁰ As soon as he saw the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister’s hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister saying, “Thus the man said to me,” he went to the man. There he was, standing by the camels at the spring. ³¹ So he said, “Come in, blessed of *ADONAI*. Why are you standing outside when I’ve tied up the house and there is room for the camels?”

³² So the man came to the house and he unloaded the camels. Straw and feed were given to the camels and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. ³³ Food was placed before him to eat, but he said, “I won’t eat until I’ve stated my business.”

So he said, “Speak.”

³⁴ “I am Abraham’s servant,” he said. ³⁵ “*ADONAI* has blessed my master very much so that he has become great, and He has given to him flocks of sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male slaves and female slaves, camels and donkeys. ³⁶ Now Sarah, my master’s wife, gave birth to a son for my master after she was old, and He gave him everything he owns. ³⁷ Then my master made me take an oath, saying, ‘You must not take a wife for my son from among the daughters of the

Canaanites in whose land I'm dwelling.³⁸ Instead you must go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.'³⁹ But I said to my master, 'Suppose the woman won't come back with me?'⁴⁰ So he said to me, 'ADONAI, before whom I've walked continually, will send His angel with you, and He will make your way successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's household.⁴¹ Then you'll be free from my oath—if you come to my family and if they don't give her to you—then you'll be free from my oath.'⁴² So I came today to the spring and I said, 'ADONAI, the God of Abraham my master, if You are really going to make my way upon which I am walking successful,⁴³ look, I'm standing by the spring of water. So let it be that the unmarried girl who is going out to draw water, to whom I'll say, "Please give me a little water to drink from your jug,"⁴⁴ and she'll say to me, "You drink, and I'll also draw water for your camels"—let her be the woman whom ADONAI appoints for my master's son!' ⁴⁵ I had not yet finished speaking to my heart, and behold there was Rebekah going out—her jug was on her shoulder and she went down to the spring and drew water. So I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'⁴⁶ And she quickly lowered her jug off of her and said, 'Drink, and I'll also water your camels.' So I drank, and she also watered the camels.⁴⁷ Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' Then I placed the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her hands.⁴⁸ I bowed down and worshiped ADONAI and blessed ADONAI, the God of my master Abraham, who guided me on the true way to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son.⁴⁹ So now, if you're really going to show loyalty and truth to my master, tell me. But if not, tell me and I'll turn to the right or to the left."

⁵⁰ Then Laban and Bethuel answered, and they said, "The matter proceeds from ADONAI. We cannot speak to you bad or good.⁵¹ Rebekah is before you. Take her and go, and let her become a wife for our master's son, just as ADONAI has spoken."

⁵² Now when Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed down to the ground to ADONAI.⁵³ Then the servant brought out articles of silver and gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious gifts to her brothers and to her mother.

⁵⁴ Then they ate and drank, he and the men who were with him, and spent the night.

When they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me off to my master."

⁵⁵ But her brother with her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days—or ten. Afterwards she may go."

⁵⁶ But he said to them, "Don't delay me, since ADONAI has made my way successful. Send me off so that I can go to my master."

⁵⁷ So they said, "We'll call the young woman and let's ask her opinion."⁵⁸ Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?"

She said, "I will go."

⁵⁹ So they sent Rebekah their sister off with her nanny, and Abraham's servant and his men,⁶⁰ and they blessed Rebekah and said to her:

"Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands, and may your seed possess the gate of those who hate him."

⁶¹ Then Rebekah got up, with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed after the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

⁶² Now Isaac had come from visiting Beer-lahai-roi and was living in the land of the Negev.⁶³ Isaac went out to meditate strolling in the field at dusk. Then he lifted up his eyes and saw, behold, camels were coming.⁶⁴ Rebekah also lifted up her eyes and saw Isaac. Then she fell off her camel.

⁶⁵ Then she said to the servant, "Who is that man there who is walking in the field—to meet us?"

The servant said, "He is my master."

So she took the veil and covered herself.⁶⁶ Then the servant recounted to Isaac all the things he had done.

⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother, took Rebekah and she became his wife—and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after the loss of his mother.

Abraham's Old Age and Descendants

25 Now Abraham took another wife—her name was Keturah.² She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah.³ Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's sons were Asshurim, Letushim and Leummim.⁴ Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All of these were Keturah's sons.⁵ Now Abraham gave everything that he had to Isaac,⁶ but to the sons of Abraham's concubines, Abraham had given gifts and sent them away from his son Isaac while he was still living, eastward to the land of the east.

⁷ Now these are the days of the years of Abraham's life that he lived: 175 years.⁸ So Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, old and satisfied. Then he was gathered to his peoples.⁹ Then Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, next to Mamre,¹⁰ the field that Abraham bought from the sons of Heth. There Abraham is buried along with Sarah his wife.

¹¹ After Abraham's death, God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac lived near Beer-lahai-roi.

¹² Now these are the genealogies of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian slave-girl, bore to Abraham.¹³ These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names according to their descendants: Ishmael's firstborn, Nebaioth, then Kedar, Ad-

beel, Mibsam, ¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵ Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedem. ¹⁶ These are Ishmael's sons and these are their names, by their unwalled and walled settlements, twelve princes according to their clans. ¹⁷ These are the years of Ishmael's life: 137 years. He breathed his last, died and was gathered to his peoples. ¹⁸ Then they dwelled from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria. Over against all his brothers he fell.

Parashat Toledot

Esau and Jacob

¹⁹ Now these are the genealogies of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham fathered Isaac. ²⁰ Isaac was 40 years old when he took for himself Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. ²¹ Isaac prayed to ADONAI on behalf of his wife because she was barren. ADONAI answered his plea and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.

²² But the children struggled with one another inside her, and she said, "If it's like this, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of ADONAI. ²³ ADONAI said to her:

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from your body
will be separated.

One people will be stronger
than the other people,
but the older will serve the younger."

²⁴ When her time came to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ Now the first came out reddish, all of him was like a fur coat, and they named him Esau. ²⁶ Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding onto Esau's heel—so he was named Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when he fathered them.

²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau became a man knowledgeable in hunting, an outdoorsman, while Jacob was a mild man, remaining in tents. ²⁸ Now Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for wild game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹ Now Jacob cooked a stew. When Esau came in from the field, he was exhausted, ³⁰ so Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me some of this really red stuff, because I'm exhausted"—that is why he is called Edom.

³¹ So Jacob said, "Sell your birthright to me today."

³² Esau said, "Look, I'm about to die. Of whatever use is this to me—a birthright?"

³³ Jacob said, "Make a pledge to me now."

So he made a pledge to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ^{†34} Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright.

Confirming the Covenant with Isaac

26 Now there was a famine in the land—aside from the previous famine that happened in Abraham's days. So Isaac went to King Abimelech of the Philistines, to Gerar. ² Then ADONAI appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land about which I tell you. ³ Live as an outsider in this land and I will be with you and bless you—for to you and to your seed I give all these lands—and I will confirm my pledge that I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴ I will multiply your seed like the stars of the sky and I will give your seed all these lands. And in your seed all the nations of the earth will continually be blessed, ⁵ because Abraham listened to My voice and kept My charge, My *mitzvot*, My decrees, and My instructions." ⁶ So Isaac stayed in Gerar.

⁷ Now the men of the place asked about his wife. So he said, "She is my sister," because he was afraid to say, "my wife"—"or else the men of the place would kill me on account of Rebekah, because she's good looking."

⁸ Now after he had been there for a long time, King Abimelech of the Philistines peered down through the window and saw, behold, Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah. ⁹ So Abimelech called Isaac and said, "So in fact she's your wife! Now how could you say, 'She's my sister'?"

Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Or else I might die because of her.'"

¹⁰ Then Abimelech said, "What is it that you've done to us? One of the people could have easily slept with your wife and you would've brought guilt on us."

¹¹ So Abimelech commanded all the people saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife will surely die!"

ADONAI Blesses Isaac

¹² Then Isaac sowed in that land and in that year reaped a hundredfold. ADONAI blessed him ¹³ and the man became great and continued to become greater until he became very great. ¹⁴ He acquired livestock of sheep and livestock of cattle, and numerous servants. Then the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵ All the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of his father Abraham the Philistines stopped up and filled with dirt. ¹⁶ So Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much more powerful than us."

¹⁷ So Isaac departed from there, camped in the Valley of Gerar and dwelled there. ¹⁸ Then Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of his father Abraham—the Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham's death. He gave them the same names that his father had given them. ¹⁹ Then Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a well of living water there. ²⁰ But the shepherds of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's shepherds saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Quarrel, because they quarreled with

† cf. Heb. 12:16.

him. ²¹ Then he dug another well and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Accusation. ²² Then he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he named it Wide Spaces and said, "Because now *ADONAI* has created wide spaces for us and we will be fruitful in the land."

²³ He went up from there to Beer-sheba. ²⁴ *ADONAI* appeared to him that night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you, and I will bless you and multiply your seed for the sake of Abraham my servant."

²⁵ So he built an altar there and called on the Name of *ADONAI*. He pitched his tent there and Isaac's servants hollowed out a well there.

Covenant of Isaac and Abimelech

²⁶ Now Abimelech went to him from Gerar along with Achuzzat his friend and Phicol the commander of his army. ²⁷ Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and sent me away from you?"

²⁸ They said, "We've clearly seen that *ADONAI* has been with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an agreement between us—between us and you—and let us make a covenant with you: ²⁹ that you will do us no harm, just as we haven't touched you and just as we did nothing to you but good, and sent you away in *shalom*. You are now blessed by *ADONAI*.'"

³⁰ Then he made a feast for them and they ate and drank. ³¹ Then they got up early in the morning and made a pledge, each to his brother. Then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in *shalom*.

³² Now it happened that on that day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they dug, and said to him, "We've found water." ³³ So he called it Pledge. That is why the city's name is Beer-sheba to this day.

³⁴ When Esau was 40 years old, he took as wife Judith the daughter of Be-eri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. ³⁵ But they caused a bitterness of spirit for Isaac and Rebekah.

Jacob Tricks Isaac

27 Now it was when Isaac grew old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called Esau his elder son, and said to him, "My son."

"Here I am," he said to him.

² "Look, I'm old," he said. "I don't know the day of my death. ³ So now, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt me some game. ⁴ Then prepare me a delicious meal that I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die."

⁵ Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac was speaking to Esau his son. So while Esau went to the field to hunt game to bring in, ⁶ Rebekah said to Jacob her son, "Look, I heard your father speaking to your brother Esau saying, ⁷ 'Bring me some game and prepare

me a delicious meal that I may eat and bless you in *ADONAI*'s presence before my death.' ⁸ So now, my son, listen to my voice, to what I am commanding you. ⁹ Go now to the flock and bring me two good young goats from there, so that I may prepare them as a delicious meal for your father—that he'll love. ¹⁰ Then you'll bring it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before his death."

¹¹ But Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "Look, my brother Esau is a hairy man, but I'm a smooth man.

¹² Perhaps my father will touch me, and he'll take me for a mocker, and I'll bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing."

¹³ Then his mother said to him, "Let your curse fall on me, my son. Just listen to me, and go, get them for me."

¹⁴ So he went and got them, and brought them to his mother, and his mother prepared a delicious meal that his father would love. ¹⁵ Rebekah also took her elder son Esau's favorite clothes that were with her in the house, and she put them on her younger son Jacob, ¹⁶ along with the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the hairless part of his neck. ¹⁷ She put the delicious meal and the bread that she had prepared in the hand of Jacob her son.

¹⁸ Then he came to his father and said, "My father."

And he said, "I'm here. Who are you, my son?"

¹⁹ Then Jacob said to his father, "I'm your firstborn, Esau. I've done just what you said to me. Sit up, please, and eat some of my wild game so that your soul may bless me."

²⁰ Then Isaac said to his son, "How in the world were you able to find it so quickly, my son?"

He said, "Because *ADONAI* your God made it happen for me."

²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come closer so I can feel you my son—whether or not you really are my son Esau."

²² So Jacob came closer to his father Isaac, and he felt him. Then he said, "The voice is Jacob's voice but the hands are Esau's hands." ²³ He did not recognize him because his hands were like the hairy hands of his brother Esau. So he blessed him. ²⁴ But he said, "Are you really my son Esau?"

So he said, "I am."

²⁵ Then he said, "Bring it to me and I'll eat some of my son's wild game, so that my soul may bless you." So he brought it to him and he ate, and he brought him wine and he drank.

²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come closer and kiss me my son." ²⁷ So he came closer and kissed him. When he smelled the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, "Behold, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that *ADONAI* has blessed.

²⁸ May God give you—
from the dew of the sky

and from the fatness of the land—
an abundance of grain and new wine.

²⁹ May peoples serve you
and may nations bow down to you.
Be master over your brothers.
May your mother's sons bow down to you.
May those who curse you be cursed
and may those who bless you be blessed."

³⁰ No sooner had Isaac finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had just gone out from his father Isaac's presence, than Esau his brother came in from his hunting.
³¹ Then he also prepared a delicious meal and brought it to his father, and he said to his father, "Let my father get up and eat of his son's wild game that your soul may bless me."

³² His father Isaac said, "Who are you?"
And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."

³³ Then Isaac trembled with intense trembling and said, "Who was it then that hunted wild game and brought it to me? I ate it all just before you came and I blessed him—and yes, he will be blessed."

³⁴ When Esau heard his father's words, he shouted with an intensely bitter groan. Then he said to his father, "Bless me, me too, my father!"

³⁵ Then he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing."

³⁶ He said, "Is this why he was named Jacob—since he's tricked me twice already? My birthright he's taken. Look! Now he's taken my blessing!" Then he said, "Haven't you saved a blessing for me?"

³⁷ Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Behold, I've made him master over you, and all your brothers I've given to him as servants. I've provided him with grain and new wine. What then can I do for you, my son?"

³⁸ Esau said to his father, "Do you just have one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

³⁹ Then Isaac his father said to him,
"Behold, away from the land's fatness shall your dwelling be,

away from the dew of the sky above.

⁴⁰ By your sword shall you live,
and your brother shall you serve.
But when you tear yourself loose,
you will tear his yoke off your neck."

⁴¹ So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, "Let the time for mourning my father draw near, so that I can kill my brother Jacob!"

⁴² Now to Rebekah was reported the words of Esau her elder son. So she sent and called for Jacob her younger son, and said to him, "Look, your brother Esau is consoling himself about you with the thought of killing you. ⁴³ So now my son, listen to my voice. Get up—flee to Laban my brother in Haran! ⁴⁴ Then stay with him a few days, until your brother's rage subsides, ⁴⁵ until your brother's rage turns away from you

and he forgets what you've done to him. Then I'll send for you and get you back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

⁴⁶ Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm disgusted with my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth like these women, from the daughters of the land what is life to me?"

Jacob Sent to Laban

28 So Isaac called for Jacob, blessed him, commanded him and said to him, "Don't take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. ² Get up, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take for yourself a wife from there, from the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. ³ Now may *El Shaddai* bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you so that you will become an assembly of peoples. ⁴ And may he give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your seed with you that you may take possession of the land of your sojourn, which God gave to Abraham."

⁵ Then Isaac sent Jacob away and he went toward Paddan-aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau. ⁶ Now Esau saw that Isaac blessed Jacob when he sent him to Paddan-aram to take for himself a wife from there, when he blessed him and commanded him saying, "Don't take a wife from the daughters of Canaan." ⁷ Jacob listened to his father Isaac and to his mother and went toward Paddan-aram. ⁸ Then Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were contemptible in his father Isaac's eyes. ⁹ So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, Nebaioth's sister, for his wife, besides his other wives.

Parashat Vayetze

Jacob's Ladder From Heaven

¹⁰ Then Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ He happened upon a certain place and spent the night there, for the sun had set. So he took one of the stones from the place and put it by his head and lay down in that place. ¹² He dreamed: All of a sudden, there was a stairway set up on the earth and its top reaching to the heavens—and behold, angels of God going up and down on it! ¹³ Surprisingly, *ADONAI* was standing on top of it † and He said, "I am *ADONAI*, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your seed. ¹⁴ Your seed will be as the dust of the land, and you will burst forth to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed—and in your seed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I

† Or, above him next to him

will not forsake you until I have done what I promised you."

¹⁶ Jacob woke up from his sleep and said, "Undoubtedly, *ADONAI* is in this place—and I was unaware." ¹⁷ So he was afraid and said, "How fearsome this place is! This is none other than the House of God—this must be the gate of heaven!"

¹⁸ Early in the morning Jacob got up and took the stone, which he had placed by his head, and set it up as a memorial stone and poured oil on top of it. ¹⁹ He called the name of that place Beth-El (though originally the city's name was Luz). ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow saying, "If God will be with me and watch over me on this way that I am going, and provide me food to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹ and I return in *shalom* to my father's house, then *ADONAI* will be my God. ²² So this stone which I set up as a memorial stone will become God's House, and of everything You provide me I will definitely give a tenth of it to You."

Jacob Loves Rachel

29 Then Jacob lifted up his feet and went to the land of the peoples of the east. ² When he looked, suddenly, there was a well in the field, and there were three herds of sheep resting by it. (For from that well they would water the flocks. The stone on the mouth of the well was large. ³ When all the herds gathered there, they would roll away the stone from the mouth of the well and water the flocks, and put the stone back to its place over the mouth of the well.)

⁴ Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?"

"We're from Haran," they said.

⁵ So he said to them, "Do you know Laban, Nahor's son?"

They said, "We know."

⁶ He said to them, "Is he well?"

"Well," they said. "Look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the flock."

⁷ He said, "Since it's still the middle of the day, it's not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the flock and let them go and graze."

⁸ But they said, "We can't, not until all the flocks are gathered and the stone is rolled away from the mouth of the well—then we water the flock."

⁹ While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with the flock that belonged to her father (for she was a shepherdess). ¹⁰ Now when Jacob saw Rachel (the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother), Jacob stepped forward and 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 lifted up his voice and wept. ¹² Then Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father.

¹³ Now when Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, hugged and kissed

him, and brought him to his house. Then he told Laban all these things. ¹⁴ Laban said to him, "Surely you are my own bone and flesh." And he stayed with him for a month.

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, "Should you, my relative, serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?"

¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. ¹⁸ Jacob was in love with Rachel, so he said, "Let me serve you for seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."

¹⁹ Laban said, "It's better that I give her to you than I give her to another man! Stay with me." ²⁰ So Jacob worked for Rachel seven years, yet in his eyes it was like a few days, because of his love for her.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are completed, so I may go to her." ²² So Laban gathered all the men of the place and he prepared a feast. ²³ When it was evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to him, and he went to her.

²⁴ Laban also gave her Zilpah, his female servant, to his daughter Leah as a female servant.

²⁵ So when it was morning, behold there she was, Leah! So he said to Laban, "What is this you've done to me? Wasn't it for Rachel that I worked with you? So why have you deceived me?"

²⁶ But Laban said, "It's not done so in our place—to give the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the bridal week for this one. Then we'll also give you this other—for work that you'll do with me—another seven years more."

²⁸ So Jacob did; he also completed this one's bridal week. Then he gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. ²⁹ Laban also gave his daughter Rachel his female servant Bilhah, to be a servant for her.

³⁰ Jacob also went to Rachel and indeed loved Rachel more than Leah. So he served with him for yet another seven years.

Rivalry Continues With Wives

³¹ Now *ADONAI* saw that Leah was unloved, so he opened her womb; but Rachel was unable to conceive. ³² Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son and named him Reuben because she said, "For *ADONAI* has seen my affliction. Surely now my husband will love me." ³³ Then she became pregnant again and gave birth to a son, and said, "For *ADONAI* heard that I am hated, so He's given me this one also," and she named him Simeon. ³⁴ Then she became pregnant again and gave birth to a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will join himself to me because I've given birth to three sons for him." For this reason he was named Levi. ³⁵ Then she became pregnant again and gave birth to a son and said, "This time I praise *ADONAI*." For this reason she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.

30 When Rachel saw that she bore no children for Jacob, Rachel was jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me sons—if there are none, I'll die!"

² But Jacob became furious with Rachel and said, "Am I, instead of God, the one who withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

³ So she said, "Here's my maid-servant Bilhah. Go to her and let her give birth on my knees, so that from her I may also build a family." ⁴ Then she gave her maid-servant Bilhah to him for a wife, and Jacob went to her. ⁵ Bilhah became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Jacob. ⁶ So Rachel said, "God has judged my cause and also heard my voice—and given me a son." Therefore she named him Dan. ⁷ Then Rachel's female servant became pregnant again and gave birth to a second son for Jacob. ⁸ So Rachel said, "I've surely wrestled greatly with my sister — also I've won." So she named him Naphtali.

⁹ Now Leah saw that she stopped having children, so she took Zilpah her female servant and gave her to Jacob as a wife. ¹⁰ Then Zilpah, Leah's female servant, gave birth to a son for Jacob. ¹¹ Leah said, "How fortunate!" So she named him Gad. ¹² Then Zilpah, Leah's female servant, gave birth to a second son for Jacob. ¹³ Leah said, "How happy am I, for daughters have called me happy." So she named him Asher.

¹⁴ Now during the days of the wheat harvest, Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field and he brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."
†

¹⁵ But she said to her, "Wasn't it enough that you took my husband away? You'd also take away my son's mandrakes?"

So Rachel said, "That being so, let him lie with you tonight, in exchange for your son's mandrakes."

¹⁶ So when Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him, and she said, "You must come to me. For I've actually hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that very night.

¹⁷ Moreover, God heard Leah, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob. ¹⁸ Leah said, "God gave me my reward †† because I gave my female servant to my husband." So she named him Issachar. ¹⁹ Then Leah became pregnant again and gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob. ²⁰ Leah said, "God has presented me a good gift. This time my husband will honor me for I've borne six sons for him." So she named him Zebulun. ²¹ Afterwards she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

²² Then God remembered Rachel and God listened to her and opened her womb. ²³ Then she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. So she said, "God has taken away my disgrace." ²⁴ She named him Joseph saying, "May *ADONAI* add another son for me."

† Or, *passion posies*
wages

love, lover †† Or,

Jacob Outwits Laban

²⁵ Now it was after Rachel gave birth to Joseph that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away so that I can go to my place and to my land. ²⁶ Give me my wives and my children for whom I've served you, and let me go. For you yourself know my labor—that I've served you."

²⁷ But Laban said to him, "If I've found favor in your eyes—I've looked for good omens, and *ADONAI* has blessed me because of you." ²⁸ Moreover he said, "Name your own price and I'll pay it."

²⁹ Then he said to him, "You yourself know how I've served you and how your livestock fared with me. ³⁰ For you had very little before I came, and it has been busting at the seams in abundance. So *ADONAI* blessed you with my every step. So now, when am I myself going to make something for my household also?"

³¹ Then he said, "What can I pay you?"

Jacob said, "You don't need to pay me anything. If you will do this one thing for me, I will shepherd your flock again and watch it: ³² let me pass through your flock today, removing every colorfully spotted lamb from there and every dark-colored lamb among the sheep as well as the colorfully spotted among the goats—and that will be my salary. ³³ So tomorrow my honesty will testify on my behalf when you come to check on my salary you agreed to. Every one that isn't colorfully spotted among the goats or dark-colored among the sheep with me, it is stolen."

³⁴ So Laban said, "All right! May it be according to your word." ³⁵ On that day he removed the colorfully striped and colorful billy goats as well as all the colorfully spotted goats—every one with white on it—and every dark-colored one among the lambs, and he put them in the hand of his sons. ³⁶ Then he put a three-day's journey between them and Jacob, while Jacob was shepherding Laban's remaining flocks.

³⁷ But Jacob took fresh white poplar, almond, and plane tree branches, peeled away white stripped sections on them, exposing the white of the branches. ³⁸ Then he set the branches he had peeled in front of the flocks in the drinking troughs and watering channels where the flocks come to drink. Since they were in heat when they came to drink, ³⁹ the flocks mated near the branches, and the flocks gave birth to striped, spotted and colorful ones. ⁴⁰ Now Jacob separated the lambs and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped ones as well as all the dark-colored ones among Laban's flocks. Then he set aside the herds for himself and did not put them with Laban's flocks. ⁴¹ Whenever the strong flocks mated, Jacob put the branches in the watering troughs before the eyes of the flocks, to have them mate near the branches.

⁴² But when the flocks were sickly, he did not put the branches down—so the sickly ones became Laban's and the stronger ones became Jacob's. ⁴³ And the man grew exceedingly prosperous and had numerous

flocks, along with female and male servants, camels and donkeys.

Jacob Secretly Leaves Laban

31 Now Jacob heard the words Laban's sons were saying, "Jacob has taken everything that belongs to our father, and from what belongs to our father he has made all these riches." ² Then Jacob saw Laban's face, and he noticed that his expression wasn't the same as it was just a day or two before. ³ Then *ADONAI* said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you."

⁴ So Jacob sent and called for Rachel and Leah to come to the field, to his flock. ⁵ He said to them, "I can see by your father's face that his expression isn't the same as it was just a day or two ago. But the God of my father has been with me. ⁶ Now you yourselves know that I've served your father with all my strength. ⁷ Yet your father has fooled around with me and has changed my salary ten times—but God hasn't allowed him to harm me. ⁸ If he would say, 'the spotted ones will be your salary,' then the flocks would give birth to spotted ones. Or if he would say, 'the striped ones will be your salary,' then all the flocks would give birth to striped ones. ⁹ So God has taken away your father's livestock and has given them to me. ¹⁰ Now it happened when the flocks were in heat that I lifted up my eyes and saw, in a dream, behold, the males going up to the flocks were striped, spotted and speckled. ¹¹ Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Hineni.' ¹² He said, 'Lift up your eyes and see that all the males going up to the flocks are striped, spotted and speckled. For I have seen everything Laban has done to you. ¹³ I am the God of Beth-El where you anointed a memorial stone, where you made a vow to Me. Get up now and leave this land, and return to the land of your relatives.'"

¹⁴ Then Rachel answered along with Leah and they said to him, "Is there still a portion and inheritance for us in our father's house? ¹⁵ Aren't we considered foreigners to him? For he has sold us and has also completely used up our bridal price. ¹⁶ For all the riches that God has taken away from our father is for us and for our children. So now, everything God said to you, do it!"

¹⁷ Then Jacob got up and put his children and wives on camels. ¹⁸ He drove away all his livestock and all his possessions that he had acquired—the livestock in his possession that he acquired in Paddan-aram—to go to his father Isaac, to the land of Canaan.

¹⁹ But while Laban went to shear his flocks, Rachel stole the idols that belonged to her father, ²⁰ while Jacob stole the heart from Laban the Aramean by not telling him that he was fleeing. ²¹ He himself fled with everything that belonged to him, and he got up and crossed the River, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

Laban Confronts Jacob and Makes Covenant

²² When Laban was told on the third day after Jacob had fled, ²³ he took his relatives with him and pursued him a seven days' journey. Then he overtook him in the hill country of Gilead. ²⁴ But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, "Watch yourself—lest you say anything to Jacob, good or bad."

²⁵ So Laban caught up to Jacob. (Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, so Laban and his brothers pitched their tents in the hill country of Gilead as well). ²⁶ Then Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you've stolen my heart and have driven my daughters away like captives of the sword? ²⁷ Why did you secretly flee away, and steal from me? Why didn't you tell me, so I could send you away with joy and with songs, with tambourines and with lyres? ²⁸ And you didn't even let me kiss my sons and daughters!"

"Now, you've behaved foolishly. ²⁹ It is in the power of my hand to do evil with you, but yesterday the God of your fathers spoke to me, saying, 'Watch yourself—lest you say anything to Jacob, good or bad.' ³⁰ So now, when you up and left because you really missed your father's house, why did you steal my gods?"

³¹ In response, Jacob said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought, 'Suppose you snatch your daughters away from me.' ³² Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In front of our relatives, identify whatever is yours that is with me, and take it back." (But Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.)

³³ So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and Leah's tent and into the tent of the two maids, but he found nothing. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent. ³⁴ (Now Rachel had taken the idols, put them in the camel's saddlebag and sat on them.) So Laban felt around the entire tent but did not find them. ³⁵ She said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for I am having the way of women." So he searched but did not find the idols.

³⁶ Then Jacob got angry and argued with Laban. Jacob answered and said to Laban, "What's my crime? What's my sin that you've hotly pursued me? ³⁷ For you've felt through all my things. What did you find? Any of your household things? Put them here, in front of my relatives and yours—so they can decide between the two of us. ³⁸ These past twenty years I've been with you, your ewes and female goats have never miscarried, and I've never eaten the rams of your flock. ³⁹ I didn't bring you animals torn by wild beasts. I myself would bear the loss. You would require it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. ⁴⁰ I was consumed by heat during the day, consumed by frost during the night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. ⁴¹ This is how it's been for me twenty years in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two

daughters, and six years for your flocks—and you changed my salary ten times! ⁴² Had I not had the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, you would have sent me away empty-handed now. But God saw my misery and the toil of my hands and last night He became the Judge.”

⁴³ In response Laban said to Jacob, “The daughters are my daughters, and the sons are my sons, and the flocks are my flocks. Everything you see is mine. But what can I do for these, my daughters, today, or for their sons to whom they’ve given birth? ⁴⁴ So now, come, let’s make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.”

⁴⁵ So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar, ⁴⁶ and Jacob said to his relatives, “Gather stones.” So they took the stones and made a pile. Then they ate there on the pile. ⁴⁷ Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha and Jacob called it Gal-ed. ⁴⁸ And Laban said, “This pile is a witness between me and you today.” That is why its name is Gal-ed, ⁴⁹ or Mizpah, for he said, “Let *ADONAI* keep watch between you and me when we are out of one another’s sight. ⁵⁰ If you mistreat my daughters, and if you take wives besides my daughters, though no one is with us, look! God is the witness between you and me.”

⁵¹ Laban said further to Jacob, “Behold, this pile, and this pillar which I’ve set up between you and me: ⁵² this pile serves as a witness, that I won’t pass by this pillar to go to you, and that you won’t pass by this pillar and this pillar to go to me—with evil intent. ⁵³ May the God of Abraham and the gods of Nahor, the gods of their father, judge between us.”

Jacob also made an oath by the fear of his father Isaac. ⁵⁴ Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain and he invited his relatives to eat bread. So they ate bread and spent the night on the mountain.

32 (31:55) Early in the morning Laban got up, kissed his grandchildren and daughters and blessed them. Then Laban left and returned to his place. ² (1) While Jacob left on his way, the angels of God met him. ³ (2) Then Jacob said when he saw them, “This is God’s camp,” and he named that place Mahanaim.

Parashat Vayishlach

Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

⁴ (3) Then Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau, to the land of Seir, the field of Edom. ⁵ (4) He also commanded them saying, “This is what you should say to my lord, to Esau: ‘This is what your servant Jacob said: I’ve been staying with Laban, and have lingered until now. ⁶ (5) Now I’ve come to possess oxen and donkeys, flocks, male servants and female servants. I sent word to tell my lord, in order to find favor in your eyes.’”

⁷ (6) The messengers returned to Jacob saying, “We went to your brother, to Esau, and he’s also coming out to meet you—and 400 men with him.”

⁸ (7) So Jacob became extremely afraid and distressed. He divided the people with him, along with the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, ⁹ (8) for he thought, “If Esau comes to one camp and strikes it, the camp that’s left will escape.”

¹⁰ (9) Then Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, *ADONAI*, who said to me, ‘Return to your land and to your relatives and I will do good with you.’ ¹¹ (10) I am unworthy of all the proofs of mercy and of all the dependability that you have shown to your servant. For with only my staff I crossed over this Jordan, and now I’ve become two camps. ¹² (11) Deliver me, please, from my brother’s hand, from Esau’s hand, for I’m afraid of him that he’ll come and strike me—the mothers with the children. ¹³ (12) You Yourself said, ‘I will most certainly do good with you, and will make your seed like the sand of the sea that cannot be counted because of its abundance.’”

¹⁴ (13) So he stayed overnight there. Then from all that had come into his possession he took an offering for Esau his brother: ¹⁵ (14) 200 female goats, 20 billy goats, 200 ewes, 20 rams, ¹⁶ (15) 30 milking camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. ¹⁷ (16) He put them in the hands of his servants, each herd by itself, and he said to his servants, “Pass over before me, and put a gap between each of the herds.” ¹⁸ (17) Then he commanded the first one saying, “When my brother Esau meets you and asks you saying, ‘To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and to whom do all these before you belong?’ ¹⁹ (18) then you are to say, ‘To your servant, to Jacob—it’s an offering sent to my lord, to Esau. And look, he’s also behind us.’” ²⁰ (19) And he also commanded the second one, the third one, and all those who were going behind the flocks, saying, “Say the same exact thing to Esau when you find him. ²¹ (20) Then you are to say, ‘Look, your servant Jacob is also behind us.’” For he thought, “Let me appease him with the offering that goes ahead of me, and afterward see his face, perhaps he’ll lift up my face.” ²² (21) So the offering passed over ahead of him, while he spent that night in the camp.

²³ (22) Then he got up that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of the Jabbok. ²⁴ (23) He took them and sent them across the stream, and he sent across whatever he had.

Jacob Wrestles With God

²⁵ (24) So Jacob remained all by himself. Then a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. ²⁶ (25) When He saw that He had not overcome him, He struck the socket of his hip, so He dislocated the sock-

† Or, rolled around in the dust

et of Jacob's hip when He wrestled with him. ²⁷ (26) Then He said, "Let Me go, for the dawn has broken."

But he said, "I won't let You go unless You bless me."

²⁸ (27) Then He said to him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he said.

²⁹ (28) Then He said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but rather Israel, for you have struggled with God and with men, and you have overcome."

³⁰ (29) Then Jacob asked and said, "Please tell me Your name."

But He said, "What's this—you are asking My name?" Then He blessed him there.

³¹ (30) So Jacob named the place Peniel, "for I've seen God face to face, and my life has been spared."

³² (31) Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed by Peniel—limping because of his hip. ³³ (32) That is why the children of Israel do not eat the tendon of the hip socket, to this very day, because He struck the socket of Jacob's thigh on the tendon of the hip.

Jacob Meets Esau

33 Then Jacob glanced up and saw, behold, there was Esau coming—and 400 men with him. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. ² He put the female servants and their children first, then Leah and her children behind them, then Rachel and Joseph behind them. ³ But he himself passed on ahead of them, and bowed to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother.

⁴ But Esau ran to meet him, hugged him, fell on his neck and kissed him—and they wept. ⁵ His eyes glanced up and he saw the women and the children, and said, "Who are these with you?"

"The children whom God has graciously given your servant," he said. ⁶ Then the female servants approached, they and their children, and bowed down. ⁷ Leah also approached, along with her children, and they bowed down, and finally, Joseph and Rachel approached and bowed down.

⁸ "What do you mean by this whole caravan that I've met?"

So he said, "To find favor in your eyes, my lord."

⁹ But Esau said, "I have plenty! O my brother, do keep all that belongs to you."

¹⁰ Yet Jacob said, "No, please! If I have found favor in your eyes, then you will take my offering from my hand. For this is the reason I've seen your face—it is like seeing the face of God—and you've accepted me! ¹¹ Please, take my blessing that was brought to you, because God has been gracious to me, and because I have everything." So he kept urging him until he accepted.

¹² Then he said, "Let's journey and be on our way, and I'll go ahead of you." ¹³ He continued, "My lord knows that the children are tender, and that the flocks and the cattle in my care are nursing. So if they were pushed hard just one day, all the flocks would die.

¹⁴ Please, let my lord pass on ahead of your servant,

and I'll move on further gradually, at a pace suited to the livestock that are before me and at a pace suited to the children, until I come to my lord in Seir."

¹⁵ Then Esau said, "Please let me leave with you some of the people who are with me."

But he said, "What's this? Let me find favor in my lord's eyes."

¹⁶ So on that day Esau returned on his way to Seir, ¹⁷ but Jacob journeyed to Sukkot and built a house for himself, and for his livestock he made booths. That is the reason that place is called *Sukkot*.

¹⁸ So Jacob arrived in *shalom* to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram, and camped right in front of the city. ¹⁹ He purchased the portion of the field there where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for 100 pieces of money. ²⁰ There he set up an altar, and he called it, *El* is Israel's God.

Dinah Defiled by Shechem

34 Now Dinah, Leah's daughter whom she bore for Jacob, went out to look at the daughters of the land. ² When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he took her and lay with her and raped her. ³ But his soul clung to Dinah, Jacob's daughter, and he loved the young woman and spoke reassuringly to the young woman. ⁴ So Shechem said to his father Hamor saying, "Get me this girl for a wife."

⁵ Now Jacob had heard that he had defiled his daughter Dinah while his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob kept quiet until they came in. ⁶ Meanwhile Shechem's father Hamor went out to Jacob in order to speak with him. ⁷ Jacob's sons had already come in from the field when they heard, and the men were deeply grieved and furious, because he had committed a vile deed in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, which ought never to be done.

⁸ But Hamor spoke with them saying, "My son Shechem—he's very attached to your daughter. Please give her to him for a wife. ⁹ Intermarry with us. You can give your daughters to us, and you can take our daughters for yourselves. ¹⁰ You can live with us, and the land will be open to you: live in it, move about freely in it, and settle down in it."

¹¹ Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Would that I find favor in your eyes! Whatever you say to me I'll give. ¹² Set the dowry and the presents as high as you like and I'll give whatever you say to me. But give me the young woman as a wife."

¹³ But Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully as they spoke, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. ¹⁴ They said to them, "We can't do this thing—give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised—for this is a disgrace to us. ¹⁵ Only by this will we consent to you: if you will become like us, by circumcising every male. ¹⁶ Then we'll give you our daughters and take your daughters for ourselves, and

live with you, and become one people. ¹⁷ But if you don't listen to us and be circumcised, we'll take our daughter and leave."

¹⁸ Now their words seemed good to Hamor as well as Hamor's son Shechem. ¹⁹ So the young man did not hesitate to do it, since he delighted in Jacob's daughter. Now he was honored above everyone else in his father's house. ²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem came into the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying: ²¹ "These men are enjoying a peaceful relationship with us and they are living in the land and moving about freely in it. As for the land, look, it's spread out on both sides before us. We can take their daughters to be our wives, and we can give our daughters to them. ²² But by this did these men consent to us, to live with us and to become one people—when all our males are circumcised as they are circumcised. ²³ Their livestock and their possessions: won't they be ours? Only let us consent to them so that they'll live with us."

²⁴ Now everyone who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, every one who went out the gate of his city. ²⁵ Then on the third day while they were in pain, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came against the city undisturbed and killed every male. ²⁶ Hamor and his son Shechem they killed with the sword, then took Dinah from Shechem's house and left. ²⁷ Jacob's sons came upon the slain and plundered the city because they defiled their sister. ²⁸ They took their flocks, their cattle and their donkeys, those that were in the city as well as those that were in the field. ²⁹ All their wealth, their little children, and their wives they captured and plundered, as well as everything that was in the houses.

³⁰ But Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You've brought trouble on me, making me a stench among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites. I am but a few men—they'll gather against me and strike me—then I'll be destroyed, my household and I."

³¹ But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

Rededication at Beth-El

35 Then God said to Jacob, "Get up! Go up to Beth-El and stay there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."

² So Jacob said to his household and to everyone who was with him, "Get rid of the foreign gods that are among you. Cleanse yourselves and change your clothes. ³ Now let's get up and go up to Beth-El so that I can make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and has been with me in the way that I have gone."

⁴ So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods in their hand and the rings in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak tree near Shechem. ⁵ Then they journeyed, and the terror of God was on the cities that were around them, so they did not pursue Jacob's sons. ⁶ Then Jacob arrived at Luz in the land of Canaan (that is Beth-El), he and all the people who were with him. ⁷ He built an altar there and called the place *El-Beth-El* because God had revealed Himself to him there when he fled from the presence of his brother.

⁸ Then Rebekah's nurse Deborah died, and was buried below Beth-El, under the oak—so it was named Oak of Weeping.

⁹ God appeared to Jacob again, after he returned from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him:

"Your name was Jacob.

No longer will your name be Jacob, for your name will be Israel."

So He named him Israel.

¹¹ God also said to him:

"I am *El Shaddai*.

Be fruitful and multiply.

A nation and an assembly of nations will come from you.

From your loins will come forth kings.

¹² The land that I gave to Abraham and to Isaac—

I give it to you, and to your seed after you

I will give the land."

¹³ Then God went up from him at the place where He had spoken with him. ¹⁴ Jacob set up a memorial stone in the place where He had spoken with him—a stone pillar—and he poured a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. ¹⁵ Jacob named the place where God spoke with him Beth-El.

Rachel's Death in Childbirth

¹⁶ Then they traveled from Beth-El, and while they were still a distance from entering Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth, but her labor was difficult. ¹⁷ While she was struggling to give birth, the midwife said to her, "Don't be afraid, for this is also a son for you."

¹⁸ Now as her soul was departing (for she died), she named him Ben-Oni, but his father named him Benjamin. ¹⁹ Then Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Beth-Lehem). ²⁰ Jacob set up a memorial stone over her grave. (It is the memorial stone over Rachel's grave to this day.)

Israel Returns to Isaac

²¹ Then Israel journeyed on and set up his tent beyond the tower of Eder. ²² While Israel was living in that land, Reuben went and slept with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard about it.

Now Jacob had twelve sons. ²³ Leah's sons were Jacob's firstborn Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. ²⁴ Rachel's sons were Joseph and Ben-

jamin. ²⁵ The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's female servant, were Dan and Naphtali, ²⁶ and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's female servant, were Gad and Asher. These are Jacob's sons, who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

²⁷ Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had stayed.

²⁸ Now Isaac's days were 180 years. ²⁹ Then Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his peoples, old and full of days. So his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Esau Fathers the Edomites

36 Now these are the genealogies of Esau (that is, Edom). ² Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite, Oholibamah daughter of Anah, daughter of Tzivion the Hivite, ³ and Basemath daughter of Ishmael, sister of Nebaioth. ⁴ Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, Basemath bore Reuel, ⁵ and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam and Korah. These were Esau's sons, who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters and all the people of his household, as well as his livestock, all his cattle, and all his possessions that he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to a land away from his brother Jacob. ⁷ For their possessions were too numerous for them to dwell together, and the land where they were residing was unable to support them because of their livestock. ⁸ So Esau lived in Mount Seir (Esau is Edom).

⁹ So these are the genealogies of Esau, the father of Edom in the hill country of Seir. ¹⁰ These are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz son of Esau's wife Adah and Reuel son of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam and Kenaz. ¹² Now Timna was a concubine to Esau's son Eliphaz, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These are the sons of Esau's wife Adah. ¹³ These are Reuel's sons: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were the sons of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹⁴ These were the sons of Oholibamah, daughter of Anah, daughter of Esau's wife Zibion—she bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam and Korah.

¹⁵ These are the chiefs from Esau's sons. The sons of Eliphaz, Esau's firstborn were chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz, ¹⁶ chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek. These are the chiefs from Eliphaz in the land of Edom. These are the sons of Adah. ¹⁷ These are the sons of Esau's son Reuel: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah. These are chiefs from Reuel in the land of Edom. These are the sons of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹⁸ These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah. These are the chiefs from Oholibamah, daughter of Esau's wife Anah. ¹⁹ These are Esau's sons, and these are their chiefs (that is, Edom).

²⁰ These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹ Dish-

hon, Ezer and Dishan. These are the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom. ²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam. Lotan's sister is Timna. ²³ These are Shobal's sons: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho and Onam. ²⁴ These are Zibeon's sons: Aiah and Anah (that is, the Anah who found the hot springs in the desert while he was pasturing the donkeys of his father Zibeon). ²⁵ These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah, Anah's daughter. ²⁶ These are Dishon's sons: Hemdan, Eshban, Itran and Cheran. ²⁷ These are Ezer's sons: Bilhan, Zaavan and Akan. ²⁸ These are Dishan's sons: Uz and Aran. ²⁹ These are the chiefs of the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Tzivion, chief Anah, ³⁰ chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan—these are the chiefs of the Horites according to their chiefly divisions in the land of Seir.

³¹ Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the sons of Israel.

³² Bela son of Beor reigned in Edom—the name of his city was Dinhabah. ³³ When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah reigned in his place. ³⁴ When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. ³⁵ When Husham died, Haddad son of Bedad, who struck down the Midianites in the field of Moab, reigned in his place—the name of his city was Avit. ³⁶ When Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah reigned in his place. ³⁷ When Samlah died, Shaul from Rehovot by the River reigned in his place. ³⁸ When Shaul died, Baal-hanan son of Achbor reigned in his place. ³⁹ When Baal-hanan son of Achbor died, Hadar reigned in his place—the name of his city is Pau, and his wife's name is Mehetabel, daughter of Matred, daughter of Me-zehab.

⁴⁰ Now these are the names of the chiefs from Esau according to their family divisions, according to their places, 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, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom according to their places of residence in the land of their possession. This is Esau, the father of Edom.

Parashat Vayeshev

Joseph, Favored Son

37 Now Jacob dwelled in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan. ² These are the genealogies of Jacob.

When Joseph was 17 years old (he was a youth), he was shepherding the flocks with his brothers—with the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah. Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.

³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his other sons because he was the son of his old age. So he had made him a long-sleeved tunic. ⁴ When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his

brothers, they hated him and could not speak to him in *shalom*.

⁵ Then Joseph dreamed a dream and told his brothers—and they hated him even more. ⁶ He said to them, “Please listen to this dream I dreamed. ⁷ There we were binding sheaves in the middle of the field. All of a sudden, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaf gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf.”

⁸ “Will you truly be a king over us?” his brothers said to him. “Will you really rule over us?” So they hated him even more because of his dreams and because of his words.

⁹ But then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers, saying, “I have just dreamed another dream. Suddenly, there was the sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowing down to me!” ¹⁰ He told it to his father as well as his brothers.

Then his father rebuked him and said to him, “What’s this dream you dreamed? Will we really come—your mother and I with your brothers—to bow down to the ground to you?” ¹¹ So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the speech in mind.

Joseph Betrayed

¹² Then his brothers went to graze their father’s flocks at Shechem. ¹³ Israel said to Joseph, “Aren’t your brothers grazing the flocks in Shechem? Come, let me send you to them.”

“Here I am,” he said to him.

¹⁴ Then he said to him, “Go now, and check on the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flocks and bring word back to me.”

So he sent him from the valley of Hebron and he went to Shechem. ¹⁵ A man found him there, wandering in the field, and the man asked him, “What are you looking for?”

¹⁶ “I’m looking for my brothers,” he said. “Please tell me where they’re grazing.”

¹⁷ The man said, “They moved on from here. For I heard them saying, ‘Let’s go to Dothan.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.

¹⁸ Now they saw him from a distance. Before he was close to them they plotted together against him in order to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another, “Here comes the master of dreams! ²⁰ Come on now! Let’s kill him and throw him into one of those pits, so we can say that an evil animal devoured him. Then let’s see what becomes of his dreams.”

²¹ But Reuben heard and rescued him out of their hands, saying, “We must not beat him to death.” ²² In order to rescue him from their hand and to return him to his father, Reuben said to them, “Don’t shed blood! Throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but don’t lay a hand on him!”

²³ So as soon as Joseph came up to his brothers they stripped Joseph of his tunic (the long sleeved tunic that he had on). ²⁴ Then they took him and threw him

into the pit. (Now the pit was empty, with no water in it.)

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat bread. When they looked up, behold, there was a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balsam, and myrrh—going to bring them down to Egypt.

²⁶ Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is there if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come on! ²⁷ Let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites. Let’s not lay our hand on him—since he’s our brother, our own flesh.” His brothers listened to him. ²⁸ When some men, Midianite merchants, passed by, they dragged Joseph up and out of the pit and they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for 20 pieces of silver, and they brought Joseph to Egypt. ²⁹ When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes. ³⁰ Then he returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone! And I—where should I go?”

³¹ So they took Joseph’s tunic, slaughtered a billy goat, and they dipped the tunic into the blood. ³² Then they sent the long-sleeved tunic, and it was brought to their father, and they said, “We found this. Do you recognize whether or not it is your son’s tunic?”

³³ He did recognize it and said, “My son’s tunic! An evil animal has devoured him! Joseph must be torn to pieces!” ³⁴ Jacob tore his clothing and put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. ³⁵ All his sons got up along with all his daughters to console him, but he refused to be comforted. He said, “For I will go down to *Sheol* to my son, mourning.” So his father kept weeping for him.

³⁶ Meanwhile the Midianites sold him into Egypt, to Potiphar an official of Pharaoh, the commander of the bodyguards.

Judah and Tamar

38 About that time Judah went down from his brothers and he camped near an Adullamite man, whose name was Hirah. ² There Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite man whose name was Shua, and he took her as wife and slept with her. ³ Then she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and he named him Er. ⁴ She became pregnant again and gave birth to a son, and she named him Onan. ⁵ She gave birth to yet another son and she called him Shelah. He was in Chezib when she gave birth to him.

⁶ Then Judah got a wife for Er, his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. ⁷ But Er, Judah’s firstborn, was evil in *ADONAI*’s eyes, so *ADONAI* put him to death. ⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, go to your brother’s wife to perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up a seed for your brother. ⁹ But Onan knew that the seed would not be his. So every time he went to his brother’s wife he would destroy it on the ground so as not to provide a seed for his brother. ¹⁰ What he did was evil in *ADONAI*’s eyes, so He put him to death also.

¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Stay as a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up," because he thought, "Otherwise he too might die, like his brothers." So Tamar went and stayed in her father's house.

¹² Now the days became many, and Shua's daughter, Judah's wife, died. After Judah consoled himself, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³ Then Tamar was told, "Look! Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his flocks." ¹⁴ And she removed her widow's clothes from herself, covered herself with a veil, wrapped herself, and sat by the entrance to the springs on the way to Timnah (for she saw that Shelah had grown up and she had not been given to him as a wife).

¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute because she had covered her face. ¹⁶ So he turned aside to her along the way and said, "Please let me sleep with you" (for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law).

"What," she asked, "will you give me to sleep with me?"

¹⁷ "I will send you a young goat from the flock," he said,

"Provided you give a pledge until you send it," she said.

¹⁸ "What kind of pledge shall I give you?" he asked.

"Your seal, and your cord, and your staff in your hand," she said. So he gave them to her and he slept with her, and she got pregnant by him. ¹⁹ After she got up and left, she removed her veil from herself and put on her widow's clothes.

²⁰ When Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite to take back the pledge from the woman's hand, he could not find her. ²¹ He asked the men of her area saying, "Where is the cult prostitute? She was at the springs along the way."

But they said, "There hasn't been a cult prostitute here."

²² So he returned to Judah and said, "I couldn't find her, and the people of that place also said, 'There hasn't been a cult prostitute here.'"

²³ Then Judah said, "Let her take them for herself, or we'll be held in contempt. Behold, I did send this young goat, but you couldn't find her."

²⁴ About three months later, Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has been a prostitute—look, she's even pregnant by prostitution."

"Bring her out!" Judah said, "and let her be burned."

²⁵ As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law saying, "I'm pregnant by the man to whom these things belong." Then she said, "Do you recognize whose these are—the seal, the cords and the staff?"

²⁶ Then Judah recognized them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I didn't give her to my son Shelah." He was not intimate with her again.

²⁷ Now when it was time for her to give birth, behold there were twins in her womb. ²⁸ While she was giving birth, one stuck out his hand, and the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it to his hand saying, "This one came out first." ²⁹ But as he was pulling his hand back in, behold, his brother came out. So she said, "How you have broken through! The breach is because of you." And he named him Perez. ³⁰ Afterward his brother, on whose hand was the scarlet thread, came out. And he named him Zerah.

Joseph Succeeds in Adversity

39 Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt. Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, commander of the bodyguards, bought him from the hand of the Ishmaelites, who had brought him down there. ² But *ADONAI* was with Joseph. So he became a successful man in the house of his master, the Egyptian. ³ His master saw that *ADONAI* was with him and that *ADONAI* made everything he set his hand to successful. ⁴ Joseph found favor in his eyes, so he served him as a personal servant and he made him an overseer over his household; everything that was his he entrusted into his hand. ⁵ From the time that he made him an overseer in his house and over everything that belonged to him, *ADONAI* blessed the Egyptian's house because of Joseph; *ADONAI*'s blessing was on everything that belonged to him, in the house and in the field. ⁶ So he released everything he owned into Joseph's hand. With him in charge, he did not think about anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and handsome in appearance.

⁷ Now after these things, the master's wife lifted up her eyes at Joseph and said, "Come, lie down with me!"

⁸ But he refused. "Look," he said to his master's wife, "my master doesn't think about anything in the house with me in charge, and everything that belongs to him he's entrusted into my hand. ⁹ No one in this house is greater than I, and he has withheld nothing from me—except you, because you are his wife. So how could I commit this great evil and sin against God?"

¹⁰ So whenever she spoke to Joseph, day after day, he did not listen to her invitation to lie down beside her, to be with her. ¹¹ Now on one such day, he came into the house to do his work, and none of the people of the house were there in the house. ¹² Then she grabbed him by his garment saying, "Come, lie with me!" But he left his garment in her hand, fled and went outside. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, ¹⁴ she screamed to the men of her house and said to them, "Look! Someone brought a Hebrew man to us to fool with us. He approached me to lie with me so I screamed out loud. ¹⁵ When he heard me raise my voice and scream, he left his garment with me, fled and went outside."

¹⁶ Then she kept the garment with her until his master came home. ¹⁷ She spoke the same words to him

saying, "The Hebrew slave that you brought us approached me to fool with me. ¹⁸ When I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment with me and fled outside."

¹⁹ Now when his master heard the words his wife spoke to him saying, "Such are the things your slave did to me," his anger burned. ²⁰ Then Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. So there he was, in the prison.

²¹ But *ADONAI* was with Joseph and extended kindness to him and gave him favor in the eyes of the commander of the prison. ²² The commander of the prison entrusted into Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison, so that everything that was done there, he was responsible for it. ²³ The commander of the prison did not concern himself with anything at all under his care, because *ADONAI* was with him, and *ADONAI* made whatever he did successful.

Interpreter of Dreams

40 Now it was after these things that the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt. ² Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, with the chief of the cupbearers and with the chief of the bakers. ³ So he put them in custody of the house of the commander of the bodyguards—in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. ⁴ The commander of the bodyguards assigned Joseph to be with them and served them as their personal servant. They were in custody for some time.

⁵ Then the two of them each dreamed a dream on the same night. The dream of each man—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each had its own interpretation. ⁶ When Joseph came to them in the morning, he observed them, and there they were, looking miserable. ⁷ So he asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in the custody of the house of his master saying, "Why are your faces so sad today?"

⁸ They said to him, "We dreamed a dream and there is no one to interpret it."

Then Joseph said to them, "Don't interpretations belong to God? Please tell me."

⁹ So the chief of the cupbearers told his dream to Joseph, saying to him, "In my dream, suddenly, there was a vine in front of me. ¹⁰ On the vine were three branches, and as it was budding, its blossoms came out, its clusters ripened into grapes. ¹¹ Pharaoh's cup was in my hand and I took the grapes, pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in Pharaoh's palm."

¹² "This is its interpretation," Joseph said to him. "The three branches: they are three days. ¹³ In another three days, Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position. Then you'll put Pharaoh's cup in his hand just as you used to do before when you were his cupbearer. ¹⁴ But if you remember me, that I was

with you, when it goes well with you, please show me kindness and mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this house. ¹⁵ For I was forcibly kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing at all that they should put me in this pit."

¹⁶ When the chief of the bakers saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also was in my dream. Expectantly, there were three baskets of white bread on my head. ¹⁷ In the top basket was food for Pharaoh—all kinds of baked goods. But the birds were eating them from the basket on my head."

¹⁸ Then Joseph answered and said, "This is its interpretation. The three baskets: they are three days. ¹⁹ In another three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—off of you—and will hang you on a tree. Then the birds will eat your flesh off of you."

²⁰ Then it happened on the third day—Pharaoh's birthday—that he held a banquet for all his servants. He lifted up the head of the chief of the cupbearers and the head of the chief of the bakers among his servants. ²¹ He restored the chief of the cupbearers as his cupbearer, and he put the cup on the palm of Pharaoh's hand. ²² But the chief of the bakers he hung. It was just as Joseph had interpreted for them. ²³ Yet the chief of the cupbearers did not remember Joseph—indeed, he forgot him.

Parashat Miketz

Exalted by Pharaoh

41 Now at the end of two whole years, Pharaoh was dreaming. Behold, there he was standing by the Nile. ² Then behold, there were seven cows, good-looking and beefy, and they grazed in the reeds. ³ Then behold, there were seven other cows coming up after them from the Nile, ugly and emaciated, and they stood beside the cows at the edge of the Nile. ⁴ Then the ugly emaciated cows ate the seven good-looking beefy cows—and Pharaoh woke up.

⁵ Then he slept and dreamed a second time: behold, there were seven ears of corn coming up on one stalk, plump and good. ⁶ Then behold, there were seven ears of corn, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouting up after them. ⁷ Then the seven thin ears of corn swallowed up the seven plump and full ears of corn. Then Pharaoh woke up—it was a dream.

⁸ But in the morning he was disturbed in his spirit. So he sent and called for the fortune-telling priests of Egypt and all its wise men and Pharaoh told them his dream. But no one could interpret them for Pharaoh.

⁹ Then the chief of the cupbearers spoke with Pharaoh saying, "I am reminded of my sins today. ¹⁰ Pharaoh had been angry with his servants and put me in the custody of the house of the commander of the bodyguards—me and the chief of the bakers. ¹¹ Then we each dreamed a dream on the same night, he and I, we both dreamed, yet each dream had its

own interpretation. ¹² Now there with us was a Hebrew youth—a slave belonging to the commander of the bodyguards. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams for us, each man's dream he interpreted.

¹³ Then it came about, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. Me he restored to my position, but him he hung."

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph. So they quickly fetched him from the pit. He shaved, changed his clothes, and came to Pharaoh. ¹⁵ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I dreamed a dream and there's no one to interpret it. I heard about you— it's said that you can listen to a dream to interpret it."

¹⁶ Then Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, "It's not within me. God will answer with *shalom* for Pharaoh."

¹⁷ So Pharaoh said to Joseph: "In my dream, there I was, standing by the bank of the Nile. ¹⁸ And to my surprise, out of the Nile seven cows were coming up, beefy and good-looking, and they grazed in the reeds. ¹⁹ Then all of a sudden, there were seven other cows coming up after them, feeble, very ugly and emaciated. I've never seen the likes of these in the whole land of Egypt for ugliness. ²⁰ Then the emaciated and ugly cows ate the first seven beefy cows. ²¹ When they were devoured, one couldn't tell that they had been devoured. Their appearance was as ugly as it was at first. Then I woke up. ²² Then I saw in my dream, there were seven ears of corn coming up on one stalk, plump and good. ²³ Then suddenly, there were seven ears of corn, dried up, thin, and scorched by the east wind, sprouting up after them. ²⁴ Then the thin ears of corn swallowed up the seven good ears of corn. So I told the fortune-telling priests, but no one could provide me with an explanation."

²⁵ Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dream is one. God has told Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁶ The seven good cows: they are seven years. Also the seven ears of corn: they're seven years. It is one dream. ²⁷ The seven emaciated and ugly cows coming up after them: they're seven years. Also the seven empty ears of corn scorched by the east wind: there will be seven years of famine. ²⁸ It is the word that I have already said to Pharaoh: what God is about to do, he has shown to Pharaoh. ²⁹ Seven years of abundance are about to come in the whole land of Egypt. ³⁰ Then seven years of famine will come up after them and all the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten and the famine will consume the land. ³¹ So the abundance in the land will be unknown because of the famine that follows, for it will be a very oppressive famine.

³² "Now as for repeating Pharaoh's dream twice: it's because the matter has been settled by God and God will quickly make it happen. ³³ So now, let Pharaoh select a man discerning and wise and set him in authority over the land of Egypt. ³⁴ Let Pharaoh act by appointing administrators over the land and take a fifth portion from the land of Egypt during the seven years

of abundance. ³⁵ Then let them gather all the food from these good years that are coming, and let them store up grain under Pharaoh's hand as food for the cities, so they may preserve it. ³⁶ Let the food be held in reserve for the land for the seven years of famine that is coming upon the land of Egypt. Then the land will not be annihilated by the famine."

³⁷ Now the plan seemed good in the eyes of Pharaoh as well as all his servants. ³⁸ Then Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can a man like this be found, one in whom is God's Spirit?"

³⁹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ You! You will be over my house, and all my people will pay homage to you †. Only in relation to the throne will I be greater than you."

⁴¹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I appoint you over the whole land of Egypt." ⁴² Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, clothed him with fine linen garments, and put a chain of gold around his neck. ⁴³ Then he had him ride in the chariot as second-in-command, the one that belonged to him, and they called out before him, "Kneel down!" So he appointed him over the whole land of Egypt. ⁴⁴ Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission no one will lift up his hand or his foot in the whole land of Egypt." ⁴⁵ Then Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, as his wife. Then Joseph went out, in charge of the land of Egypt.

⁴⁶ Now Joseph was 30 years old when he began serving as representative of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and passed throughout the whole land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the seven years of abundance, the land produced in heaps. ⁴⁸ So he gathered all the food in the land of Egypt during the seven years, and put food in the cities; the food from the city fields surrounding the cities he put in each city. ⁴⁹ So Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea, vast amounts, until he stopped keeping record because it was beyond counting.

⁵⁰ Two sons also had been born to Joseph before the year of famine came, born to him by Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. ⁵¹ Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh, "because God has caused me to forget all my trouble and all my father's house." ⁵² And the second he named Ephraim, "because God has made me fruitful in the land of my oppression."

⁵³ Then the seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt came to an end, ⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine started to come—just as Joseph had said. So there was famine in all the lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was bread. ⁵⁵ When the whole land of Egypt suffered famine, the people cried out to Pharaoh for food, and Pharaoh said to all of Egypt, "Go to Joseph. Do whatever he tells you." ⁵⁶ The famine was

† Or, kiss your mouth

over all the entire land, so Joseph opened up all that was among them and sold grain to Egypt. Then the famine became severe in the land of Egypt.⁵⁷ Yet the whole world came to Egypt to buy grain—to Joseph—because the famine was severe in the whole world.

Joseph Meets His Brothers

42 Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, so Jacob said to his sons, “Why are you looking at each other?”² Then he said, “Look! I’ve heard that there’s grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some grain for us there so that we’ll live and not die.”

³ So Joseph’s brothers went down, ten of them, to buy grain from Egypt. ⁴ But Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, Jacob did not send, for he said, “An accident might happen to him.”

⁵ The sons of Israel went to buy grain among the others who were coming, because the famine was in the land of Canaan. ⁶ Now Joseph was the ruler over the land. He was the provider of grain for all the people of the earth. ⁷ Then Joseph’s brothers came and bowed down to him with faces to the ground. When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he made himself unrecognizable to them. Then he spoke harshly and said to them, “Where have you come from?”

“From the land of Canaan,” they said, “to buy grain as food.”

⁸ Though Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. ⁹ Then Joseph remembered the dreams he had dreamed about them. He said to them, “You’re spies! You’ve come to see the undefended places in the land.”

¹⁰ “No, my lord!” they said to him. “Your servants came to buy grain as food. ¹¹ All of us—we are sons of one man. We’re honest. Your servants have never been spies.”

¹² “Not so,” he said to them. “Rather, you’ve come to see the undefended places in the land.”

¹³ But they said, “We your servants are twelve brothers, sons of one man in the land of Canaan. Look, the youngest is with our father today and the other one is no more.”

¹⁴ Joseph said to them, “It’s just like I told you when I said, ‘You’re spies.’ ¹⁵ By this you’ll be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you’ll not leave from here until your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ Send one from among yourselves to get your brother, while you remain confined, in order to test your words, to see whether the truth is with you. If not, by the life of Pharaoh, you’re definitely spies!”

¹⁷ So he put them together in custody for three days.

¹⁸ Then Joseph said to them on the third day, “Do this and you will live. I fear God. ¹⁹ If you’re honest, let one of your brothers remain as a prisoner in the guard-house where you’ve been, while you, go and bring grain for the hunger in your homes. ²⁰ And your

youngest brother, bring to me so that your words can be verified—and you won’t die.” So they did.

²¹ Then each man said to his brother, “We’re truly guilty for our brother. We saw the distress of his soul when he begged us for mercy, but we didn’t listen. That’s why this distress has come to us.”

²² Reuben answered them and said, “Didn’t I tell you, ‘Don’t sin against the boy?’ But you didn’t listen. Now, see how his blood is now being accounted for.”

²³ They did not know that Joseph was listening, since there was an interpreter between them. ²⁴ He turned away from them and wept. When he turned back to them and spoke to them, he took Simeon from them and tied him up before their eyes.

²⁵ Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to return each man’s money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. So it was done for them. ²⁶ Then they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left from there. ²⁷ As one of them opened his sack to give fodder to his donkey at the lodge, he saw his money—behold, it was in the opening of his bag.

²⁸ So he said to his brothers, “My money has been returned! Look, it’s in my bag.”

Their hearts sank. Trembling, each one turned to his brother and said, “What is this that God has done to us?”

²⁹ When they came to their father Jacob, in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, ³⁰ “The man, the lord of the land, spoke with us harshly, and took us as spies of the land. ³¹ But we said to him, ‘We’re honest. We’ve never been spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no more and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.’ ³³ Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, ‘By this I’ll know if you’re honest: leave one of your brothers with me. As for the hunger of your homes: take and go! ³⁴ Then bring your youngest brother to me, so that I may know you are not spies, but you are honest. I’ll give you back your brother and you can move about freely in the land.’”

³⁵ Now as they were emptying their sacks, behold, there was each man’s bundle of money in his sack. When they saw their money bundles, they and their father, they were afraid.

³⁶ Then their father Jacob said to them, “You’ve made me childless! Joseph is no more. Now Simeon is gone, and next you’ll take Benjamin! Everything is against me!”

³⁷ Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, “You can put my two sons to death if I don’t bring him back to you. Put him in my hand and I—I will return him to you.”

³⁸ But he said, “My son will not go down with you—for his brother is dead and he alone remains. And if harm should happen to him along the way you’re going, you’ll bring my grey hair down to *Sheol* in grief.”

Judah Pledges for Benjamin

43 Now the famine was severe in the land. ² When they finished eating the grain they had brought from Egypt their father said to them, “Go back. Buy us a little food.”

³ But Judah said to him, “The man warned us firmly saying, ‘You won’t see my face unless your brother is with you.’ ⁴ If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy grain for you for food. ⁵ But if you won’t send him, we won’t go down, because the man said to us, ‘You won’t see my face unless your brother is with you.’”

⁶ Then Israel said, “Why did you do evil to me by telling the man that you have another brother?”

⁷ They said, “The man questioned particularly about us and about our relatives saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have a brother?’ So we spoke to him on the basis of these words. How could we possibly know that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’”

⁸ Then Judah said to his father Israel, “Please, send the boy with me and we’ll get up and go, so that we’ll live and not die—we and you, and our children. ⁹ I myself will be his pledge. You can demand him back from my own hand. If I don’t bring him back to you and place him before you, then you can blame me all my days. ¹⁰ If we had not delayed, we could have returned twice by now.”

¹¹ Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and bring an offering down to the man—a little balsam and a little honey, gum and myrrh, pistachios and almonds. ¹² Also take in your hand a double portion of silver, and bring back in your hand the silver that had been returned in the mouth of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake. ¹³ Take your brother too—now, get up, go back to the man! ¹⁴ May *El Shaddai* grant you mercy before the man, so that he may release your other brother to you, along with Benjamin. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved.”

The Brothers Return With Benjamin

¹⁵ Then the men took this offering. They also took the double portion of silver in their hand, as well as Benjamin. So they got up and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. ¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the one over his house, “Bring the men into the house. Slaughter an animal and prepare it, for the men will eat with me this afternoon. ¹⁷ So the man did as Joseph said, and the man brought the men into Joseph’s house. ¹⁸ But the men were afraid, because they had been brought into Joseph’s house. They said, “It’s because of the silver that was returned to our sacks the first time that we are being brought in—to pounce on us and fall on us and take us as slaves, along with our donkeys.”

¹⁹ So they approached the man who was over Joseph’s house and spoke to him at the entrance of the house. ²⁰ “I beg your pardon, my lord!” they said. “We indeed came down on the previous occasion to buy grain for food. ²¹ When we came to the lodge and opened our sacks, behold, there was each man’s money at the opening of the sack, the full amount of our money. So we’ve returned it in our hand. ²² Moreover, we’ve brought down other money in our hand to buy grain for food. We didn’t know who put our money into our sacks.”

²³ “Be at peace,” he replied. “Don’t be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks. Your money had come to me.”

Then he brought Simeon out to them, ²⁴ and the man brought the men into Joseph’s house, gave them water and they washed their feet. He also provided fodder for their donkeys. ²⁵ So they prepared the offering for Joseph’s coming at noon, for they had heard that they were going to eat there. ²⁶ When Joseph came home, they brought him the offering in their hand into the house, and they bowed down to the ground to him. ²⁷ Then he asked if they were well, and said, “Is he well—your elderly father that you told me about? Is he still alive?”

²⁸ “Your servant, our father, is well,” they said. “He’s still alive.” Then they knelt and bowed down.

²⁹ Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother whom you mentioned to me?” Then he said, “May God be gracious to you, my son.” ³⁰ Then Joseph hurried out because his compassion grew warm and tender toward his brother so that he wanted to cry. So he went into an inner room and wept there.

³¹ Then he washed his face, came out, and controlled himself. “Serve the food,” he said. ³² So they served him by himself, them by themselves, and the Egyptians who were eating with him by themselves (for Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews because it was an abomination to Egyptians). ³³ They were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. The men looked at each other in astonishment. ³⁴ Then portions were brought to them from before him—and Benjamin’s portion was five times larger than any of their portions. Yet they drank and made merry with him.

Joseph Tests His Brothers

44 Then he commanded the one over his household saying, “Fill the men’s sacks with as much food as they are able to carry and put money in the opening of each man’s sack. ² Put my cup, the silver cup, in the opening of the sack of the youngest along with his grain money.” So he did as Joseph told him.

³ When the morning dawned, the men were sent off, they and their donkeys. ⁴ They left the city and did not get far, when Joseph said to the one over his house—

hold, "Get up, go after the men. When you catch up to them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good?'⁵ Isn't this the one from which my lord drinks? He even uses it especially to discern by divination. What you've done is evil!"⁶ So he caught up to them and spoke these words to them.

⁷ They said to him, "Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing as this.⁸ Look, the money we found in the opening of our bags, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan. So how could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house?⁹ Whoever among your servants is found with it, let him die! And we, we'll also be my lord's slaves."

¹⁰ "Even now let it be according to your words," he said. "The one with whom it is found shall be my slave. But the rest of you shall be innocent."

¹¹ Then each man quickly lowered his sack to the ground and each man opened his sack.¹² He searched them beginning with the eldest and finishing with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.¹³ Then they tore their clothing, and each one loaded up his donkey and they returned to the city.

¹⁴ When Judah and his brothers entered Joseph's house, he was still there. They fell to the ground before him.¹⁵ "What's this deed you've done?" Joseph said to them, "Didn't you know that a man like me can discern by divination?"

¹⁶ Then Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? How can we justify ourselves? God has exposed your servants' guilt. We are now my lord's slaves—both we as well as the one in whose hand the cup was found."

¹⁷ But he said, "Far be it from me to do this. The one in whose hand the cup was found—he will be my slave. But you, go up to your father in peace."

Parashat Vayigash

Judah Pleads for Benjamin

¹⁸ Then Judah approached him and said, "I beg your pardon, my lord. Please let your servant say a word in my lord's ears, and don't be angry with your servant, since you are like Pharaoh.¹⁹ My lord asked his servants saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'²⁰ So we said to my lord, 'We have a father who is old, a child born to him of his old age is young. Now his brother is dead, so he is the only one of his mother's children left, and his father loves him.'²¹ Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me so that I can look at him.'²² But we said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father. If he were to leave his father, he would die.'²³ Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you won't see my face again.'

²⁴ "Now when we went up to your servant, my father, we told him my lord's words.²⁵ Then our father said,

'Go back, buy us a little grain for food.'²⁶ So we said, 'We won't go down unless we have our youngest brother with us—then we'll go down. For we won't see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.'

²⁷ "Then your servant my father said to us, 'You yourselves know that my wife bore me two sons.²⁸ One went out from me, so I said, "He must have been torn to shreds," and I haven't seen him since.²⁹ And if you also take this one away from before me and an accident happens to him, then you'll bring my grey hair down to the evil of *Sheol*.'

³⁰ "Now if I come to your servant my father and the boy isn't with us, since his life is bound to his life,³¹ when he sees that the boy is no more, he'll die. Then your servants will bring the grey hair of your servant our father down to *Sheol* in grief.³² For your servant became pledge for the boy with my father saying, 'If I don't bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before my father all my days.'³³ So now, please let your servant remain as my lord's slave in the boy's place, and let the boy go up with his brothers.³⁴ For how can I go up to my father and the boy is not with me? Else I must see the evil that would come upon my father!"

Joseph Reveals Himself

45 Now Joseph could no longer restrain himself in front of all those who were standing by him, so he cried out, "Get everyone away from me!" So no one stood with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.² But he gave his voice to weeping so that the Egyptians heard, and Pharaoh's household heard.³ Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" And his brothers were unable to answer him because they were terrified at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near me." So they came near. "I'm Joseph, your brother—the one you sold to Egypt," he said.⁵ "So now, don't be grieved and don't be angry in your own eyes that you sold me here—since it was for preserving life that God sent me here before you.⁶ For there has been two years of famine in the land, and there will be five more years yet with no plowing or harvesting.⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to ensure a remnant in the land and to keep you alive for a great escape.⁸ So now, it wasn't you, you didn't send me here, but God! And He made me as a father to Pharaoh, lord over his whole house and ruler over the entire land of Egypt.

⁹ "Go up quickly to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son, Joseph: God has made me lord over all Egypt. Come down to me. Don't delay.¹⁰ Then you'll live in the land of Goshen, and be close to me, you and your children and your children's children, your flocks and your cattle, and everything that belongs to you.¹¹ I'll provide food for you there—for the famine will last another five years—otherwise you'll lose everything, you and your household, and everything that belongs to you.'¹² And look, you and my brother Ben-

jamin can see with your own eyes that it's my mouth that's speaking to you. ¹³ You must tell my father about all my honor in Egypt, and about all that you've seen. And you must quickly bring my father down here."

¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept while Benjamin wept upon his neck, ¹⁵ and he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. Finally after this, his brothers talked with him.

¹⁶ When the commotion was heard in Pharaoh's house—"Joseph's brothers have come!"—it was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants, ¹⁷ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers: 'Do this! Load your animals and go to the land of Canaan. ¹⁸ Then get your father, your households, and come to me. I'll give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.' ¹⁹ You are also commanded to say: 'Do this! Take for yourselves wagons from the land of Egypt for your little children and for your wives, and pick up your father and come. ²⁰ Don't be concerned about your goods, because the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

²¹ So the sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them carts by Pharaoh's command and he gave them provisions for the journey. ²² To each of them he gave a change of clothes, while to Benjamin he gave 300 pieces of silver and five sets of clothes. ²³ Also to his father he sent the following: ten donkeys carrying from the best of Egypt, and ten female donkeys carrying grain and food and provisions for his father's journey. ²⁴ Then he sent his brothers off, and as they departed, he said to them, "Don't be anxious on the way."

²⁵ Then they went up from Egypt and came to the land of Canaan, to Jacob their father. ²⁶ They told him saying, "Joseph is still alive and he is ruler of the whole land of Egypt!"

His heart went numb, for he did not believe them. ²⁷ But they told him all of Joseph's words that he had told them. When he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to pick him up, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ Then Israel said, "Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I must go and see him, before I die."

Jacob Goes to Egypt

46 So Israel set out, along with everything that belonged to him. When he came to Beer-Sheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. ² In visions of the night God said to Israel, "Jacob, Jacob." "Hineni," he said.

³ "I am God, the God of your father," He said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will turn you into a great nation there. ⁴ I Myself will go down with you to Egypt and I Myself will also most certainly bring you up. Joseph will put his hands on your eyes."

⁵ Then Jacob arose from Beer-Sheba and Israel's sons carried Jacob their father, their little children, and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

⁶ They also took their livestock and their possessions they had acquired in the land of Canaan and they

came to Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him.

⁷ His sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his offspring, he brought with him to Egypt. ⁸ Now these are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Jacob's firstborn, Reuben, ⁹ and Reuben's sons: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. ¹⁰ Simeon's sons: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zochar and Shaul the son of the Canaanite woman. ¹¹ Levi's sons: Gershon, Kohath and Merari. ¹² Judah's sons: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah. Er died along with Onan in the land of Canaan. Perez's sons were Hezron and Hamul. ¹³ Issachar's sons: Tola, Puvah, Iob and Shimron. ¹⁴ Zebulun's sons: Sered, Elon and Jahleel. ¹⁵ These are Leah's sons whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, along with his daughter Dinah. The tally of all of his sons and daughters was 33 people.

¹⁶ Gad's sons: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli. ¹⁷ Asher's sons: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and Serah their sister. Beriah's sons: Heber and Malchiel. ¹⁸ These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter. She bore these to Jacob: 16 people.

¹⁹ The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰ Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph in the land of Egypt—Asenath the daughter of Potiphera priest of On bore them to him. ²¹ Benjamin's sons: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard. ²² These are Rachel's sons who were born to Jacob. The tally of all the people was 14.

²³ The sons of Dan: Hushim. ²⁴ Naphtali's sons: Yachzeel, Guni, Yezer and Shillem. ²⁵ These are the sons of Bilhah whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter and she bore these to Jacob. The tally of all the people was seven. ²⁶ All the people belonging to Jacob who came to Egypt—those coming from his loins (not counting the wives of Jacob's sons)—the tally of all the people was 66. ²⁷ The sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt was a tally of two people. The tally of all the people belonging to Jacob's house who came to Egypt was 70.

²⁸ Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph to show him the way to Goshen. When they came to the land of Goshen, ²⁹ Joseph harnessed his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as he appeared before him, he fell upon his neck, and wept on his neck for some time.

³⁰ Then Israel said to Joseph, "At this time I am ready to die, after seeing your face in person—for you're still alive!"

³¹ Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I'll go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household who were in the land of Canaan have come to me. ³² The men are shepherds, for they've been men who handle livestock, who have brought their flocks and cattle and everything that they possess.' ³³ So when Pharaoh calls

you and says, 'What is your occupation?' ³⁴ you must say, 'Your servants have been men who handle livestock since the time of our youth until now, both we and our fathers,' so that you can live in the land of Goshen, because every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians."

Jacob Blesses Pharaoh

47 Then Joseph came and informed Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers and their flocks and their cattle and everything that belongs to them have come from the land of Canaan, and behold, they are in the land of Goshen."

² From among his brothers he took five men and presented them before Pharaoh. ³ Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?"

So they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers." ⁴ Then they said to Pharaoh, "We came to dwell temporarily in the land, since there is no pasture for the flocks that belong to your servants, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. So now, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen."

⁵ Pharaoh said to Joseph saying, "Your father and your brothers came to you. ⁶ The land of Egypt is before you—settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in the land of Goshen. If you know of any capable men among them, make them overseers of the livestock—over those that are mine."

⁷ Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and presented him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸ Pharaoh asked Jacob, "How many days are the years of your life?"

⁹ Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my sojourn are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life. Moreover, the days of the years of my life have not attained the days of the years of the lives of my fathers, in the days of their sojourn."

¹⁰ And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from Pharaoh's presence. ¹¹ Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them property in the land of Egypt, in the best part of the land, in the land of Rameses, just as Pharaoh commanded. ¹² And Joseph supported his father and his brothers and his father's entire household with food for the mouths of the little ones.

Joseph's Leadership in the Famine

¹³ Now there was no food in all the land because the famine was very severe. Both the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. ¹⁴ Joseph collected all the money that could be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the grain that they bought, and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. ¹⁵ Then the money of the land of Egypt and of the land of Canaan ran out and all of Egypt came to Joseph saying, "Give us food. Why

should we die in front of you because the money is gone?"

¹⁶ Joseph said, "Give your livestock and I'll give it to you for your livestock, if the money is gone." ¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph and Joseph gave them food in exchange for horses, for flocks of sheep, for herds of cattle and for donkeys. He provided them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year.

¹⁸ When that year came to an end, they came to him in the second year and said to him, "We won't hide from my lord that the money has run out and the livestock and the domestic animals are my lord's. There is nothing left in my lord's sight except our bodies and our land. ¹⁹ Why should we die before your eyes—both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food—we and our land will become Pharaoh's slaves. Provide seed so that we may live and not die, and the land won't be deserted."

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh because the Egyptians, each one, sold his field, for the famine overcame them. Thus the land became Pharaoh's. ²¹ He made the people slaves from one end of Egypt's border to the other. ²² Only he did not buy the land belonging to the priests, because the priests had an allotment from Pharaoh, and they ate their allotment that Pharaoh gave them. Therefore they did not sell their land.

²³ Then Joseph said to the people, "Behold, I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh. Here is seed for you, so that you can sow the land. ²⁴ During the harvest you must give a fifth part to Pharaoh and four-fifths will be for you, for seed for the field and for your food, and for those in your houses, and for food for your little ones."

²⁵ "You've saved our lives," they said. "We find favor in the eyes of my lord, and we'll be Pharaoh's slaves." ²⁶ So Joseph set it as a statute until this very day concerning the land of Egypt: a fifth-part goes to Pharaoh. Only the priests' land did not become Pharaoh's.

²⁷ Meanwhile, Israel settled in the land of Egypt in the land of Goshen, acquired property in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly.

Parashat Vayechi

Joseph's Promise to Jacob

²⁸ Now Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for 17 years, so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years. ²⁹ As the time of Israel's death drew near, he called for his son Joseph and said to him, "If I have found favor in your eyes, please put your hand under my thigh and show me faithful kindness. Please do not bury me in Egypt. ³⁰ When I lie down with my fathers, you must carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place."

So he said, "I myself will do according to your word."

³¹ "Swear to me," he said. So he swore to him. Then Israel bowed down in worship on the head of his staff.
†

Blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh

48 After these things, someone told Joseph, "Behold, your father is sick." So he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, with him. ² When someone told Jacob, saying, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel summoned his strength and sat up in the bed.

³ Then Jacob said to Joseph, " *El Shaddai* appeared to me in Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me. ⁴ He said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and multiply you and turn you into an assembly of peoples, and I will give this land to your seed after you as an everlasting possession.' ⁵ So now, your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, they are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just like Reuben and Simeon. ⁶ Any descendent of yours whom you father after them will be yours; they will be identified by the names of their brothers for their inheritance. ⁷ Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died along the way, in the land of Canaan, while we were still a distance from entering Ephrath. And I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Beth-Lehem)."

⁸ Then Israel saw Joseph's sons and said, "Who are these?"

⁹ Joseph said to his father, "They're my sons, whom God has given me here."

Then he said, "Please bring them to me, so I may bless them."

¹⁰ Now Israel's eyes had grown heavy with old age—he could not see. So he brought them near to him, and he kissed them and hugged them. ¹¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, "To see your face, I didn't expect—and look, God has let me see your offspring as well!"

¹² Then Joseph took them from his knees and bowed with his face down to the ground. ¹³ Then Joseph took the two of them—Ephraim with his right hand across from Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand across from Israel's right—and brought them close to him. ¹⁴ But Israel stretched out his right hand and placed it upon Ephraim's head (though he was the younger), and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, crossing his hands (though Manasseh was the firstborn). ¹⁵ Then he blessed Joseph and said,

"The God before whom my fathers
Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has shepherded me
throughout my life to this day,

¹⁶ The Angel who redeemed me
from all evil,
May He bless the boys,
and may they be called by my name,

and by the name of my fathers,
Abraham and Isaac.

May they multiply to a multitude
in the midst of the land."

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father placed his right hand upon Ephraim's head, it was wrong in his eyes. So he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to his father, "Not like that, my father, because this one's the firstborn. Put your right hand upon his head."

¹⁹ But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also will become a people, and he also will become great. But his younger brother will become greater than he and his seed will be the fullness of the nations." ²⁰ Then he blessed them that day saying, "In you shall Israel bless by saying:

'May God make you
like Ephraim and like Manasseh.'"

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, "Look, I am about to die. But God will be with you and will bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²² Now I myself give you one portion more than your brothers, that which I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and my bow."

Jacob Speaks Over His Sons

49 Jacob called his sons and said to them:
"Gather together so that I can tell you
what will happen to you in the last days.

² Be assembled and listen, sons of Jacob,
and listen to Israel your father.

³ Reuben, my firstborn are you,
my vigor and firstborn of my power,
endowed with extra dignity,
endowed with extra strength—

⁴ like water boiling over
you will not have extra,
for you got up into your father's bed,
when you defiled a maid's couch.

⁵ "Simeon and Levi are brothers,
instruments of violence are their knives.

⁶ In their secret counsel
may my soul not enter.
In their contingent may my honor
never be united.

For in their anger they slew men,
and in their self-will they maimed oxen.

⁷ Cursed be their anger for it was strong
and their rage for it was cruel—
I will disperse them in Jacob,
I will scatter them in Israel.

⁸ "Judah, so you are—
your brothers will praise you:
Your hand will be on your enemies' neck.
Your father's sons will bow down to you.

⁹ A lion's cub is Judah—
from the prey, my son,

† Or, at the head of his bed

you have gone up.
 He crouches, lies down like a lion,
 or like a lioness—
 who would rouse him? †
¹⁰ The scepter will not pass from Judah,
 nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, ††
 until he to whom it belongs will come.
 To him will be the obedience of the peoples. ‡
¹¹ Binding his foal to the vine,
 his donkey's colt to the choice vine, ††
 he washes his garments in wine,
 and in the blood of grapes his robe. ‡
¹² His eyes are darker than wine,
 and teeth that are whiter than milk.
¹³ "Zebulun will dwell by the seashore,
 and be by a harbor for ships—
 his distant border reaches Sidon.
¹⁴ "Issachar is a strong-boned donkey,
 lying down between two saddlebags.
¹⁵ He saw that a resting place was good,
 and that the land was pleasant.
 He leaned his shoulder to bear a burden,
 and became a forced laborer.
¹⁶ "Dan will judge his people,
 as one of the tribes of Israel.
¹⁷ Let Dan be a serpent beside a road,
 a viper beside a path,
 who strikes a horse's heels,
 so that its rider falls backward.
¹⁸ For your salvation I wait, *ADONAI*!
¹⁹ "Gad—attackers will attack him,
 but he will attack their heels.
²⁰ "Asher—rich is his food—
 he will provide delicacies fit for a king.
²¹ "Naphtali is a doe let loose,
 who offers words of beauty.
²² "A fruitful son is Joseph,
 a fruitful son beside a spring—
 daughters walk along a wall.
²³ The archers were bitter and shot arrows
 and were hostile towards him.
²⁴ Yet his bow was always filled,
 and his arms quick-moving—
 by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob.
 From there a Shepherd,
 the Stone of Israel, †††
²⁵ from the God of your father
 who helps you,
 and *Shaddai* who blesses you,
 with blessings of heavens above,
 blessings of the deep that lies below,
 blessings of breasts and womb.
²⁶ The blessings of your father surpassed
 the blessings of the ancient mountains,
 the desire of the everlasting hills.

† cf. Rev. 5:5. †† cf. Rev. 19:15. ‡ Or tribute comes
 Shiloh comes †† cf. Zech. 9:9-10; Matt. 21:5; John 12:15. ††† cf.
 Isa. 63:1-2; Rev. 19:13. †††† cf. Ps. 118:22; Isa. 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:6-8.

May they be upon Joseph's head,
 upon the crown of the one set apart from his
 brothers.

²⁷ "Benjamin is a ravening wolf—
 in the morning he devours spoils,
 and in the evening divides plunder."

²⁸ These are the tribes of Israel, twelve in all, and this
 is what their father spoke to them. He blessed them,
 each one he blessed with a suitable blessing. ²⁹ Then
 he charged them and said to them, "I am about to 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, that is next
 to Mamre in the land of Canaan—the field that Abra-
 ham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a property for
 burial. ³¹ There they buried Abraham and his wife
 Sarah. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah, and
 there I buried Leah. ³² The field was purchased along
 with the cave in it from the sons of Het."

³³ When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he
 drew his feet up into the bed, then breathed his last
 and was gathered to his peoples.

Lamentation for Jacob

50 Joseph fell upon his father's face, wept over him
 and kissed him. ² Then Joseph commanded his
 servants the physicians to embalm his father, so the
 physicians embalmed Israel. ³ They took 40 days for
 him, because that is how long embalming takes, and
 Egypt wept 70 days.

⁴ When the days of formal weeping passed, Joseph
 spoke to Pharaoh's house saying, "If I've found favor in
 your eyes, please say in Pharaoh's ears, ⁵ 'My father
 made me take an oath saying, "Behold, I am about to
 die. In my tomb—which I dug for myself in the land of
 Canaan—there you must bury me.'" So now, please al-
 low me to go up and bury my father, and then return.'"

⁶ Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father just as
 he made you swear on oath."

⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father. Also all of
 Pharaoh's servants, the elders of his household and all
 the elders of the land of Egypt went up with him,
⁸ along with all of Joseph's house, his brothers, and his
 father's household. Only their children and their flocks
 and cattle were left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ Chariots
 and horsemen also went up with him—it was a very
 impressive company.

¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of the
 bramble on the other side of the Jordan, they
 mourned there—a very great and solemn lamenta-
 tion. He observed seven days of mourning for his fa-
 ther. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaan-
 ites, saw the mourning ritual at the threshing floor of
 the prickly bush, they said, "A solemn mourning ritual
 this is for the Egyptians." That is why it is named Abel-
 Mizraim, which is on the other side of the Jordan.

¹² So Jacob's sons did for him just as he commanded
 them. ¹³ His sons carried him to the land of Canaan

and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, the field that Abraham bought as a property for burial from Ephron the Hittite, next to Mamre.

¹⁴ After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all those who went up with him to bury his father.

Joseph Comforts His Brothers

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father had died, they said, "Maybe Joseph will be hostile towards us and pay us back in full for all the evil we showed him." ¹⁶ So they charged Joseph saying, "Before his death, your father gave a command, saying, ¹⁷ 'Thus you must say to Joseph: "Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin because they treated you wrongly." Therefore, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.'"

Then Joseph wept when they spoke to him, ¹⁸ and his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your slaves!"

¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. For am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Yes, you yourselves planned evil against me. God planned it for good, in order to bring about what it is this day—to preserve the lives of many people. ²¹ So now, don't be afraid. I myself will provide food for you and your little ones." So he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

²² Joseph remained in Egypt—he and his father's household—and Joseph lived 110 years. ²³ Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons. Also the sons of Machir, Manasseh's son, were born upon Joseph's knees.

²⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I'm about to die. But God will surely take notice of you and will bring you up from this land to the land that He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." ²⁵ Then Joseph made Israel's sons swear an oath saying, "When God takes notice of you, you will bring my bones up from here."

²⁶ So Joseph died at 110 years old, and they embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Exodus

Exodus Introduction

The nation that was triumphantly called forth by in early Genesis had barely grown into a small clan by Genesis' end—a tiny band of brothers residing in a sprawling Egyptian empire.

Called (or “Names,” of the sons of Israel) in the Hebrew Bible, the book of Exodus describes how the Hebrew tribe grew in Egypt, albeit under very adverse circumstances. A turn of political events rendered the multiplied Israelites in Egypt as mere slave stock. Their misfortune grew with their numbers. Hard-pressed under the oppressive yoke of their Egyptian overlords, Abraham's distant offspring cried out to Abraham's seemingly distant God. In response, God made an appearance through a deliverer raised up to ameliorate the people's miserable condition: Moses (Exod. 1-2).

Moses' rise is noted in Exodus (Exod. 3-4) where God elevates him to facilitate a series of miracles on His and the people's behalf. Israel's deliverance came on the heels of “the war of the wills” between Israel's God and Pharaoh's gods. The final and ultimate miracle was facilitated by the applied blood of a spotless lamb and the death of the firstborn Egyptian males (Exod. 5-11).

With Egypt reeling from its losses, Pharaoh expelled the people of Israel in haste. The English and Greek name “Exodus” translates as “going out.” The “Feast of Unleavened Bread” and “Passover” harken to the aforementioned stories and keep the memory of the exodus alive for Jews in every generation (Exod. 12-13)—much as communion reverberates for Christians in every generation—itself a related spotless lamb story—something done in remembrance of the lamb that was slain.

For the Hebrews, the “going out” of Egypt then led to a “coming in” at Sinai. There, the heavenly glory descended upon the earthly summit, and it was there that God spoke to the fledgling nation and delivered what the book of Hebrew later referred to as Israel's “first covenant” in blood (Exod. 24:6ff.; Heb. 9:18-19). Since the blood of the Passover lamb saved them, slaying the lambs and sprinkling their blood was now institutionalized through the sanctuary and, therefore, remembered for all time (Heb. 8). This arrangement was subsequently and more fully extended to people of saving faith from all nations through (Heb. 9:18-28).

In Exodus, redeemed Israel is similarly beckoned to honor God while walking their earthly trek. This entails keeping the Sabbath, living justly, giving free-will offerings for God's Tabernacle (Exod. 25:1-2, cf. 2 Cor. 9:7), and using their gifts and talents to build and maintain the Tabernacle (Exod. 39:32, 43). In Exodus 19:5-6, Israel is called out to be God's very own national treasure. This sense of being chosen is elsewhere extended to all members of Messiah's community (1 Pet. 2:4-10).

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Livestock, Boils, Hail

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The Passover Lamb

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 Ark, Table, , Incense Altar
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 Setting up the Tabernacle
 Glory Fills the Tabernacle

Parashat Shemot

Oppression in Egypt

¹ Now these are the names of *Bnei-Yisrael* who came into Egypt with Jacob, each man with his family: ² Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; ³ Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; ⁴ Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher. ⁵ The souls that came out of the line of Jacob numbered 70 in all, while Joseph was already in Egypt.

⁶ Then Joseph died, as did all his brothers and all that generation. ⁷ Yet *Bnei-Yisrael* were fruitful, increased abundantly, multiplied and grew extremely numerous—so the land was filled with them.

⁸ Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, "Look, the people of *Bnei-Yisrael* are too numerous and too powerful for us. ¹⁰ Come, we must deal shrewdly with them, or else they will grow even more numerous, so that if war breaks out, they may join our enemies, fight against us, and then escape from the land."

¹¹ So they set slave masters over them to afflict them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Raamses as storage cities for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread. So the Egyptians dreaded the presence of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹³ They worked them harshly, ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard labor with mortar and brick, doing all sorts of work in the fields. In all their labors they worked them with cruelty.

¹⁵ Moreover the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ and said, "When you help the Hebrew women during childbirth, look at the sex. If it's a son, then kill him, but if it's a daughter, she may live." ¹⁷ Yet the midwives feared God, so they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this—let the boys live?"

¹⁹ The midwives told Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women. They are like animals, † and give birth before the midwife comes to

† Or *lively, vigorous*

them.”²⁰ So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, growing very numerous.²¹ Because the midwives feared God, He gave them families of their own.

²² But Pharaoh charged all his people saying, “You are to cast every son that is born into the river, but let every daughter live.”

Young Moses

2 Now a man from the house of Levi took as his wife a daughter of Levi.² The woman conceived and gave birth to a son. Now when she saw that he was delightful, she hid him for three months.^{†3} But when she could no longer hide him, she took a basket of papyrus reeds, coated it with tar and pitch, put the child inside, and laid it in the reeds by the bank of the Nile.⁴ His sister stood off at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵ Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe, while her maidens walked along by the river-side. When she saw the basket^{††} among the reeds, she sent her handmaiden to fetch it.⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child—a baby boy crying! She had compassion on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrew children.”

⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Should I go and call a nurse from the Hebrews to nurse the child for you?”

⁸ Pharaoh’s daughter told her, “Go!” So the girl went and called the child’s mother.⁹ Then Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him.¹⁰ After the boy grew older she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. So she named him Moses saying, “Because I drew him out of the water.”[‡]

¹¹ Now it happened in those days, after Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brothers and saw their burdens. He noticed an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people.^{††12} So he looked around and when he saw that there was nobody, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.¹³ Then he went out the following day, and saw two Hebrew men fighting. So he said to the guilty one, “Why are you beating your companion?”

¹⁴ But the man answered, “Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Are you saying you’re going to kill me—just as you killed the Egyptian?”

Then Moses was afraid, and thought, “For sure the deed had become known.”¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard about this, he tried to kill Moses.

But Moses fled from Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian,^{‡‡} where he sat down by a well.¹⁶ Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters who came and drew water. They filled the troughs to water their fa-

ther’s flock.¹⁷ But shepherds came and drove them away, so Moses stood up, helped them and watered their flock.

¹⁸ When they came to Reuel their father, he said, “How come you’ve returned so soon today?”

¹⁹ So they told him, “An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds. He also drew water for us and watered the flock.”

²⁰ “Where is he then?” he said to his daughters. “Why did you leave the man behind? Invite him to have some food to eat!”

²¹ Moses was content to stay on with the man. Later he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah.²² She gave birth to a son and he named him Gershom, saying, “I have been an outsider^{‡‡‡} in a foreign land.”

²³ Now it came about over the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. *Bnei-Yisrael* groaned because of their slavery. They cried out and their cry from slavery went up to God.²⁴ God heard their sobbing and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.²⁵ God saw *Bnei-Yisrael*, and He was concerned about them.

Angel of *ADONAI* in a Burning Bush

3 Now Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. So he led the flock to the farthest end of the wilderness, coming to the mountain of God, Horeb.^{‡‡2} Then the angel of *ADONAI* appeared to him in a flame of fire from within a bush. So he looked and saw the bush burning with fire, yet it was not consumed.³ Moses thought, “I will go now, and see this great sight. Why is the bush not burnt?”

⁴ When *ADONAI* saw that he turned to look, He called to him out of the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!”

So he answered, “*Hineni*.”

⁵ Then He said, “Come no closer. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”⁶ Moreover He said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” So Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷ Then *ADONAI* said, “I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their slave masters, for I know their pains.⁸ So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, to bring them up out of that land into a good and large land, a land flowing with milk and honey, into the place of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.⁹ Now behold, the cry of *Bnei-Yisrael* has come to Me. Moreover I have seen the oppression that the Egyptians have inflicted on them.¹⁰ Come now, I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people *Bnei-Yisrael* out from Egypt.”

† cf. Acts 7:20; Heb. 11:23. †† Or, ark ‡ The Moshe drawing out born †† cf. Acts 7:23-24; Heb. 11:24-27. ‡‡ cf. Acts 7:25-29.

‡‡ Hebrew Ger sham
‡‡‡ Meaning desolation desert
§ cf. Acts 7:30-34.

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring *Bnei-Yisrael* out of Egypt?"

¹² So He said, "I will surely be with you. So that will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you. When you have brought the people out of Egypt: you will worship God on this mountain."

¹³ But Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is His Name?' What should I say to them?"

¹⁴ God answered Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. †" Then He said, "You are to say to *Bnei-Yisrael*, 'I AM' has sent me to you." ¹⁵ God also said to Moses: "You are to say to *Bnei-Yisrael*, *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and the Name by which I should be remembered from generation to generation.

¹⁶ "Go now, gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them: ' *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—has appeared to me, saying, I have been paying close attention to you and have seen what is done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷ So I promise I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.'

¹⁸ "They will listen to your voice. So you will go, you along with the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and say to him: ' *ADONAI*, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Now please let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to *ADONAI* our God.' ¹⁹ Nevertheless, I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go, except by a mighty hand. ²⁰ So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders that I will do in the midst of it. After that, he will let you go.

²¹ "Then I shall grant these people favor in the eyes of the Egyptians. So it will happen that when you go, you will not leave empty-handed. ²² Every woman is to ask her neighbor and the woman who lives in her house for silver and gold jewelry and clothing. You will put them on your sons and your daughters. So you will plunder the Egyptians."

Objections and Excuses

4 Then Moses said, "But look, they will not believe me or listen to my voice. They will say, ' *ADONAI* has not appeared to you.'"

² So *ADONAI* said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he said.

³ Then He said, "Cast it on the ground." When he cast it to the ground, it became a serpent, so Moses fled from before it. ⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand, and take it by the tail." So he put out his hand, laid hold of it, and it became a staff in his hand.

⁵ "This is so that they may believe *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—has appeared to you."

⁶ *ADONAI* also said to him, "Now put your hand within your cloak." So he put his hand inside, and when he took it out, his hand had *tzara'at*—white as snow.

⁷ Then He said, "Put your hand back into your cloak." So he put his hand back in, and when he took it out it was restored again as the rest of his skin.

⁸ Then He said, "If they do not believe you, or listen to the voice of the first sign, they will believe the message of the latter sign. ⁹ But if they do not believe even these two signs nor listen to your voice, you are to take the water of the river and pour it on the dry land. The water which you take out of the river will become blood on the ground."

¹⁰ But Moses said to *ADONAI*, " *ADONAI*, I am not a man of words—not yesterday, nor the day before, nor since You have spoken to Your servant—because I have a slow mouth and a heavy tongue."

¹¹ So *ADONAI* said to him, "Who made man's mouth? Or who makes a man mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, *ADONAI*? ¹² Now go! I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say."

¹³ But he said, "Please, please, send it by another hand."

¹⁴ Then the anger of *ADONAI* was kindled against Moses, so He said, "In fact, Aaron the Levite is your brother. I know that he can speak well. Moreover, he is on his way to meet you! When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. ¹⁵ You are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth. I will be with your mouth and with his, and teach you what to do. ¹⁶ He will be your spokesman to the people, so that he may act as a mouthpiece for you, and it will be as if you were as God for him. ¹⁷ Now then, you must take this staff in your hand to do the signs."

Moses Returns to Egypt

¹⁸ So Moses went, returned to his father-in-law Jethro and said to him, "Please let me go, so I may return to my kinsmen who are in Egypt and see whether they are still alive."

Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

¹⁹ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses in Midian, "Go, return to Egypt, for all the men that sought your life are dead." ²⁰ So Moses took his wife and his sons, set them on a donkey and returned to the land of Egypt. Moses took the staff of God in his hand.

²¹ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all the wonders before Pharaoh that I have put in your hand. Still, I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go. ²² You are to say to Pharaoh, 'This is what *ADONAI* says: "Israel is My son, My firstborn." ²³ So I have said to you, Let My son go, that he may serve Me, but you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will slay your son, your firstborn.'"

† I AM WHO I AM I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE

²⁴ It happened along the way, at a lodging place, that *ADONAI* met him and sought to kill him! ²⁵ But Zipporah took a flint, cut off the foreskin of her son, and threw it at his feet, saying, "You are surely a bridegroom of blood to me." ²⁶ She said, "A bridegroom of blood" because of the circumcision. Then He let him alone.

²⁷ Now *ADONAI* said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went and met him at the mountain of God, and kissed him. ²⁸ Then Moses told Aaron all the words of *ADONAI* with which He had been sent, along with all the signs that He had commanded him to do. ²⁹ Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ³⁰ Aaron spoke all the words that *ADONAI* had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. ³¹ So the people believed. When they heard that *ADONAI* had remembered *Bnei-Yisrael* and had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Pharaoh Will Not Let Israel Go

5 Afterward, Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "This is what *ADONAI*, God of Israel, says: Let My people go, so that they may hold a feast for Me in the wilderness."

² But Pharaoh said, "Who is *ADONAI*, that I should listen to His voice and let Israel go? I do not know *ADONAI*, and besides, I will not let Israel go."

³ They answered, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness, so we may sacrifice to *ADONAI* our God, or else He may strike us with pestilence or with the sword."

⁴ But the king of Egypt said to them, "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, make the people break loose from their work? Go to your labors!" ⁵ Then Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now so numerous, yet you would have them rest from their labors?"

⁶ Then on the same day Pharaoh commanded the slave masters of the people and their foremen saying, ⁷ "You are not to give the people any more straw to make bricks, as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. ⁸ But impose on them the quota of bricks that they made previously; don't reduce it. For they are lazy—that's why they cry out saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' ⁹ Let even heavier work be laid upon the men, so that they must labor, paying no attention to deceptive words."

¹⁰ Then the slave masters of the people went out, along with their officers, and they spoke to the people saying: "This is what Pharaoh says: I will not give you straw. ¹¹ Go and get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, for there will be no reduction of your work."

¹² So the people were scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. ¹³ But the slave masters pressured, saying, "Fulfill your work, your daily amount, just as when there was straw."

¹⁴ Moreover the foremen of *Bnei-Yisrael*, whom Pharaoh's slave masters had set over them, were beat-

en and asked, "Why haven't you met your quota of bricks, both yesterday and today like before?"

¹⁵ The foremen of *Bnei-Yisrael* came and cried out to Pharaoh saying, "Why do you deal this way with your servants? ¹⁶ No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, 'Make bricks!' and look, your servants are beaten. But it is your own people at fault."

¹⁷ But he said, "Lazy! You're lazy! That's why you were saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to *ADONAI*.' ¹⁸ So go now and work! No straw will be given to you—but you must deliver the quota of bricks."

¹⁹ So the foremen of *Bnei-Yisrael* saw that they were in trouble when they were told, "You are not to reduce the number of bricks from day to day." ²⁰ Then they met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them as they came from Pharaoh.

²¹ So they said to them, "May *ADONAI* look on you and judge, because you have made us a stench in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants—putting a sword in their hand to kill us!"

²² So Moses returned to *ADONAI* and said, " *ADONAI*, why have You brought evil on these people? Is this why You sent me? ²³ Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your Name, he has brought evil on these people. You have not delivered Your people at all."

How Will Pharaoh Listen?

6 *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Now you will see what I am going to do to Pharaoh. By way of a strong hand he will let them go, and drive them out of his land."

Parashat Va'eira

² God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am *ADONAI*. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, as *El Shaddai*. Yet by My Name, *ADONAI*, did I not make Myself known to them. ⁴ I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage where they journeyed.

⁵ Furthermore, I have heard the groaning of *Bnei-Yisrael*, whom the Egyptians are keeping in bondage. So I have remembered My covenant. ⁶ Therefore say to *Bnei-Yisrael*: I am *ADONAI*, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. ⁷ I will take you to Myself as a people, and I will be your God. You will know that I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ So I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, and give it to you as an inheritance. I am *ADONAI*."

⁹ Moses spoke this way to *Bnei-Yisrael*, but they did not listen to him because of their broken spirit and cruel bondage. ¹⁰ So *ADONAI* told Moses, ¹¹ "Go, speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that will he let *Bnei-Yisrael* go out of his land."

¹² But Moses said to *ADONAI*, “*Bnei-Yisrael* have not listened to me. So how would Pharaoh listen to me—I, who have uncircumcised lips?”

¹³ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and to Aaron and gave to them a charge for *Bnei-Yisrael* and Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring *Bnei-Yisrael* out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ These are the heads of their father’s houses. The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. These are the families of Reuben. ¹⁵ The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. These are the families of Simeon.

¹⁶ These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations: Gershon, Kohath and Merari. Levi lived 137 years. ¹⁷ The sons of Gershon were Libni and Shimei, according to their families. ¹⁸ The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. Kohath lived 133 years. ¹⁹ The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their generations.

²⁰ Amram married Jochebed, his father’s sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 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 daughter of Aminadav, sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ²⁴ The sons of Korah were Assir, Elkanah and Abiasaph. These are the families of the Korahites. ²⁵ Eleazar, Aaron’s son, married one of the daughters of Putiel and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the ancestral houses of the Levites according to their families.

²⁶ These are the same Aaron and Moses to whom *ADONAI* said, “Bring *Bnei-Yisrael* out from the land of Egypt according to their divisions.” ²⁷ These are the ones that spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring *Bnei-Yisrael* out from Egypt. These are that same Moses and Aaron. ²⁸ So it happened on the day when *ADONAI* spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, ²⁹ that *ADONAI* said to Moses, “I am *ADONAI*. Tell Pharaoh king of Egypt everything that I tell to you.” ³⁰ But Moses said to *ADONAI*, “I am of uncircumcised lips, so how would Pharaoh listen to me?”

7 So *ADONAI* said to Moses, “See, I have set you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother will be your prophet. ² You are to speak all that I command you and Aaron your brother is to speak to Pharaoh, so that he will let *Bnei-Yisrael* go out of his land. ³ Yet I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply My signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. ⁴ But Pharaoh will not listen to you, so I will lay My hand upon Egypt, and bring forth My armies, My people *Bnei-Yisrael*, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. ⁵ The Egyptians will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I stretch out My hand against Egypt, and bring out *Bnei-Yisrael* from among them.” ⁶ So Moses and Aaron did as *ADONAI* command-

ed them. ⁷ Moses was eighty years old [†] and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

⁸ *ADONAI* told Moses and Aaron, ⁹ “When Pharaoh speaks to you saying, ‘Prove yourselves with a miracle,’ then you are to say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, so that it may become a serpent.’”

¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and did as *ADONAI* had commanded. Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. ¹¹ Then Pharaoh called for the wise men and the sorcerers, and they too, the magicians of Egypt, did the same with their secret arts. ¹² For each man threw down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs. ¹³ Yet Pharaoh’s heart was hardened. So he did not listen to them—just as *ADONAI* had said.

Ten Plagues Begin: Blood

¹⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is stubborn; he refuses to let the people go. ¹⁵ Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he is coming out to the water, and stand ready to meet him by the bank of the Nile. Take the staff that was transformed into a serpent in your hand. ¹⁶ You are to say to him: *ADONAI*, God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you, saying, ‘Let My people go, so they may serve Me in the wilderness,’ and behold, you have not listened. ¹⁷ This is what *ADONAI* says: ‘By this you will know that I am *ADONAI*. Behold, I will strike the waters that are in the river with the staff that is in my hand, and they will be turned to blood. ¹⁸ The fish that are in the river will die, the river will become foul, and the Egyptians will hate to drink water from the Nile.’”

¹⁹ *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Say to Aaron: Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, over their pools and over all their ponds, so that they become blood. There will be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in wooden and stone containers.”

²⁰ So Moses and Aaron did as *ADONAI* commanded. He lifted up the staff and struck the waters that were in the river in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and all the waters of the Nile turned to blood. ²¹ When the fish that were in the river died, the river became so foul that the Egyptians could not drink water from the river. The blood was throughout all the land of Egypt.

²² But the magicians of Egypt did the same with their secret arts. So Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them—just as *ADONAI* had said.

²³ Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and did not even take it to heart. ²⁴ So all the Egyptians dug around the river for water to drink, because they could not drink of the water from the Nile. ²⁵ Seven days were fulfilled after *ADONAI* had struck the Nile.

[†] cf. Acts 7:23, 30.

²⁶ (8:1) Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him: This is what *ADONAI* says: 'Let My people go, so they may serve Me. ²⁷ (8:2) If you refuse to let them go, see, I will strike all your territory with frogs. ²⁸ (8:3) The river will swarm with frogs. They will go up and enter your house, into your bedroom, upon your bed, into the houses of your servants, upon your people, into your ovens, and in your kneading bowls. ²⁹ (8:4) The frogs will climb up on you, your people and all your servants.'"

Frogs, Gnats, Flies

8 (5) Then *ADONAI* told Moses, "Say to Aaron: Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, canals and pools, and cause frogs to come up over the land of Egypt."² (6) So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land. ³ (7) But the magicians did the same with their secret arts and brought up frogs over the land of Egypt.

⁴ (8) Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to *ADONAI*, that He would take the frogs away from me and from my people. Then I will let the people go, so they may sacrifice to *ADONAI*."

⁵ (9) Moses answered Pharaoh, "Boast about me after I pray for you. When am I to pray for you, your servants and your people, that the frogs would be cut off from you and your houses, and remain only in the Nile?"

⁶ (10) "Tomorrow," he said.

So he said, "Let it happen according to your word, so that you may know that there is none like *ADONAI* our God. ⁷ (11) The frogs will depart from you, from your houses, from your servants and from your people. They will remain only in the Nile."

⁸ (12) After Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, Moses cried out to *ADONAI* concerning the frogs, which He had brought upon Pharaoh. ⁹ (13) So *ADONAI* acted according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out in the houses, the courts and the fields. ¹⁰ (14) They piled them together in large heaps, and the land stank. ¹¹ (15) But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to them—just as *ADONAI* had said.

¹² (16) So *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, and it will become gnats † throughout all the land of Egypt.'" ¹³ (17) So they did. When Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, there were gnats on men and animals. All the dust of the earth became gnats throughout all the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ (18) When the magicians attempted the same with their secret arts to bring forth gnats, they could not. There were gnats on men and animals. ¹⁵ (19) So the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them—just as *ADONAI* had said.

† Or lice

¹⁶ (20) Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh. As he comes to the water say to him, This is what *ADONAI* says: Let My people go, that they may serve Me. ¹⁷ (21) Or else, if you do not let My people go, I will send the swarm of flies †† on you and on your servants, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians will be full of the swarm of flies including the ground that they stand on.

¹⁸ (22) "But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people are dwelling—except no swarm of flies will be there—so that you may know that I, *ADONAI*, am in the midst of the earth. ¹⁹ (23) I will make a distinction between My people and your people. By tomorrow this sign will happen."

²⁰ (24) *ADONAI* did just so. A massive swarm of flies went into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants' houses. All the land of Egypt was ruined because of the swarm of flies.

²¹ (25) So Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron and said, "Go! Sacrifice to your God—in the land."

²² (26) But Moses said, "That would not be right. For the offerings we intend to sacrifice to *ADONAI* our God are an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination to the Egyptians, wouldn't they stone us? ²³ (27) We must walk a three-day journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to *ADONAI* our God—just as He tells us."

²⁴ (28) Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, so that you may sacrifice to *ADONAI* your God in the wilderness. Only you must not go very far away. Pray for me."

²⁵ (29) So Moses said, "See, I am leaving you, and I will pray to *ADONAI* that the swarm of flies will depart from Pharaoh, his servants and from his people tomorrow. However, let Pharaoh no longer deal deceitfully by not letting the people go sacrifice to *ADONAI*."

²⁶ (30) Then Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to *ADONAI*. ²⁷ (31) *ADONAI* acted according to the word of Moses, and removed the swarm of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants and from his people. Nothing remained. ²⁸ (32) But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and did not let the people go.

Livestock, Boils, Hail

9 Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, and tell him: This is what *ADONAI*, the God of the Hebrews, says: 'Let My people go, so they may serve Me.' ² For if you refuse to let them go, and hold them still, ³ behold, the hand of *ADONAI* will fall upon your livestock that are in the field—on the horses, donkeys, camels, herds and flocks. There will be a crushing plague. ⁴ But *ADONAI* will make a distinction between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt, and nothing will die that belongs to *Bnei-Yisrael*."

⁵ Also *ADONAI* set a specific time, saying, "Tomorrow *ADONAI* will do this thing in the land."

†† Hebrew does not specify what kind of insects, possibly stinging flies.

⁶ Then the next day, *ADONAI* did the deed. All the cattle of Egypt died, yet of the cattle of *Bnei-Yisrael*, not one died. ⁷ When Pharaoh inquired, there was not so much as one of the cattle of *Bnei-Yisrael* dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was stubborn, and he did not let the people go.

⁸ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from the furnace, and have Moses throw it heavenward in the sight of Pharaoh. ⁹ It will become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and will become boils erupting with sores on both men and animals throughout all the land."

¹⁰ So they took soot from the furnace and stood before Pharaoh. When Moses threw it heavenward, it became boils erupting with sores on both men and animals. ¹¹ Moreover, the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, because they were on the magicians, as on all the Egyptians. ¹² But *ADONAI* hardened the heart of Pharaoh, so he did not listen to them—just as *ADONAI* had said to Moses.

¹³ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, stand before Pharaoh and say to him: This is what *ADONAI* the God of the Hebrews says: 'Let My people go, so they may serve Me. ¹⁴ For this time I will send all My plagues to your heart, and on your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth. ¹⁵ Surely by now I could have stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. ¹⁶ However, I have let you stand for this reason: to show you My power, and that My Name might be proclaimed throughout all the earth. ¹⁷ Yet still you exalt yourself over My people, by not letting them go. ¹⁸ Behold, tomorrow at about this time, I will cause it to rain a very severe hailstorm, the likes of which has not occurred in Egypt since the day it was founded until now. ¹⁹ Send word, shelter your cattle and all that you have in the field. For every person and animal found in the field and not brought home, when the hail comes down on them, they will die.'"

²⁰ Whoever feared the word of *ADONAI* among the servants of Pharaoh had his own servants and cattle flee into the houses, ²¹ but whoever disregarded the word of *ADONAI* left his servants and cattle in the field.

²² Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven and let there be hail in all the land of Egypt, on people, animals and every plant of the field, throughout all the land."

²³ So Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and *ADONAI* sent thunder and hail. Fire came down on the earth, as *ADONAI* rained hail on the land of Egypt. ²⁴ The hail fell very severely, with fire flashing up amidst the hail, the likes of which had not occurred in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. ²⁵ The hail struck down everything that was in the fields, both men and animals, all throughout the land of Egypt. It also struck every plant of the field and broke down

every tree. ²⁶ Only in the land of Goshen, where *Bnei-Yisrael* were, was there no hail.

²⁷ So Pharaoh sent, called for Moses and Aaron and said to them, "I have sinned this time. *ADONAI* is righteous, while I and my people are wicked. ²⁸ Pray to *ADONAI*—there has been enough of God's thunders and hail! I will let you go. You don't have to stay any longer."

²⁹ Moses said to him, "As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to *ADONAI*. The thunder will cease and there will be no more hail—so you may know that the earth is *ADONAI*'s. ³⁰ But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear *ADONAI Elohim*."

³¹ (The flax and the barley were destroyed, because the barley was in the ear, and the flax was in bloom.

³² But the wheat and the spelt were not destroyed, because they ripen later.)

³³ Moses went out of the city, away from Pharaoh, and stretched out his hands to *ADONAI*. Then the thunder and hail ceased, and rain no longer poured down on the earth. ³⁴ But when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail and the thunder had ceased, he increased his sin and hardened his heart, both he and his servants. ³⁵ So Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he did not let *Bnei-Yisrael* go—just as *ADONAI* had said by Moses's hand.

Parashat Bo

Locusts, Darkness

10 Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, because I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, so that I might show these My signs in their midst, ² and so you may tell your son and your grandchildren what I have done in Egypt, as well as My signs that I did among them, so you may know that I am *ADONAI*."

³ So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what *ADONAI*, the God of the Hebrews, says: How long would you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, so they may serve Me. ⁴ Or else, if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your borders. ⁵ Then they will cover the face of the earth, so that no one will be able to see the ground. They will eat the remainder of what escaped—whatever is left from the hail—and eat every tree that grows for you out in the field. ⁶ Your houses will be filled, as will the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians, as neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen since the day they were on the earth until today!" Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

⁷ Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Send the men, so they may serve *ADONAI* their God. Don't you realize yet that Egypt is being destroyed?"

⁸ So Moses and Aaron were brought to Pharaoh again. “Go, serve *ADONAI* your God,” he said. “But who will be going?”

⁹ Moses answered, “We will go with our young and our elderly, our sons and our daughters. We will go with our flocks and our herds—for we must have *ADONAI*’s feast for Him.”

¹⁰ But he said to them, “So may *ADONAI* be with you, if I ever do let you go, with your little ones. See clearly now! Evil is in your face. ¹¹ Not so! Go now—the men—and serve *ADONAI*! For that’s what you were seeking.” Then they were driven out from Pharaoh’s presence.

¹² Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, so they may come up onto Egypt and eat every plant in the land—everything the hail has left.” ¹³ So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and *ADONAI* brought an east wind over the land all that day and all night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. ¹⁴ The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and rested on the entire territory of Egypt. So dense—there was nothing like it before them, nor will there ever be again. ¹⁵ For they covered the face of the whole earth so that the land was darkened, and they ate every plant in the land and all the fruit from the trees that the hail had left. No green thing remained, not a tree or a plant of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.

¹⁶ Then Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron and said, “I have sinned against *ADONAI* your God and against you. ¹⁷ Now forgive my sin, only this once, please! So pray to *ADONAI* your God—just so He would take this death away from me!”

¹⁸ So he went out from Pharaoh and prayed to *ADONAI*. ¹⁹ Then *ADONAI* turned the wind from the west, very strong, and it carried off the locusts and drove them into the Sea of Reeds. Not one locust remained in all the territory of Egypt. ²⁰ But *ADONAI* hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let *Bnei-Yisrael* go.

²¹ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, and there will be darkness over the land of Egypt—a darkness that may be felt.”

²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. ²³ They could not see one another, nor could anyone rise from his place for three days. Yet all *Bnei-Yisrael* had light within their dwellings.

²⁴ Pharaoh called Moses and said, “Go, serve *ADONAI*. Only let your flocks and your herds remain. Your little ones may also go with you.”

²⁵ But Moses said, “You must also put sacrifices and burnt offerings into our hand, then we will do it for *ADONAI* our God. ²⁶ Our cattle must also go with us—not a hoof may be left behind. We must take from them to serve *ADONAI* our God. We ourselves will not know how we will serve *ADONAI* until we arrive there.”

²⁷ But *ADONAI* hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he was unwilling to let them go. ²⁸ So Pharaoh said to him, “Go away from me! Take heed never to see my face again, because on the day you do, you will die!”

²⁹ “Right!” Moses said. “You said it! May I never see your face again!”

Final Plague: Death

11 Now *ADONAI* had said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague upon Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely thrust you out altogether from here.

² Speak now into the ears of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and gold.” ³ *ADONAI* gave the people favor in the eyes of the Egyptians. Indeed, the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the eyes of Pharaoh’s servants and in the eyes of the people.

⁴ So Moses said, “This is what *ADONAI* says: At around midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt, ⁵ and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die—from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the maidservant behind the mill, along with all the firstborn cattle. ¹⁶ There will be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, the likes of which has never been before nor will ever be again. ⁷ But not so much as a dog will growl against any of *Bnei-Yisrael*, neither man nor beast—so that you may know that *ADONAI* makes a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel. ⁸ All these servants of yours will come down to me and bow down to me, saying, ‘Get out, you and all the people who follow you!’ After that, I will go.” Then he went out from Pharaoh hot with anger.

⁹ *ADONAI* had said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.” ¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, yet *ADONAI* hardened Pharaoh’s heart, so he did not let *Bnei-Yisrael* go out of his land.

The Passover Lamb

12 Now *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, ² “This month will mark the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year for you. ³ Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb for his family one lamb for the household.

⁴ But if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor are to take one according to the number of the people. According to each person eating, you are to make your count for the lamb.

⁵ Your lamb is to be without blemish, a year old male. ^{††} You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

⁶ You must watch over it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the con-

† cf. Heb. 11:28. †† cf. 1 Pet. 1:19.

gregation of Israel is to slaughter it at twilight.¹⁷ They are to take the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the crossbeam of the houses where they will eat it.⁸ They are to eat the meat that night, roasted over a fire. With *matzot* and bitter herbs^{††} they are to eat it.⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled with water, but only roasted with fire—its head with its legs and its innards.¹⁰ So let nothing of it remain until the morning. Whatever remains until the morning you are to burn with fire.¹¹ Also you are to eat it this way: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet and your staff in your hand. You are to eat it in haste. It is *ADONAI*'s Passover.

¹² "For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night and strike down every firstborn, both men and animals, and I will execute judgments against all the gods of Egypt. I am *ADONAI*.¹³ The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. ‡ When I see the blood, I will pass over you. So there will be no plague among you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ "This day is to be a memorial for you. †† You are to keep it as a feast to *ADONAI*. Throughout your generations you are to keep it as an eternal ordinance.¹⁵ For seven days you are to eat *matzot*, but on the first day you must remove *hametz* from your houses, †† for whoever eats *hametz* from the first day until the seventh day, that soul will be cut off from Israel.¹⁶ The first day is to be a holy assembly for you as well as the seventh day. No manner of work is to be done on those days, except what is to be eaten by every person—that alone may be prepared by you.¹⁷ So you are to observe the Feast of *Matzot*, for on this very same day have I brought your ranks out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you are to observe this day throughout your generations as an eternal ordinance.

¹⁸ "During the first month in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, you are to eat *matzot*, until the evening of the twenty-first day of the month.¹⁹ For seven days no *hametz* is to be found in your houses, for whoever eats *hametz*, that soul will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is an outsider or one who is born in the land.²⁰ You are to eat no *hametz*; in all your houses you are to eat *matzot*."

²¹ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go, select lambs for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. ††²² You are to take a bundle of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and apply it to the crossbeam and two doorposts with the blood from the basin. None of you may go out the door of his house until morning.²³ *ADONAI* will pass through to strike down the Egyptians, but when He sees the blood on the crossbeam and the two doorposts, *ADONAI* will pass over that door, and will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses

to strike you down.²⁴ Also you are to observe this event as an eternal ordinance, for you and your children.

²⁵ "When you come into the land which *ADONAI* will give you as He has promised, you are to keep this ceremony.²⁶ Now when it happens that your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?'²⁷ You are to say, 'It is the sacrifice of *ADONAI*'s Passover, because He passed over the houses of *Bnei-Yisrael* in Egypt, when He struck down the Egyptians, but spared our households.'" So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

²⁸ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* went and did it. They did just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses and Aaron.²⁹ So it came about at midnight that *ADONAI* struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn cattle. †††

³⁰ Then Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was loud wailing in Egypt. For there was not a house where someone was not dead.³¹ So he called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, "Rise up, go out from my people, both you and *Bnei-Yisrael*, go, serve *ADONAI* as you have said.³² Take your flocks and your herds, as you said, and be gone! But bless me, too."

³³ Now the Egyptians urged the people, sending them out of the land quickly, for they thought, "We will all be dead!"³⁴ So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.³⁵ So *Bnei-Yisrael* acted according to the word of Moses. They asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold, and for clothing.³⁶ *ADONAI* gave the people favor in the eyes of the Egyptians and let them have what they asked for. So they plundered the Egyptians.

³⁷ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about 600,000 men on foot, as well as children.³⁸ Also a mixed multitude went up with them, along with the flocks, herds and heavy livestock.³⁹ They had baked *matzot* cakes from the dough that they brought out of Egypt. It had no *hametz*, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not delay, so they had not made provisions for themselves.

⁴⁰ Now the time that *Bnei-Yisrael* lived in Egypt was 430 years.⁴¹ So it happened at the end of 430 years, to the very day, that all the armies of *ADONAI* went out from the land of Egypt.⁴² It was a night of watching for *ADONAI* to bring them out of the land of Egypt. This same night is a night of vigil for *ADONAI*, for all *Bnei-Yisrael* throughout their generations.

⁴³ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover. No foreigner may eat it,⁴⁴ but every man's servant that is bought for money, after you have circumcised him, may eat it.⁴⁵ Nor should a visitor or hired servant eat it.⁴⁶ It is to be eat-

† Lit. between the evenings †† Hebrew *maror* ‡ cf. Heb. 11:28. †† cf. Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-25. †† cf. 1 Cor. 5:7-8. ††† cf. Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7; 1 Cor. 5:7.

††† cf. Heb. 11:28.

en inside a single house. You are not to carry the meat out of the house, nor are you to break any of its bones. ^{†47} All the congregation of Israel must keep it. ⁴⁸ But if an outsider dwells with you, who would keep the Passover for *ADONAI*, all his males must be circumcised. Then let him draw near and keep it. He will be like one who is native to the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat from it. ⁴⁹ The same *Torah* applies to the native as well as the outsider who dwells among you."

⁵⁰ So all *Bnei-Yisrael* did so. They did just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ It was on that very day that *ADONAI* brought *Bnei-Yisrael* out of the land of Egypt as armies.

Redemption of the Firstborn

13 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, from every womb of *Bnei-Yisrael*, both men and animals—this is Mine." ^{††}

³ Moses said to the people, "Remember this day, on which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage. For by a strong hand *ADONAI* brought you out from this place. No *hametz* may be eaten. ⁴ This day, in the month of Aviv, you are going out. ⁵ When *ADONAI* brings you into 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 are to observe this service during this month. ⁶ For seven days you are to eat *matzah*, and the seventh day is to be a feast to *ADONAI*. ⁷ *Matzot* is to be eaten throughout the seven days, and no *hametz* is to be seen among you, nor within any of your borders.

⁸ "You are to tell your son on that day saying, 'It is because of what *ADONAI* did for me when I came out of Egypt.' ⁹ So it will be like a sign on your hand and a reminder between your eyes, so that the *Torah* of *ADONAI* may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand *ADONAI* has brought you out of Egypt. ¹⁰ You are to keep this ordinance as a *moed* from year to year.

¹¹ "Now when *ADONAI* brings you into the land of the Canaanite, as He swore to you and your fathers and gives it you, ¹² you are to set apart to *ADONAI* every firstborn from the womb, and every firstborn male animal you have will be *ADONAI*'s. ¹³ Every firstborn donkey you are to redeem with a lamb, and if you do not redeem it, then you are to break its neck. But you are to redeem every firstborn male among your sons.

¹⁴ "So when your son asks you in times to come, 'What is this?' say to him, 'By a strong hand *ADONAI* brought us out from Egypt, the house of bondage, ¹⁵ and when Pharaoh refused to let us go, *ADONAI* slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both men and animals. So I sacrifice to *ADONAI* all firstborn males, but I redeem the firstborn of my sons.' ¹⁶ So it will be like a sign on your hand and like frontlets between your

eyes, for by a strong hand *ADONAI* brought us out of Egypt."

Parashat Beshalach

¹⁷ After Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them along the road to the land of the Philistines, although that was nearby, for God said, "The people might change their minds if they see war and return to Egypt." ¹⁸ So God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Sea of Reeds, and *Bnei-Yisrael* went up out of the land of Egypt armed.

¹⁹ Moses also took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made *Bnei-Yisrael* swear an oath saying, "God will surely remember you, and then you are to carry my bones away with you." [‡]

²⁰ So they journeyed from Succoth and encamped in Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ *ADONAI* went before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead the way and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light. So they could travel both day and night. ^{‡22} The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night never departed from the people.

Sea of Reeds Showdown

14 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses saying, ² "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, so that they turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. You are to camp by the sea, opposite Baal-zephon.

³ Pharaoh will say concerning *Bnei-Yisrael*, 'They are wandering aimlessly in the land—the wilderness has shut them in!' ⁴ I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so he will follow after them. Then I will be glorified over Pharaoh along with all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am *ADONAI*.'" So they did so.

⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we let Israel go from serving us?"

⁶ So he prepared his chariots and took his people with him. ⁷ He took 600 of the finest chariots, along with all other chariots of Egypt, and captains over them. ⁸ *ADONAI* hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so he pursued *Bnei-Yisrael*, for *Bnei-Yisrael* went out with a high hand. ⁹ But the Egyptians pursued them with all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, as well as his charioteers and his army, and overtook them as they were encamped by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth opposite Baal-zephon.

¹⁰ When Pharaoh drew near, *Bnei-Yisrael* lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them! So they were terrified, and *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to *ADONAI*. ¹¹ They said to Moses, "Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness because there were no graves in Egypt? Why have you dealt this way with us, to bring us out of Egypt? ¹² Did we not say to you in Egypt, 'Let us alone, so that we may serve the

† cf. John 19:33,36. †† cf. Luke 2:23.

‡ cf. Heb. 11:22. ‡† cf. 1 Cor. 10:1.

Egyptians?’ It was better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness!”

¹³ But Moses said to the people, “Don’t be afraid! Stand still, and see the salvation of *ADONAI*, which He will perform for you today. You have seen the Egyptians today, but you will never see them again, ever! ¹⁴ *ADONAI* will fight for you, while you hold your peace.”

¹⁵ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Why are you crying to Me? Tell *Bnei-Yisrael* to go forward. ¹⁶ Lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it. Then *Bnei-Yisrael* will go into the midst of the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷ Then I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will go in after them, so that I will be glorified over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I have been glorified over Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.”

¹⁹ Then the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them. Also the pillar of cloud moved from in front and stood behind them, ²⁰ and so came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel—there was the cloud and the darkness over here, yet it gave light by night over there—neither one came near the other all night long.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. *ADONAI* drove the sea back with a strong east wind throughout the night and turned the sea into dry land. So the waters were divided. ²² Then *Bnei-Yisrael* went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, while the waters were like walls to them on their right and on their left. †

²³ But the Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen. ²⁴ Now it came about during the morning watch that *ADONAI* looked at the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and caused the army of the Egyptians to panic. ²⁵ He took off their chariot wheels and caused them to drive heavily, so that the Egyptians said, “Get away from the presence of Israel! For *ADONAI* fights for them against the Egyptians!”

²⁶ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the waters come back upon the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.”

²⁷ So Moses stretched his hand out over the waters, and the sea returned to its strength at the break of dawn. The Egyptians were fleeing from it, but *ADONAI* overthrew them in the midst of the sea. ††²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen and the entire army of Pharaoh that went after them into the sea. Not one of them remained.

²⁹ But *Bnei-Yisrael* had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were like walls to them on their right hand and on their left. ³⁰ So *ADONAI* saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ When Israel saw the great work that

ADONAI did over the Egyptians, the people feared *ADONAI*, and they believed in *ADONAI* and in His servant Moses.

Song of Moses and Miriam

15 Then Moses and *Bnei-Yisrael* sang this song to *ADONAI*: ‡

I will sing to *ADONAI*, for He is highly exalted!
The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea.

² *ADONAI* is my strength and song,
and He has become my salvation. †

This is my God, and I will glorify Him,
my father’s God, and I will exalt Him.

³ *ADONAI* is a warrior— *ADONAI* is His Name!

⁴ Pharaoh’s chariots and his army
He has hurled into the sea,
and his chosen captains have sunk
into the Sea of Reeds.

⁵ The deeps cover them.
They sank to the depths like a stone.

⁶ Your right hand, *ADONAI*, is glorious in power.
Your right hand, *ADONAI*, dashes the enemy to
pieces.

⁷ In the greatness of Your excellency
You overthrow those who resist You.
You send forth Your wrath—
it consumes them as stubble.

⁸ With the blast of Your nostrils the waters piled up.
The floods stood upright as a heap.
The deeps became firm ground in the heart of the
sea.

⁹ The enemy said, “I will pursue,
I will overtake, I will divide the spoil.
My lust shall gorge on them!
I will draw my sword—my hand will destroy them.”

¹⁰ You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them.
They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹ Who is like You, *ADONAI*, among the gods?
Who is like You,
glorious in holiness,
awesome in praises,
doing wonders? ††

¹² You stretched out Your right hand,
the earth swallowed them.

¹³ You in Your lovingkindness
led the people You have redeemed.
You guided them in Your strength to Your holy habi-
tation.

¹⁴ When the peoples hear, they will tremble—
anguish will seize
the inhabitants of Philistia.

¹⁵ Then the chiefs of Edom are terrified.
Trembling grips Moab’s mighty men.
All of Canaan’s inhabitants will melt away.

¹⁶ Terror and dread will fall on them.

† cf. 1 Cor. 10:1. †† cf. Heb. 11:29.

‡ cf. Rev. 15:3. †† cf. Rev. 12:10. ††† cf. Acts 4:30; 7:36; Heb. 2:4.

By the greatness of Your arm they become still as a stone,
till Your people cross over, *ADONAI*,
till the people whom You purchased cross over.
17 You bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance,
the place, *ADONAI*, that You have made
for Yourself to dwell in—
the Sanctuary, *ADONAI*,
which Your hands have prepared.
18 *ADONAI* will reign forever and ever!
19 For Pharaoh's horses with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, but *ADONAI* brought the waters of the sea back over them. Yet *Bnei-Yisrael* walked in the midst of the sea on dry ground. 20 Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing, 21 as Miriam sang to them:
Sing to *ADONAI*, for He is highly exalted!
The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!

Bitter Waters Made Sweet

22 Then Moses led Israel onward from the Sea of Reeds. They went out into the wilderness of Shur. But they travelled three days in the wilderness and found no water. 23 When they came to Marah, they could not drink from the waters because they were bitter. On account of this it was called Marah. 24 So the people complained to Moses saying, "What are we going to drink?"

25 So he cried out to *ADONAI*, and *ADONAI* showed him a tree. When he threw it into the waters, they were made sweet.

There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them. 26 He said, "If you diligently listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, do what is right in His eyes, pay attention to His *mitzvot*, and keep all His decrees, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians. For I am *ADONAI* who heals you."

27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees. So they camped there by the waters.

Manna From Heaven

16 They journeyed on from Elim, and the entire community of *Bnei-Yisrael* came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving the land of Egypt. 2 But the whole congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 *Bnei-Yisrael* said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of *ADONAI* in the land of Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat, when we ate bread until we were full. But you have brought us into the wilderness, to kill this entire congregation with hunger."

4 Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. † The people will go out and gather a day's portion every day, so that I can test them to find out whether they will walk according to My *Torah* or not. 5 So on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather day by day."

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all *Bnei-Yisrael*, "In the evening you will know that *ADONAI* has brought you out from the land of Egypt, 7 and in the morning, then you will see the glory of *ADONAI*. For He heard your complaining against Him. What are we? You complain against us?" 8 Then Moses said, " *ADONAI* will give you meat to eat in the evening and enough bread to fill you in the morning, since *ADONAI* hears your complaints that you mutter against Him, what are we? Your complaining is not against us, but against *ADONAI*!"

9 Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael*, 'Come near before *ADONAI*, because He has heard your complaining.'"

10 Then, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael*, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of *ADONAI* appeared in the cloud. 11 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, 12 "I have heard the complaining of *Bnei-Yisrael*. Speak to them saying, 'At dusk you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI* your God.'"

13 So when evening fell, quails came up and covered the camp. Moreover, in the morning there was a layer of dew all around the camp. 14 When the layer of dew was gone, on the surface of the desert was a thin, flake-like frost, as fine as the frost on the ground.

15 When *Bnei-Yisrael* saw it, they said one to another, "What is it?" †† For they did not know what it was. Then Moses said to them, "It is the bread that *ADONAI* has given you to eat. 16 This is the word that *ADONAI* has commanded. Every man is to gather according to his needs, an omer ‡ per person, according to the number of people per household. Each man is to take it for those who are in his tent."

17 *Bnei-Yisrael* did so, and some gathered more, some less. 18 When they measured it with an omer, those who gathered more had nothing left over, and those that gathered less did not lack at all. Every man gathered according to his appetite.

19 Also Moses said to them, "Let no one save any of it until the morning."

20 However, they did not listen to Moses. Some of them preserved it until the morning—but it bred worms and rotted. So Moses was angry with them.

21 So they gathered it morning by morning, each man according to his needs, and as the sun became hot it melted. 22 On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each individual. So all

† cf. John 6:31. †† Hebrew Mah-hu What's that? ‡ About two quarts.

the leaders of the community came and informed Moses. ²³ But he said to them, "This is what *ADONAI* has said. Tomorrow is a *Shabbat* rest, a holy *Shabbat* to *ADONAI*. Bake whatever you would bake, and boil what you would boil. Store up for yourselves everything that remains, to be kept until the morning."

²⁴ So they set it aside until the morning, just as Moses instructed, and it did not rot nor were there any worms. ²⁵ Then Moses said, "Eat that today, because today is a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI*. Today you will not find it in the field. ²⁶ You are to gather it for six days, but the seventh day is the *Shabbat*, and there will be none."

²⁷ Yet on the seventh day, some of the people went out to gather and they found none. ²⁸ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep My *mitzvot* and My *Torah*? ²⁹ See, *ADONAI* has given you the *Shabbat*, so on the sixth day He gives you the bread of two days. Let every man stay in his place, and let no man go out on the seventh day." ³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹ The house of Israel named it *manna*. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. ³² Then Moses said, "This is what *ADONAI* has commanded. Let a full omer of it be kept throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out from the land of Egypt."

³³ Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put a full omer of *manna* inside. Store it up before *ADONAI*, to be kept throughout your generations."

³⁴ Just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses, Aaron stored it up in front of the Testimony, to be preserved. ³⁵ *Bnei-Yisrael* ate the *manna* for 40 years. They ate the *manna* until they came to an inhabited land, when they came to the borders of the land of Canaan. ³⁶ Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah. †

Test and Quarreling

17 All the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* journeyed from the wilderness of Sin in stages, according to the command of *ADONAI*, and camped in Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² So the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test *ADONAI*?"

³ But the people thirsted for water there, and they complained against Moses and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt? To kill us with thirst, along with our children and cattle?"

⁴ So Moses cried out to *ADONAI* saying, "What am I to do for these people? They are about ready to stone me."

⁵ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Walk before the people, and take of the elders of Israel with you, along with your staff with which you struck the river. Take it in your hand and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you, there upon the rock in Horeb. You are to strike the

rock, and water will come out of it so that the people can drink." Then Moses did just so in the eyes of the elders of Israel. ⁷ The name of the place was called *Mas-sah* and *Meribah*, because of the quarreling of *Bnei-Yisrael*, and because they tested *ADONAI* saying, "Is *ADONAI* among us, or not?"

War Against Amalek

⁸ Then the Amalekites came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men, go out, and fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses said, and fought the Amalekites, while Moses, Aaron and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed. But when he let down his hand, the Amalekites prevailed. ¹² Moses' hands grew heavy, so they took a stone, put it under him, and he sat down. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side. So his hands were steady until the sun went down. ¹³ So Joshua overpowered the Amalekites and his army with the edge of the sword.

¹⁴ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven."

¹⁵ Then Moses built an altar, and called the name of it *ADONAI - Nissi*. ††¹⁶ Then he said, "By the hand upon the throne of *ADONAI*, *ADONAI* will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Parashat Yitro

Jethro's Advice

18 Now Jethro, the priest of Midian and Moses's father-in-law, heard about everything God had done for Moses and for His people Israel, and how *ADONAI* had brought Israel out of Egypt. (² Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, had taken in Moses' wife Zipporah, after he had sent her away ³ with her two sons. One was named Gershom ‡ because he said, "I have been an outsider in a foreign land," ⁴ and the name of the other was Eliezer because he said, "For my father's God is my help ††, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.")

⁵ So Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses into the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of God. ⁶ He had told Moses, "I, Jethro your father-in-law, am coming to you, along with your wife and her two sons." ⁷ So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, then bowed down and kissed him. They asked each other about their welfare, and went into the tent. ⁸ Moses told his father-in-law all that *ADONAI* had done to Pharaoh and to

† An omer=about 2 dry quarts; an ephah=20.

†† Meaning God is my standard God is my banner ‡ Hebrew Ger an outsider sham there †† Hebrew Eli my God etzer help

the Egyptians for Israel's sake, as well as all the travail that had come upon them along the way, and how *ADONAI* delivered them.

⁹Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness that *ADONAI* had shown to Israel, since He had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians. ¹⁰Jethro said, "Blessed be *ADONAI*, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh, and has delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹Now I know that *ADONAI* is greater than all gods, since they had acted arrogantly against them." ¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, presented a burnt offering and sacrifices to God. Aaron also came along with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

¹³The next day, Moses sat to judge the people, and they stood around Moses from morning till evening. ¹⁴When Moses's father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What's this you're doing to the people? Why sit by yourself, alone, with all the people standing around from morning until evening?"

¹⁵Moses answered his father-in-law, "It's because the people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶When they have an issue, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, so I make them understand God's statutes and His laws."

¹⁷But Moses's father-in-law said to him, "What you're doing is no good. ¹⁸You will surely wear yourself out, as well as these people who are with you, because the task is too heavy for you. You cannot do it alone, by yourself. ¹⁹Now listen to my voice—I will give you advice, and may God be with you! You, represent the people before God, and bring their cases to God. ²⁰Enlighten them as to the statutes and the laws, and show them the way by which they must walk and the work they must do. ²¹But you should seek out capable men out of all the people—men who fear God, men of truth, who hate bribery. Appoint them to be rulers over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²²Let them judge the people all the time. Then let every major case be brought to you, but every minor case they can judge for themselves. Make it easier for yourself, as they bear the burden with you. ²³If you do this thing as God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people will go to their places in *shalom*."

²⁴So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said. ²⁵Moses chose capable men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²⁶They judged the people all the time. The hard cases they brought to Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

²⁷Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went on his way to his own land.

Theophany at Sinai

19 In the third month after *Bnei-Yisrael* had gone out of the land of Egypt, that same day they arrived at the wilderness of Sinai. ²They travelled from Rephidim, came into to the wilderness of Sinai, and set up camp in the wilderness. Israel camped there, right in front of the mountain.

³Moses went up to God, and *ADONAI* called to him from the mountain saying, "Say this to the house of Jacob, and tell *Bnei-Yisrael*, ⁴'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagle's wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵Now then, if you listen closely to My voice, and keep My covenant, then you will be My own treasure from among all people, for all the earth is Mine. ⁶So as for you, you will be to Me a kingdom of *kohanim* and a holy nation.' These are the words which you are to speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*."

⁷So Moses went, called for the elders of the people, and put before them all these words that *ADONAI* had commanded him. ⁸All the people answered together and said, "Everything that *ADONAI* has spoken, we will do." Then Moses reported the words of the people to *ADONAI*.

⁹*ADONAI* said to Moses, "I am about to come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people will hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever." Then Moses told the words of the people to *ADONAI*.

¹⁰*ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go to the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow. Let them wash their clothing. ¹¹Be ready for the third day. For on the third day *ADONAI* will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. ¹²You are to set boundaries for the people all around, saying, 'Be very careful not to go up onto the mountain, or touch the border of it. Whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death. ¹³Not a hand is to touch it, but he will surely be stoned or shot through. Whether it is an animal or a man, it will not live.' When the *shofar* sounds, they may come up to the mountain."

¹⁴Then Moses went down from the mountain to the people, consecrated them, and then, they washed their clothing. ¹⁵He said to the people, "Be ready for the third day. Do not draw near your wives."

¹⁶In the morning of the third day, there was thundering † and lightning, a thick cloud on the mountain, and the blast of an exceedingly loud *shofar*. All the people in the camp trembled. ¹⁷Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the lowest part of the mountain. ¹⁸Now the entire Mount Sinai was in smoke, because *ADONAI* had descended upon it in fire. The smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace. The whole mountain quaked greatly. ¹⁹When the sound of the *shofar* grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him with a thunderous sound.

† Hebrew *Kol sounds voices*

²⁰ Then *ADONAI* came down onto Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. *ADONAI* called Moses to the top of the mountain, so Moses went up. ²¹ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to see *ADONAI*, and many of them die. ²² Even the *kohanim* who come near to *ADONAI* must consecrate themselves, so that *ADONAI* does not break out against them."

²³ Moses said to *ADONAI*, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You are the One who warned us, saying, 'Set boundaries around the mountain, and consecrate it.'"

²⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to him, "Go down. You are to come back up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the *kohanim* and the people break through to come up to *ADONAI*, or He will break out against them." ²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them.

The Ten Words

20 Then God spoke all these words saying, ² "I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ "You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴ Do not make for yourself a graven image †, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or on the earth below or in the water under the earth. ⁵ Do not bow down to them, do not let anyone make you serve them. For I, *ADONAI* your God, am a jealous God, bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing lovingkindness to the thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My *mitzvot* .

⁷ "You must not take the Name of *ADONAI* your God in vain, for *ADONAI* will not hold him guiltless that takes His Name in vain.

⁸ "Remember *Yom Shabbat* , to keep it holy. ⁹ You are to work six days, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI* your God. In it you shall not do any work—not you, nor your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, nor the outsider that is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days *ADONAI* made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Thus *ADONAI* blessed *Yom Shabbat* , and made it holy.

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long upon the land which *ADONAI* your God is giving you.

¹³ "Do not murder.

(14) "Do not commit adultery.

(15) "Do not steal.

(16) "Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁴ (17) "Do not covet your neighbor's house, your neighbor's wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

¹⁵ (18) All the people witnessed the thundering and the lightning, and the sound of the *shofar* , and the mountain smoking. When the people saw it, they trembled and stood far off. ¹⁶ (19) So they said to Moses, "You, speak to us, and we will listen, but do not let God speak to us, or we will die."

¹⁷ (20) So Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, for God has come to test you, so that His fear may be in you, so that you do not sin." ¹⁸ (21) The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

¹⁹ (22) Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Say this to *Bnei-Yisrael* : You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. ²⁰ (23) Do not make gods of silver alongside Me, and do not make gods of gold for yourselves. ²¹ (24) You are to make an altar of earth for Me, and there you will sacrifice your burnt offerings, your fellowship offerings—your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I cause My name to be mentioned I will come to you and bless you. ²² (25) When you make for Me an altar of stones, do not build it from cut stone, for if you use a tool on it, you will have profaned it. ²³ (26) Nor are you to go up to My altar on steps, so that your nakedness would not be uncovered while on it."

Parashat Mishpatim

Ordinances for the Covenant

21 "Now these are the ordinances which you will set before them.

² "If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve for six years, and in the seventh he is to go free, without payment. ³ If he comes in by himself, he is to go out by himself. If he was married, then his wife will go out with him. ⁴ If his master gave him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children will be her master's, and he will go free by himself.

⁵ "But if the servant plainly states, 'I love my master, my wife and my children, and I will not go out free,' ⁶ then his master is to bring him to God, †† then take him to a door or to a doorpost. His master is to pierce his ear through with an awl, and he will serve him forever.

⁷ "If a man sells his daughter to be a maidservant, she is not to go free as the male servants do. ⁸ If she does not please her master who has selected her for himself, then he is to allow her to be redeemed. He will have no power to sell her to a foreign people, seeing as he has dealt deceitfully toward her. ⁹ If he betroths her to his son, he must give her the rights of a daughter. ¹⁰ If he takes another wife, he is not to diminish her food, her clothing, or her marriage rights. ¹¹ If he does not provide these three to her, then she is to go free without payment.

† Hebrew *Pe-sel* crafted idol

†† Hebrew *Elohim* God, gods, princes or judges

¹² "Whoever strikes a man so that he dies must surely be put to death. ¹³ But if he did not hunt him down, yet God caused it to happen, then I will appoint for you a place where he may run. ¹⁴ If a man presumes to kill his neighbor with craftiness, you are to take him from My altar and put him to death.

¹⁵ "Anyone who strikes his father or his mother must surely be put to death.

¹⁶ "Anyone who steals a person and sells him, or is found with him under his hand, must surely be put to death.

¹⁷ "Whoever curses his father or his mother must surely be put to death.

¹⁸ "If people quarrel, and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist, and the other does not die but lies in bed, ¹⁹ if he rises again and walks around on his staff, then the one that struck him he will be cleared. But he must pay for the loss of his time and help him to be thoroughly healed.

²⁰ "If a man strikes his male or female servant with a staff, who dies by his hand, he must surely be punished. ²¹ Notwithstanding, if the servant gets up in a day or two he will not be punished, for he is his property. †

²² "If men fight, and hit a pregnant woman so that her child is born early, yet no harm follows, the one who hit her is to be strictly fined, according to what the woman's husband demands of him. He must pay as the judges determine. ²³ But if any harm follows, †† then you are to penalize life for life, ²⁴ eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, blow for blow.

²⁶ "If a man strikes the eye of his male or female slave and destroys it, he must let him go free for the sake of his eyesight. ²⁷ If he strikes out his slave's tooth, he must let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

²⁸ "If an ox gores a man or a woman so that they die, the ox must surely be stoned, and its meat is not to be eaten, but the owner of the ox will be cleared. ²⁹ If the ox was given to goring in times past, and a warning has been given to its owner, yet he has not kept it pent up, and it has killed a man or a woman, then the ox must be stoned and its owner must also be put to death. ³⁰ If instead a ransom is placed on him, then he is to pay for the redemption of his life whatever is demanded. ³¹ Whether it has gored a son or daughter, this rule is to be applied to him. ³² If the ox gores a male or female slave, he is to pay 30 shekels of silver to their master, and the ox is to be stoned.

³³ "If one uncovers a pit or digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls in, ³⁴ the owner of the pit must pay compensation. He is to give money to the owner, and the dead animal will be his.

³⁵ "If one man's ox hurts another's ox so that it dies, they are to sell the live ox and divide the price. They are also to divide the dead one. ³⁶ Or if it becomes

known that the ox was given to violence in times past, and its owner has not kept it pent up, he must surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal will be his own. ³⁷ (22:1) If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he is to pay five oxen for one ox or four sheep for one sheep.

22 (2) "If a thief found breaking in is struck so that he dies, there is no bloodguilt for him. ² (3) But if the sun has risen, there is bloodguilt, and he is to make full restitution. If he has nothing, then he must be sold for his theft. ³ (4) If the item is found in his hand alive—whether ox, donkey or sheep—he is to pay double.

⁴ (5) "If a man causes a field or vineyard to be eaten by letting his animal loose, and it feeds in another man's field, then he is to make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard.

⁵ (6) "If fire breaks out and spreads among thorns, so that stalks of grain, standing grain or the fields themselves are consumed, then the one who lit the fire must make full restitution.

⁶ (7) "If a man entrusts his neighbor with money or items for safekeeping, and it is stolen out of the man's house, when the thief is found, he must pay double. ⁷ (8) If the thief is not found, then the master of the house is to present himself to God, to see whether he has laid his hand on his neighbor's goods. ⁸ (9) For any transgression—whether ox, donkey, sheep, clothing, or anything else lost—when someone says, 'This is mine!' the case of both parties is to be brought before God. The one whom God convicts is to pay double to his neighbor.

⁹ (10) "If a man entrusts his neighbor with a donkey, ox, sheep or any animal to care for, and it dies, is hurt or taken away with no one seeing, ¹⁰ (11) then there must be an oath before *ADONAI* between the two of them, to determine whether or not he has laid his hand on his neighbor's goods. The owner is to accept it with no restitution. ¹¹ (12) But if indeed it was stolen from him, he is to make restitution to the owner. ¹² (13) If it is torn in pieces, let him bring it as evidence. He is not required to pay for what has been torn to pieces.

¹³ (14) "If a man borrows anything belonging to his neighbor, and it is harmed or dies in the absence of the owner, he must make full restitution. ¹⁴ (15) But if the owner is present, he is not required to pay restitution. If it was rented, it is covered by the rental fee.

¹⁵ (16) "If a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and lies with her, he must pay a dowry for her to be his wife. ¹⁶ (17) But if her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he must weigh out silver equal to the dowry for virgins.

¹⁷ (18) "You must not permit a sorceress to live.

¹⁸ (19) "Anyone who lies with an animal must surely be put to death.

¹⁹ (20) "Anyone who sacrifices to the gods, except to *ADONAI* alone, is to be put under a ban of destruction.

† *Lit. money* †† *i.e., a miscarriage.*

²⁰ (21) "You must not exploit or oppress an outsider, for you were outsiders in the land of Egypt.

²¹ (22) "You must not mistreat any widow or orphan.

²² (23) If you mistreat them in any way, and they cry out to Me, I will surely hear their cry. ²³ (24) My wrath will burn hot, and I will kill you with the sword. So your wives will become widows and your children will become orphans.

²⁴ (25) "If you lend money to any of My people, to the poor among you, you are not to act like a debt collector with him, and you are not to charge him interest.

²⁵ (26) If you ever take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, you are to return it to him before the sun goes down, ²⁶ (27) for that is his only covering, his cloak for his skin. What will he sleep in? When he cries out to Me I will hear, because I am gracious.

²⁷ (28) "Do not despise God, or curse a ruler of your people.

²⁸ (29) "Do not hold back the fullness of your crops or your vintage. You are to present the firstborn of your sons to Me. ²⁹ (30) "Do the same with your cattle and with your sheep. For seven days it is to be with its mother, and on the eighth day you are to give it to Me.

³⁰ (31) "You are to be a holy people for Me. You must not eat any flesh torn by beasts in the field. You may throw it out to the dogs.

23 "Do not spread a false report. Do not join hands with the wicked by becoming a malicious witness. ² Do not follow a crowd to do evil. Nor are you to testify in a case, to follow a crowd and pervert justice. ³ On the other hand, nor should you take sides with a poor man in his case.

⁴ "If you find your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you must surely bring it back to him again. ⁵ If you see the donkey of the one that hates you lying down under its burden, do not leave it. Rather, you are to release it with him.

⁶ "You are not to pervert justice to your poor in his dispute. ⁷ Stay far away from a false charge. Do not kill the innocent and the righteous, for I will not justify the guilty. ⁸ Take no bribe, for a bribe blinds those who have sight, and perverts the words of the righteous.

⁹ "Do not oppress an outsider, for you know the heart of an outsider, since you were outsiders in the land of Egypt.

¹⁰ "For six years you are to sow your land and gather the increase. ¹¹ But during the seventh year you are to let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor among your people may eat. Whatever they leave behind, the animals of the field may eat. You are to deal with your vineyard and your olive grove in the same way.

¹² "You are to do your work for six days, but on the seventh day you will rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and also the son of your handmaid and the outsider may be refreshed.

¹³ "With all the things that I have said to you, take heed. Make no mention of the names of other gods, and do not let them be heard in your mouth.

Three Harvest Festivals

¹⁴ "Three times in the year you are to celebrate a festival for Me. ¹⁵ You are to observe the Feast of *Matzot*.

† For seven days you will eat *matzot* as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month Aviv, for that is when you came out from Egypt. No one is to appear before Me empty-handed. ¹⁶ Also you are to observe the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors that you sow in the field, as well as the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather your crops from the field. ¹⁷ Three times in the year all your men are to appear before *ADONAI Elohim*.

¹⁸ "Do not offer the blood of My sacrifice with *hametz*. Nor is the fat of My feast to remain out all night until the morning. ¹⁹ Bring the choicest firstfruits of your land into the House of *ADONAI* your God.

"Do not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

²⁰ "Behold, I am sending an angel before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you into the place that I have prepared. ²¹ Watch for Him and listen to His voice. Do not rebel against Him because He will not pardon your transgression, for My Name is in Him.

²² But if you listen closely to His voice, and do everything I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. ²³ For My angel will go before you, and bring you to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and the Jebusites, and I will cut them off. ²⁴ You are not to bow down to their gods or serve them, or do what they do. Rather, you are to utterly overthrow them, and break their pillars in pieces. ²⁵ You are to serve *ADONAI* your God, and He will bless your food and your water. Moreover I will take sickness away from your midst. ²⁶ None will miscarry nor be barren in your land, and I will fill up the number of your days.

²⁷ "I will send My terror before you and throw all the people to whom you will come into panic, and make all your enemies turn their backs to you. ²⁸ I will send the hornet before you, which will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites and the Hittites, from before you. ²⁹ I will not drive them out from before you in a single year. Otherwise the land would become desolate, and the animals of the field will multiply against you. ³⁰ But little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you are fruitful. Then you will possess the land.

³¹ "I will set your border from the Sea of Reeds to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates River. For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you are to drive them out before you. ³² Make no covenant with them or with their gods. ³³ They must not dwell in your land and cause you to sin against Me, for if you worship their gods, they will be a snare to you."

† cf. Luke 22:15.

Cutting the Covenant at Sinai

24 Then to Moses He said, "Come up to *ADONAI*, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ² Moses alone is to approach *ADONAI*, but the others may not draw near, nor are the people to go up with him."

³ So Moses came and told the people all the words of *ADONAI* as well as all the ordinances. All the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which *ADONAI* has spoken, we will do."

⁴ So Moses wrote down all the words of *ADONAI*, then rose up early in the morning, and built an altar below the mountain, along with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ He then sent out young men of *Bnei-Yisrael*, who sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings of oxen to *ADONAI*. ⁶ Then Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins and the other half he poured out against the altar. ⁷ He took the Scroll of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. Again they said, "All that *ADONAI* has spoken, we will do and obey."

⁸ Then Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which *ADONAI* has cut with you, in agreement with all these words." †

⁹ Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up. ¹⁰ They saw the God of Israel, and under His feet was something like a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the very heavens. ††¹¹ Yet He did not raise His hand against the nobles of *Bnei-Yisrael*. So they beheld God, and ate and drank.

¹² Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and stay there, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the *Torah* and the *mitzvot*, which I have written so that you may instruct them."

¹³ So Moses rose up along with his attendant Joshua, and Moses went up onto the mountain of God. ¹⁴ To the elders he said, "Wait for us here until we come back to you. See, Aaron and Hur are with you—whoever has a dispute should go to them."

¹⁵ When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it. ¹⁶ The glory of *ADONAI* settled upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. Then on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ The appearance of the glory of *ADONAI* was like a consuming fire ‡ on the top of the mountain in the sight of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁸ So Moses entered into the midst of the cloud and went up onto the mountain. Moses was on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights.

† cf. Heb. 9:18-20; Luke 22:20. †† cf. Rev. 4:3; John 1:18. ‡ cf. Heb. 12:18,29.

Parashat Terumah

Tabernacle: Ark, Table, Menorah

25 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses saying, ² "Tell *Bnei-Yisrael* to take up an offering for Me. From anyone whose heart compels him you are to take My offering. ³ These are the contributions which you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; ⁴ blue, purple and scarlet cloth; fine linen and goat hair; ⁵ ram skins dyed red, sealskins, acacia wood; ⁶ oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ⁷ onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastplate.

⁸ "Have them make a Sanctuary for Me, so that I may dwell among them. ⁹ You are to make it all precisely according to everything that I show you—the pattern of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all the furnishings within—just so you must make it.

¹⁰ "Now they are to make an Ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits in length, one and a half cubits wide, and a cubit and a half high. ¹¹ You are to overlay it with pure gold, inside and out, and make a crown of gold around it. ¹² You are to cast four rings of gold for it, and place them in its four feet. Two rings will be on one side, and two rings on the other side. ¹³ Also make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

¹⁴ You are to put the poles into the rings on the sides of the Ark, in order to carry the Ark. ¹⁵ The poles are to remain in the rings of the Ark, and not be taken from it. ¹⁶ You are to put the Testimony, which I will give you, into the Ark.

¹⁷ "Then you are to make an atonement cover † of pure gold, two and a half cubits long, one cubit and a half wide. ¹⁸ Also make two *cheruvim* of gold, from hammered work, at the two ends of the atonement cover. ¹⁹ Make one *cheruv* at one end and one *cheruv* at the other end. Of one piece with the atonement cover you are to make the *cheruvim* at its two ends.

²⁰ The *cheruvim* are to spread out their wings above, shielding the atonement cover with their wings, each facing its companion. The faces of the *cheruvim* are to be turned toward the atonement cover. ²¹ You are to put the atonement cover on top of the Ark, and inside the Ark you will put the Testimony that I will give you.

²² "I will meet with you there. I will speak with you from above the atonement cover—from between the two *cheruvim* that are on the Ark of the Testimony—about all that I will command you, for *Bnei-Yisrael*.

²³ "You will make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high.

²⁴ You are to overlay it with pure gold, and make a crown of gold around it. ²⁵ Make a border a single handwidth wide around it and a golden crown for the border all around. ²⁶ Also make four gold rings for it,

†† Hebrew *kapporet* mercy seat

and put the rings in the four corners that are on its four feet. ²⁷ The rings are to be close to the borders, as holders for the poles to carry the table. ²⁸ You are to make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, so that the table may be carried with them. ²⁹ You are also to make the dishes, pans, jars and bowls to pour drink offerings, from pure gold. ³⁰ Always set the bread of the Presence † on the table before Me.

³¹ “You are to make a *menorah* of pure gold, by hammered work. Its base, stem, cups, bulbs and flowers are to be one piece. ³² There are to be six branches coming out of the sides, three branches of the *menorah* out of one side, and three branches out of the other. ³³ There are to be three cups shaped like almond blossoms in one branch, each with a bulb and flower, then three cups made like almond blossoms in the next branch, each with a bulb and flower, and so forth for the six branches coming out of the *menorah*.

³⁴ Within the *menorah* will be four cups made like almond blossoms, with bulbs and flowers. ³⁵ There is to be a bulb under two branches of the first piece, a bulb under two branches of the second piece, and a bulb under two branches of the third piece, for the six branches coming out of the *menorah*. ³⁶ Their bulbs and their branches are to be one piece—all of it a single hammered work of pure gold. ³⁷ You are also to make the seven lamps for it, and set the lamps up to shed light over the space before it.

³⁸ The tongs and the censers are to be of pure gold. ³⁹ It is to be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these pieces. ⁴⁰ See that you make them according to their pattern being shown to you on the mountain.

Curtains

26 “Moreover you are to make the Tabernacle with ten curtains of fine woven linen, of blue ††, purple and scarlet, with *cheruvim* made by the work of a skillful craftsman. ² The length of each curtain is to be 28 cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits. All the curtains are to have the same measure. ³ Five curtains are to be coupled together one to another, and the other five curtains are also to be coupled one to another. ⁴ Also make loops of violet on the edge of the one curtain that is outermost in the first set, and do likewise within the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set. ⁵ You are to make 50 loops in the first curtain and 50 loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set. The loops are to be opposite one another. ⁶ Then make 50 clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to another with the clasps, so that the Tabernacle may be one piece.

⁷ “You are to make curtains of goat hair for a tent over the Tabernacle, 11 curtains in all. ⁸ The length of each curtain is to be 30 cubits and the width of each curtain four cubits. The 11 curtains are to have the

same measurement. ⁹ You are to couple 5 curtains by themselves, and 6 curtains by themselves, and double over the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tent.

¹⁰ Then make 50 loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outermost in the first set, along with 50 loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set. ¹¹ Make 50 bronze clasps, put them into the loops, and couple the tent together, so that it may be one. ¹² As for the overhanging part that remains of the tent curtains, the half curtain that remains is to hang over the back of the Tabernacle. ¹³ The extra cubit on one side, as well as the cubit on the other side, which remains in the length of the curtains of the tent, is to hang over the sides of the Tabernacle on each side, to cover it. ¹⁴ You are to make a covering for the tent of ram skins, dyed red, and a covering of sealskins above.

¹⁵ “You are to make the framework of boards for the Tabernacle from acacia wood, standing upright. ¹⁶ The length of each board is to be 10 cubits by one and a half cubits wide. ¹⁷ There are to be 2 supports in each board, joined one to another. Do this for all the boards of the Tabernacle. ¹⁸ You are to make the 20 boards for the south side of the Tabernacle, ¹⁹ and 40 silver bases underneath the 20 boards. 2 bases go underneath 1 board for its supports and 2 bases under another board for its supports. ²⁰ Likewise, for the second side of the Tabernacle, on the north side, there are to be 20 boards, ²¹ with their 40 bases of silver. 2 bases go under 1 board and 2 bases under the next board. ²² For the back part of the Tabernacle, westward, you are to make 6 boards. ²³ Make 2 boards for the corners of the Tabernacle on the back side. ²⁴ They are also to be doubled at the bottom, and in the same way joined at the top by the first ring. It is to be this way for them both, and they will provide for the two corners. ²⁵ So there will be 8 boards, with 16 silver bases, 2 bases under each board.

²⁶ “Also make crossbeams of acacia wood, five for the boards on one side of the Tabernacle, ²⁷ five for the boards on the other side of the Tabernacle, and five for the boards on the back part of the Tabernacle to the west. ²⁸ The middle crossbeam in the center of the boards will pass through from end to end. ²⁹ Then overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings from gold as holders for the crossbeams, and overlay the crossbeams with gold.

³⁰ “You are to raise up the Tabernacle according to the plan which you were shown on the mountain.

³¹ “Make a fine woven linen curtain ‡ of blue, purple and scarlet, with *cheruvim*. It is to be the work of a skillful craftsman. ³² You are to hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks being made of gold, atop four bases of silver. ³³ You are to hang the curtain under the clasps, and bring the Ark within the curtain of the Testimony. The *parokhet* will divide for you between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

† Hebrew *le-kem pa-nim le-pa-nay* bread faces my face

†† Or violet

‡ Hebrew *parokhet*

³⁴ “Then you are to put the atonement cover on the Ark of the Testimony in the Holy of Holies. ³⁵ You shall set the table outside the curtain, and the *menorah* opposite the table on the side of the Tabernacle toward the south. You are to put the table on the north side. †

³⁶ “For the entrance of the tent, also make a screen of blue, purple and scarlet, finely twisted linen, the work of a color weaver. ³⁷ You are also to make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold. Their hooks are to be made of gold, and you are to cast five bases of bronze for them.

Altar, Courtyard, Oil

27 “Make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide. The altar will be square and its height is to be three cubits. ² Make horns on the four corners—of one piece. Overlay it with bronze. ³ You are to make pots for it to take away ashes, along with shovels, basins, forks and fire pans—make all the utensils of bronze. ⁴ Also make a bronze grating net for it, and on the net you are to make four bronze rings on the four corners. ⁵ You are to place it under the ledge around the altar beneath, so that the net may reach halfway up the altar. ⁶ Make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. ⁷ Its poles are to be put into the rings, on the two sides of the altar, for carrying it. ⁸ You are to make it with planks so that it is hollow. As it has been shown to you in the mountain, they are to make it just so.

⁹ “You are also to make a courtyard for the Tabernacle. For the south side there are to be hangings for the courtyard of finely twisted linen, 100 cubits long. ¹⁰ There are to be 20 pillars with 20 bronze bases, and the hooks on the pillars along with their bands are to be made of silver. ¹¹ Likewise for the north side, in length there are to be 100 cubit long hangings, 20 pillars and 20 bronze bases. The hooks of the pillars and their clasps are to be made of silver.

¹² “Now for the width of the courtyard on the west side there are to be 50 cubits of hangings, 10 pillars and 10 bases. ¹³ The width of the courtyard on the east side is to be 50 cubits. ¹⁴ The hangings on one side of the gate are to be 15 cubits, with 3 pillars and 3 bases. ¹⁵ For the other side there is also to be 15 cubits of hangings, with 3 pillars and 3 bases.

¹⁶ “For the gate of the courtyard there is to be a 20 cubit curtain of blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen, the work of a color weaver, along with their 4 pillars and their 4 bases. ¹⁷ The pillars of the courtyard are to be banded with silver, their hooks of silver, and their bases of bronze all around. ¹⁸ The length of the courtyard is to be 100 cubits, and the width 50 throughout. The height is to be 5 cubits, with hangings of finely twisted linen, with their bronze bases. ¹⁹ All the articles of the Tabernacle for all the services there, along with all the pegs, including all the pegs of the courtyard, are to be bronze.

† cf. Heb. 9:2-5.

Parashat Tetzaveh

²⁰ “Also you are to command *Bnei-Yisrael*, that they are to bring to you pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually. ²¹ In the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons will set it in order, to burn from evening to morning before *ADONAI*. It will be a statute forever throughout their generations, on behalf of *Bnei-Yisrael*.

Kohen's Garments

28 “Bring your brother Aaron near with his sons from among *Bnei-Yisrael*, so that they may minister to Me as *kohanim*—Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ² You are to make holy garments for your brother Aaron, for splendor and for beauty. ³ You are to speak to all who are skilled, whom I have filled with a spirit of artistry, to make Aaron's garments for consecrating him, so that he may minister to Me as a *kohen*. ⁴ These are the garments that they are to make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a tunic of checkered work, a turban and a sash. They are to make holy garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so that he may minister to Me as a *kohen*. ⁵ They are to use the gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen.

⁶ “They are to make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen, the work of the skillful craftsman. ⁷ It is to have two shoulder pieces stitched to the two ends, so that it may be joined together. ⁸ The skillfully woven band which is upon it, with which it is to be bound, is to be made like the design, and from the same piece of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen.

⁹ “You are to take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of *Bnei-Yisrael*: ¹⁰ six of their names on one stone and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. ¹¹ With the work of a gem cutter engraving a seal, etch the two stones, in the order of the names of *Bnei-Yisrael*. Make them enclosed in settings of gold. ¹² Fasten the two stones upon the shoulder pieces of the ephod, to be memorial stones for *Bnei-Yisrael*. So Aaron is to bear their names before *ADONAI* on his two shoulders as a reminder. ¹³ Fashion filigree settings of gold, ¹⁴ along with two chains of pure gold, of braided work, and you will attach the chains to the filigree settings.

¹⁵ “Make a breastplate of judgment, the work of a skillful craftsman. You are to make it like the design of the ephod—of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen. ¹⁶ It is to be square and doubled over, a span in length and a span in width. ¹⁷ Set within it four rows of jewels: a row of ruby, topaz and emerald for the first row; ¹⁸ a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond for the second row; ¹⁹ a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst for the third; ²⁰ and a beryl, an onyx and a

jasper for the fourth row. They are to be enclosed in gold filigree settings. ²¹ The stones are to be engraved in the order of the names of *Bnei-Yisrael*, twelve according to their names, like the etchings of a signet seal, one corresponding to each name of the twelve tribes. †

²² Also you are to make, upon the breastplate, braided chains of wreathed work from pure gold. ²³ Forge on the breastplate two rings of gold and fasten the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. ²⁴ Then attach the two wreathed chains of gold on the two rings at the ends of the breastplate. ²⁵ The other two ends of the chains you are to place on the two settings, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod in front. ²⁶ So you are to make two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it that is toward the inner side of the ephod. ²⁷ Also make two gold rings and place them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod underneath, in the front, close to where it is joined, above the artfully woven band of the ephod. ²⁸ Then they will bind the breastplate by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue thread, so that it may be on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate will not come loose from it.

²⁹ Aaron will bear the names of *Bnei-Yisrael* in the breastplate of judgment on his heart, whenever he enters the holy place, as a continual memorial before *ADONAI*. ³⁰ Also put the *Urim* and the *Thummim* within the breastplate of judgment, so they will be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before *ADONAI*. Aaron will bear the judgment of *Bnei-Yisrael* on his heart before *ADONAI* continually.

³¹ You are to make the robe of the ephod entirely of blue. ³² It is to have a hole for the head in the center, and a binding of woven work around the hole, as a collar, so that it may not be torn. ³³ On the hem of it you are to make pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet, all around the hem, with golden bells between them: ³⁴ one golden bell and a pomegranate, then another golden bell and a pomegranate, on the hem of the robe all around. ³⁵ It must be worn by Aaron whenever he ministers. The sound will be heard when he goes into the holy place before *ADONAI* and when he comes out, so that he does not die.

³⁶ Also you are to make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'HOLY TO *ADONAI*.' ³⁷ Attach it with a violet cord onto the turban, on the front of the turban. ³⁸ So it will rest on Aaron's forehead, so that Aaron will bear away the iniquity committed regarding the holy things, which *Bnei-Yisrael* set apart as all their holy gifts. It is to be always on his forehead, so that they may have favor before *ADONAI*.

³⁹ You are to weave the tunic in checkered work of fine linen, make a turban of fine linen, and make a sash, the work of a color weaver. ⁴⁰ For Aaron's sons

you are to make tunics, sashes and headwear for them—for splendor and for beauty. ⁴¹ Put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him, and anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, so that they may minister to Me as *kohanim*.

⁴² You are to make linen undergarments for them, to cover the skin of their nakedness, from the hips to the thighs. ⁴³ They are to be worn by Aaron and his sons when they go into the Tent of Meeting or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not become subject to guilt and die. It is to be a statute forever, to him and to his offspring after him.

How to Consecrate *Kohanim*

29 Now this is what you are to do to consecrate them, so that they may minister as *kohanim*. Take one young bull and two rams without blemish, ² along with *matzot*, cakes of *matzot* mixed with oil, and *matzot* wafers spread with oil. Make them from fine wheat flour. ³ You are to put them into one basket and present them, along with the bull and the two rams. ⁴ You are to bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and wash them with water. ⁵ Then take the garments, and put the tunic on Aaron, along with the robe, the ephod and the breastplate. Gird him with the artfully woven band of the ephod, ⁶ set the turban on his head, and put the holy coronet on the turban. ⁷ Then you are to take the anointing oil, pour it upon his head and anoint him. ⁸ Also you are to bring his sons and put tunics on them. ⁹ You are to gird Aaron and his sons with sashes, tie headwear on them, and they shall hold the priesthood by a perpetual statute. In this way you are to consecrate Aaron and his sons.

¹⁰ You are to bring the bull before the Tent of Meeting, and Aaron and his sons are to lay their hands on its head. ¹¹ You are to slaughter the bull before *ADONAI* at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ¹² Then take the blood of the bull, put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour out all the remaining blood at the base of the altar. ¹³ Also take all the fat that covers the innards, the lobe above the liver, the two kidneys, along with the fat that is on them, and burn them on the altar. ¹⁴ But the meat of the bull, along with its skin and its dung, you are to burn with fire outside the camp. It is a sin offering.

¹⁵ Then take one ram, have Aaron and his sons lay their hands upon the head of the ram, ¹⁶ then slaughter the ram, take its blood, and sprinkle it around the altar. ¹⁷ You are to cut the ram into pieces, wash its innards and its legs, and place them with its head and other pieces. ¹⁸ Then you are to offer the whole ram up in smoke on the altar. It is a burnt offering to *ADONAI*, a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*.

¹⁹ Then take the other ram, and have Aaron and his sons lay their hands upon the head of that ram.

²⁰ Slaughter the ram, take its blood, and dab it on the

† cf. Rev. 21:12.

tip of the right ear of Aaron, on the tip of the right ears of his sons, on the thumb of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet, then pour the blood on the altar all around. ²¹ Also you are to take some of the blood that is on the altar, along with the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and their garments. In this way he and his garments are to be consecrated, along with his sons and their garments.

²² "Moreover, take some of the fat from the ram, along with the fat tail, the fat that covers the innards, the covering over the liver, the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, along with the right thigh, because it is a ram of consecration. ²³ Also take one loaf of bread, one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of *matzot* that is before *ADONAI*. ²⁴ You are to put the entirety into Aaron's hands and the hands of his sons, and present them as a wave offering before *ADONAI*. ²⁵ Then you are to take them out of their hands and offer them up in smoke on the altar on top of the burnt offering, as a sweet aroma before *ADONAI*, an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*. ²⁶ Also take the breast of Aaron's ram of consecration and wave it as a wave offering before *ADONAI*—so it will be your portion.

²⁷ "Set apart the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution, which is waved and offered up, from the ram of consecration, including what belongs to Aaron and his sons. ²⁸ It is to belong to Aaron and his sons as their due share forever from *Bnei-Yisrael*, because it is a contribution. It is to be a contribution from *Bnei-Yisrael* from their sacrifices of fellowship offerings, their contribution to *ADONAI*.

²⁹ "The holy garments of Aaron are to pass to his sons after him, to be anointed in them and to be consecrated in them. ³⁰ The son that succeeds him as *kohen*, who comes into the Tent of Meeting to minister in the holy place, is to put them on for seven days.

³¹ "You are to take the ram of consecration and boil its meat in a holy place. ³² Aaron and his sons are to eat the meat of the ram and the bread that is in the basket at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ³³ They are to eat those things with which atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them, but a layman is not to eat them, because they are holy. ³⁴ If some of the meat of the consecration or the bread remains until the morning, you are to burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

³⁵ "Do for Aaron and his sons everything according to what I have commanded you. Consecrate them for seven days. ³⁶ Each day you are to offer a bull as a sin offering, † apart from the other offerings of atonement. Also purify the altar when you make atonement for it, and anoint it in order to sanctify it. ³⁷ You are to make atonement for the altar for seven days, and so sanctify it. The altar will be most holy, and whatever touches it will become holy.

† cf. Heb. 10:11.

³⁸ "Now this is what you are to offer upon the altar: two one-year-old lambs, each day, continually. ³⁹ You are to offer one lamb in the morning and the other lamb at dusk. ⁴⁰ Offer along with the first lamb a tenth of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering. ⁴¹ The other lamb you are to offer at dusk, like the grain offering and drink offering of the morning, as a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*. ⁴² It is to be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before *ADONAI*. There I will meet with you, to speak with you there. ⁴³ I will meet with *Bnei-Yisrael* there. So it will be sanctified by My glory.

⁴⁴ "So I will sanctify the Tent of Meeting and the altar. I will also sanctify Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as *kohanim*. ⁴⁵ So I will dwell among *Bnei-Yisrael* and be their God. ⁴⁶ Then they will know that I am *ADONAI* their God, who brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, so that I may live among them. I am *ADONAI* their God.

Incense Altar

30 "You are to make an altar of acacia wood for burning incense. ² It is to be square—one cubit in length, one cubit wide, and two cubits high. The horns must be of one piece with it. ³ You are to overlay it with pure gold on top, all around the sides and over the horns. Also you are to make a crown of gold for it all around. ⁴ Make two golden rings for it under the crown on the two sides, and they will be holders for poles to carry it. ⁵ Make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. ⁶ You are to set it in front of the curtain that is in front of the Ark of the Testimony, in front of the atonement cover that is over the Testimony, where I will meet with you.

⁷ "Aaron must burn sweet spices of incense there every morning. When he attends to the lamps, he is to burn it. ⁸ Also when Aaron keeps the lamps lit at dusk he must burn it. There must be incense continually before *ADONAI*, throughout your generations. ⁹ You must not offer up unauthorized incense on it. Nor should any burnt offering or grain offering be there, nor should you pour any drink offering there. ¹⁰ Aaron is to make atonement upon the horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering throughout your generations. It is most holy to *ADONAI*."

Parashat Ki Tisa

Census and Ransom Money

¹¹ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² "When you tally the sum of *Bnei-Yisrael* by numbering them, then every man must pay a ransom for his soul to *ADONAI* when you count them, so that no plague will fall on them. ¹³ Everyone among them who crosses over must give half a shekel according to the Sanctuary shekel

(which is 20 gerahs): half a shekel as an offering to *ADONAI*.¹⁴ Everyone who crosses over among them who is counted, from 20 years old and upward, is to give the offering to *ADONAI*.¹⁵ The rich are not to give more and the poor are not to give less than the half shekel, when they present the offering of *ADONAI* to make atonement for your souls.¹⁶ You are to take the atonement money from *Bnei-Yisrael* and give it for the service of the Tent of Meeting, so that it may be a memorial for *Bnei-Yisrael* before *ADONAI*, to make atonement for your souls.”

Basin for Washing

¹⁷ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying,¹⁸ “You will also make a basin of bronze with a bronze stand for washing. You are to place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it.¹⁹ Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and their feet there.²⁰ Whenever they go into the Tent of Meeting or come near to the altar to minister, to present an offering made by fire in smoke to *ADONAI*, they are to wash with water so that they do not die.²¹ They are to wash their hands and their feet, so that they do not die. It is to be an eternal statute for them, to him and to his offspring throughout their generations.”

Holy Anointing Oil

²² Moreover *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying,²³ “Now take for yourself the best spices: 500 shekels of flowing myrrh, half as much sweet cinnamon (250), also 250 shekels of sweet calamus,²⁴ 500 of cassia, after the Sanctuary shekel, plus a hin[†] of olive oil.²⁵ You are to make holy anointing oil from it, a fragrant mixture, blended as the work of a perfumer. It will be holy anointing oil.²⁶ You are to anoint the Tent of Meeting with it, the Ark of the Testimony,²⁷ as well as the table and all its articles, the *menorah* and its articles, the altar of incense,²⁸ the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin along with its stand.²⁹ You are to consecrate them so that they will be most holy. Whatever touches them will become holy.

³⁰ “You are to anoint Aaron and his sons and consecrate them, so that they may minister to Me as *kohanim*.³¹ Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying, ‘This is to be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.³² It must not be poured on human flesh, nor are you to make any like it, with its formula. It is holy and it must be holy to you.³³ Whoever mixes any like it, or whoever puts any of it on anyone unauthorized, will be cut off from his people.”

³⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Take the sweet spices—stacte, onycha and galbanum. The spices and pure frankincense are to be in equal measures.³⁵ Make a fragrant mixture from them, a blend like the work of the perfumer, seasoned with salt, pure and holy.³⁶ You are to beat some of it into powder, and set

it before the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I will meet with you. It is to be most holy to you.³⁷ But the incense which you make, with its formula, you are not to make for yourselves. It is to be holy to you, for *ADONAI*.³⁸ Whoever makes any like it, to breathe in its smell, will be cut off from his people.”

Ruach -filled Craftsmen

31 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying,² “See, I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,³ and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, understanding and knowledge in all kinds of craftsmanship,⁴ to make ingenious designs, to forge with gold, silver and bronze,⁵ as well as cutting stones for setting and carving wood, to work in all manner of craftsmanship.⁶ Also look, I Myself have appointed with him Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Within the hearts of all who are wise-hearted I have placed skill, so that they may make everything that I have commanded you:⁷ the Tent of Meeting, the Ark of the Testimony, the atonement cover that is to be on it, all the furnishings of the Tabernacle,⁸ the table and its utensils, the *menorah* of pure gold with all of its utensils, the altar of incense,⁹ the altar of burnt offering with all of its utensils, the basin and its stand,¹⁰ the woven garments, the holy garments for Aaron the *kohen*, the garments for his sons to minister as *kohanim*,¹¹ the anointing oil, and the incense of sweet spices for the holy place. They are to make them just as how I commanded you.”

Shabbat : A Perpetual Covenant Sign

¹² Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying,¹³ “Speak now to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying, ‘Surely you must keep My *Shabbatot*, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, so you may know that I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies you.¹⁴ Therefore you are to keep the *Shabbat*, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it will die, for whoever does any work during *Shabbat*, that soul will be cut off from the midst of his people.¹⁵ Work is to be done for six days, but on the seventh day is a *Shabbat* of complete rest, holy to *ADONAI*. Whoever does any work on the *Shabbat* will surely be put to death.¹⁶ So *Bnei-Yisrael* is to keep the *Shabbat*, to observe the *Shabbat* throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.¹⁷ It is a sign between Me and *Bnei-Yisrael* forever, for in six days *ADONAI* made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and rested.”

¹⁸ When He had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave the two tablets of the Testimony to Moses—tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.

† *hin*

Molten Calf and Smashing Tablets

32 Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, "Get up, make us gods who will go before us. As for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what's become of him!"

² So Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden rings that are in the ears of your wives, your sons and your daughters, and bring them to me." ³ So all the people broke off the golden rings that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He received them from their hand, and made a molten calf, fashioned with a chiseling tool.

Then they said, "This is your god, Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"

⁵ When Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. Then Aaron made a proclamation saying, "Tomorrow will be a feast to *ADONAI*." ⁶ They rose up early the next morning, sacrificed burnt offerings and brought fellowship offerings. The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to make merry.

⁷ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go down! For your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have become debased. ⁸ They quickly turned aside from the path that I commanded for them. They have made a molten calf, worshiped it, and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'"

⁹ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰ Now therefore, leave Me alone, so My wrath may burn hot against them, and so I may consume them—and make from you a great nation!"

¹¹ Then Moses sought *ADONAI* his God and said, "*ADONAI*, why should Your wrath burn hot against Your people, whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

¹² Why should the Egyptians say, 'He brought them out to do evil, to slay them in the mountains, and to annihilate them from the face of the earth?' Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this destruction against Your people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of I will give to your offspring, and they will inherit it forever.'"

¹⁴ So *ADONAI* relented from the destruction that He said He would do to His people.

¹⁵ Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain, with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand, tablets that were written on both sides, on one and on the other. ¹⁶ The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷ When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of war within the camp." ¹⁸ But Moses said:

"It is not the voice of a shout of victory, nor is it the voice of crying from defeat, but I hear the sound of singing."

¹⁹ Then it happened, as soon as Moses came near the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing, and his anger burned hot. So he threw the tablets out of his hands, and smashed them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ Then he took the calf that they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on the surface of the water and made *Bnei-Yisrael* drink it.

²¹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you, to make you bring such a great sin upon them?"

²² Aaron said, "Don't be angry, my lord! You know these people yourself, and how they are set on evil.

²³ They said to me, 'Make gods for us, to go before us! As for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what happened to him.' ²⁴ So I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So they gave it to me and I threw it into the fire—and out came this calf!"

²⁵ When Moses saw that the people were unrestrained, because Aaron had let them run wild, to become a joke among their enemies, ²⁶ Moses stood at the gate of the camp and said, "Whoever is on *ADONAI*'s side, let him come to me." Then all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

²⁷ He said to them, "This is what *ADONAI*, the God of Israel says, 'Every man put on his sword, and go to and fro, from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay his brother, his friend, and his neighbor.'" ²⁸ So the sons of Levi did as Moses said, and that day from among the people there fell about 3,000 men.

²⁹ Then Moses said, "Consecrate your hands today to *ADONAI* so that He may give you a blessing today, for every man has been against his son and his brother."

³⁰ So it happened the following day, Moses said to the people, "You have committed a horrendous sin. So now I will go up to *ADONAI*—perhaps I can make atonement for your sin."

³¹ Then Moses returned to *ADONAI* and said, "Alas, these people have sinned greatly, and made gods of gold! ³² Yet now, please forgive their sin. But if not, please blot me out of Your book that You have written."

³³ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot out of My book. ³⁴ Now go, lead the people to the place that I told you about. My angel will go before you. Nevertheless, on the day when I take account, I will hold them accountable for their sin."

³⁵ So *ADONAI* struck the people because of what they did with the calf that Aaron had made.

33 Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Leave, get out of this place, you and the people that you have brought out of the land of Egypt, into the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob saying, 'I will give it to your seed.' ² I will send an angel before you. I will drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and the Jebusites. ³ Head up into a land flowing with milk and honey, but I will not move within the midst of you, so that I do not destroy you along the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."

⁴ When the people heard these dreadful words, they mourned, and no one put on any ornaments. ⁵ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Say to *Bnei-Yisrael*, 'You are a stiff-necked people. If I were going up among you for one moment, I would consume you. Take off your ornaments, so that I may consider what to do to you.'" ⁶ So *Bnei-Yisrael* stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb onward.

Show Me Your Glory!

⁷ Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the Tent of Meeting. So it happened, everyone who sought *ADONAI* would go out to the Tent of Meeting, which was outside the camp. ⁸ Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would arise and stand, everyone at the door of his own tent, and look after Moses, until he had gone into the Tent. ⁹ After Moses entered, the pillar of cloud descended, stood at the door, and He would speak with Moses. ¹⁰ When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the Tent, they all rose up and worshiped, every man at the entrance of his own tent. ¹¹ So *ADONAI* spoke with Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. Then he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, did not leave the Tent.

¹² So Moses said to *ADONAI* "You say to me, 'Bring up this people,' but You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My eyes.' ¹³ Now then, I pray, if I have found grace in Your eyes, show me Your ways, so that I may know You, so that I might find favor in Your sight. Consider also that this nation is Your people."

¹⁴ "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest," He answered.

¹⁵ But then he said to Him, "If Your presence does not go with me, don't let us go up from here! ¹⁶ For how would it be known that I or your people have found favor in Your sight? Isn't it because You go with us, that distinguishes us from all the people on the face of the earth?"

¹⁷ *ADONAI* answered Moses, "I will also do what you have said, for you have found favor in My sight, and I know you by name."

¹⁸ Then he said, "Please, show me Your glory!"

¹⁹ So He said, "I will cause all My goodness to pass before you, and call out the Name of *ADONAI* before you. I will be gracious toward whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will be merciful."

²⁰ But He also said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live."

²¹ Then *ADONAI* said, "See, a place near Me—you will stand on the rock. ²² While My glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and cover you with My hand, until I have passed by. ²³ Then I will take away My hand, and you will see My back, but My face will not be seen."

34 *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Carve for yourself two tablets of stone like the first ones, and I will write upon them the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. ² Be ready by the morning, come up to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain. ³ No one is to come up with you, and do not let anyone be seen throughout the entire mountain. Even the flocks and herds must not graze in front of that mountain."

⁴ So he carved two tablets of stone like the first. Then Moses rose up early in the morning, went up onto Mount Sinai as *ADONAI* had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tablets of stone. ⁵ Then *ADONAI* descended in the cloud, stood with him there, as he called on the Name of *ADONAI*.

Thirteen Attributes of God

⁶ Then *ADONAI* passed before him, and proclaimed, "*ADONAI*, *ADONAI*, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth, ⁷ showing mercy to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means leaving the guilty unpunished, but bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and fourth generation."

⁸ Then Moses quickly bowed his head down to the earth and worshiped. ⁹ He said, "If now I have found grace in Your eyes, my Lord, let my Lord please go within our midst, even though this is a stiff-necked people. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Your own inheritance."

Exclusive Covenant

¹⁰ Then He said, "I am cutting a covenant. Before all your people I will do wonders, such as have not been done in all the earth, or in any nation. All the people you are among will see the work of *ADONAI*—for what I am going to do with you will be awesome! ¹¹ Obey what I am commanding you today. Behold, I am going to drive out the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites before you. ¹² Watch yourself, and make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, or they will become a snare among you. ¹³ Instead you must break down their altars, smash their pillars and cut down their Asherah

poles. ¹⁴ For you are to bow down to no other god, because *ADONAI* is jealous for His Name—He is a jealous God.

¹⁵ “See that you do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land. Otherwise when they prostitute themselves with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, someone will invite you, and you will eat from their sacrifice. ¹⁶ Do not take their daughters for your sons, for their daughters will prostitute themselves with their own gods, and cause your sons to prostitute themselves with their gods.

¹⁷ “You are not to make for yourselves metal gods.

¹⁸ “You are to keep the Feast of *Matzot*. For seven days you are to eat *matzot*, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month Aviv, for in the month Aviv you came out from Egypt.

¹⁹ “Every firstborn of the womb is Mine, and from all your cattle you are to sanctify the males, the firstborn of the ox and sheep. ²⁰ A firstborn donkey you are to redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, then you are to break its neck. You must redeem all your firstborn sons. No one should appear before Me empty-handed.

²¹ “For six days you will work, but on the seventh day you will rest. During plowing time and harvest you must rest.

²² “You are to observe the Feast of *Shavuot*, which is the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, as well as the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year. ²³ Three times during the year all your males are to appear before *ADONAI Elohim*, God of Israel. ²⁴ For I am going to cast out nations before you, then enlarge your territory. So no one will covet your land when you go up to appear before *ADONAI* your God three times in the year.

²⁵ “You are not to offer the blood of My sacrifice with *hametz*, nor should the sacrifice of the Passover Festival remain until morning.

²⁶ “You are to bring the choicest firstfruits of your land to the House of *ADONAI* your God.

“You must not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.”

²⁷ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Write these words, for based on these words I have cut a covenant with you and with Israel.” ²⁸ So he stayed there with *ADONAI* for 40 days and 40 nights, and he did not eat bread or drink water. He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant: the Ten Words. †

²⁹ Now it happened, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand when he came down from the mountain, that Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant, because God had spoken with him. ³⁰ When Aaron and all *Bnei-Yisrael* saw Moses, the skin of his face shone in rays, so they were afraid to come near him.

³¹ But Moses called out to them, so Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke to them. ³² Afterward all *Bnei-Yisrael* came near,

and he gave them all the *mitzvot* that *ADONAI* had spoken to him in Mount Sinai.

³³ When Moses was done speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴ But when Moses went before *ADONAI*, so that He could speak with him, he took the veil off until he came out. When he came out and spoke to *Bnei-Yisrael* what he was commanded, ³⁵ *Bnei-Yisrael* saw the face of Moses and that the skin of his face glistened. So Moses put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

Parashat Vayakhel

Offerings for the Tabernacle

35 Then Moses assembled all the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* and said to them, “These are the words which *ADONAI* has commanded you to do.

² Work is to be done for six days, but the seventh day is a holy day for you, a *Shabbat* of complete rest to *ADONAI*. Whoever does any work then will die. ³ Do not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on *Yom Shabbat*.”

⁴ Moses also said to all the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael*, “This is the word which *ADONAI* commanded saying: ⁵ Take from among you an offering for *ADONAI*. Whoever has a willing heart, let him bring *ADONAI*’s offering: gold, silver and bronze; ⁶ blue, purple and scarlet cloth; fine linen and goat hair; ⁷ ram skins dyed red, sealskins and acacia wood; ⁸ oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; ⁹ onyx stones, and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastplate.

¹⁰ “Let every wise-hearted man among you come and make everything that *ADONAI* has commanded, including ¹¹ the Tabernacle, its tent and its covering, its clasps and its boards, its crossbars, its pillars and its bases; ¹² the Ark and the poles, the atonement cover and the curtain screen; ¹³ the table and its poles with all of its utensils, along with the bread of the Presence; ¹⁴ also the *menorah* for light with its utensils, its lamps and the oil for the light; ¹⁵ the altar of incense and its poles, the anointing oil, the sweet incense, and the screen for the entrance of the Tabernacle; ¹⁶ the altar of burnt offering with its grating of bronze, its poles and all its utensils, the basin and its stand; ¹⁷ the hangings of the courtyard, the pillars and their bases, and the curtain for the gate of the courtyard; ¹⁸ the pegs of the Tabernacle and of the courtyard, along with their cords; ¹⁹ the woven garments for ministering in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the *kohen* and for his sons, to minister as *kohanim*.”

²⁰ Then all the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* departed from before Moses. ²¹ Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit was willing came and brought *ADONAI*’s offering for the work of the Tent of Meeting and for all its service as well as for the holy garments. ²² So they came, both men and women,

† Or Ten Commandments

everyone whose heart compelled him, and brought nose rings, earrings, signet rings, bracelets, and all kinds of golden jewels—everyone who brought a wave offering of gold to *ADONAI*.²³ Everyone who had blue, purple, scarlet, fine linen, goat hair, ram skins dyed red or sealskins brought them.²⁴ Everyone who could make a contribution of silver or bronze brought *ADONAI*'s offering, and every man who had acacia wood of any use for service brought it.²⁵ Also all the women who were wise-hearted spun with their hands, and brought what they had woven—the blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen.²⁶ All the women whose heart stirred them up with wisdom spun the goat hair.²⁷ Also the leaders brought onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastplate,²⁸ along with the spice, the oil for the light and for anointing and for the sweet incense.²⁹ Every man and woman whose heart made them willing gave toward all the work that *ADONAI* had commanded to be done by Moses' hand. So *Bnei-Yisrael* brought it as a freewill offering to *ADONAI*.

³⁰ Then Moses said to *Bnei-Yisrael*, "See, *ADONAI* has called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.³¹ He has filled him with the *Ruach* of God, with wisdom, understanding and knowledge, in all manner of craftsmanship,³² to make ingenious designs, to work in gold, silver and bronze,³³ as well as cutting gemstones for setting, wood carving, to make all kinds of skillful craftsmanship.³⁴ He has also placed in his heart the ability to teach—both he and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.³⁵ He has filled them with wisdom of heart to forge all the works of an engraver, an artisan, and an embroiderer in blue, purple, scarlet and in fine linen, as well as weaving—they can perform every craft and ingenious designs.

More Than Enough!

36 "So Bezalel and Oholiab are to work, along with every wise-hearted man in whom *ADONAI* has placed insight and understanding to know how to perform all the labor for the service of the Sanctuary, according to everything *ADONAI* has commanded."

² Then Moses called Bezalel, Oholiab and all the wise-hearted men in whose minds *ADONAI* had set wisdom, along with everyone whose heart stirred him up to come do the work.³ They received from Moses the entire offering that *Bnei-Yisrael* had brought for the work of the service of the Sanctuary, to build it. They brought freewill offerings to him morning after morning.⁴ Then all the skilled men who were doing all the work of the Sanctuary came, one by one from the work he was doing,⁵ and said to Moses, "The people are bringing much more than enough for the work of this construction that *ADONAI* has commanded to be done."

⁶ So Moses gave an order, and they proclaimed it throughout the camp saying, "Let neither man nor woman make anything else as an offering for the

Sanctuary." So the people were restrained from bringing more.⁷ For the work material they had was sufficient for all the work, with much left over.

⁸ So all the wise-hearted men among them did the work. They made the Tabernacle with ten curtains of finely twisted linen, along with blue, purple and scarlet, with *cheruvim*—the work of a skillful craftsman.⁹ The length of each curtain was 28 cubits and the width of each curtain was four cubits. All the curtains had one measure.¹⁰ Then he coupled five curtains to one another, and the other five curtains he also coupled together.¹¹ He made blue loops on the edge of the curtain that was outermost within the first set. He did the same along the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the second set.¹² He made 50 loops in one curtain and 50 loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set, so that the loops were opposite to one another.¹³ Also he made 50 clasps of gold and coupled the curtains one to another with the clasps, so the Tabernacle was one.

¹⁴ Then he made curtains from goat hair for a tent over the Tabernacle. He made eleven curtains.¹⁵ The length of each curtain was 30 cubits, and the width of each was four cubits. The eleven curtains had one measure.¹⁶ He coupled five curtains by themselves, and six other curtains by themselves.¹⁷ He made 50 loops on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the first set and 50 loops on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the second set.¹⁸ Also he made 50 bronze clasps to couple the tent together, so that it would be one.¹⁹ Then he made a covering for the tent of ram skins, dyed red, along with a covering of seal-skins above.

²⁰ He also made the framework of boards for the Tabernacle from acacia wood, standing upright.²¹ The length of a board was ten cubits, the width was a cubit and a half.²² Each board had two supports, joined one to another. He did this for all the boards of the Tabernacle.²³ So he built the boards for the Tabernacle, 20 boards from the south side southward.²⁴ And he made 40 silver bases under the 20 boards, two bases under one board for its two supports, and two bases under another board for its two supports.²⁵ Also for the second side of the Tabernacle, on the north side, he made 20 boards,²⁶ along with their 40 silver bases, two under one board and two under the next.²⁷ For the back part of the Tabernacle westward he made six boards.²⁸ He also made two boards for the corners of the Tabernacle in the back,²⁹ so that they could be doubled underneath, and in same way to be fixed to the top, at the first ring. He did this for both of them at the two corners.³⁰ So there were eight boards, along with their silver bases, 16 in all, two under each board.

³¹ Then he made crossbars from acacia wood, five for the boards on one side of the Tabernacle,³² five for the boards on the other side of the Tabernacle, and five crossbars for the boards of the Tabernacle for the back part, westward.³³ He built the middle crossbar to

pass through, in the center of the boards, from one end to the other. ³⁴ He overlaid the boards with gold and made golden rings for them, as holders for the crossbars, and overlaid the crossbars with gold.

³⁵ Then he made the curtain of blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen, along with the *cheruvim*, the work of a skillful craftsman. ³⁶ He made four pillars of acacia, and overlaid them with gold, having golden hooks, and he cast four silver bases for them. ³⁷ Then he made a *parokhet* for the entrance of the tent, of blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen, the work of a color weaver. ³⁸ Also he made the five pillars with their hooks, and overlaid their capitals and bands with gold, along with their five bronze bases.

Ark, Table, Menorah, Incense Altar

37 Bezalel also made the Ark from acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. ² He overlaid it with pure gold inside and out, and made a crown of gold for it all around. ³ He cast four golden rings for it, in the four feet, two rings on the one side, and two on the other. ⁴ He also made poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold. ⁵ Then he put the poles into the rings on the sides of the Ark, to carry the Ark.

⁶ He made an atonement cover of pure gold, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide. ⁷ Then he forged two *cheruvim* of gold, from hammered work, at the two ends of the atonement cover, ⁸ one *cheruv* at one end, and one *cheruv* at the other. He made the atonement cover from a single piece with the *cheruvim* on the two ends. ⁹ So the *cheruvim* spread out their wings on high, overshadowing the atonement cover with their wings, with their faces to one another, and the faces of the *cheruvim* toward the atonement cover.

¹⁰ Then he made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long, a cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high. ¹¹ He overlaid it with pure gold and made a golden crown all around. ¹² Also he made a border for it, a hand-width around, and made a golden crown for the border all around. ¹³ He cast four golden rings for it, and put the rings into the four corners that were on the four feet. ¹⁴ The rings were close to the borders, as holders for the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵ He also made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold, to carry the table. ¹⁶ He forged the articles that were on the table, the dishes, pans, bowls and jars, with which to pour, out of pure gold.

¹⁷ Then he made the *menorah* of pure gold, of hammered work, even its base, its stem, its cups, its bulbs and its flowers, were one piece with it. ¹⁸ There were six branches going out of the sides, three branches out of one side, and three branches out of the other. ¹⁹ Three cups made like almond blossoms were in one branch, a bulb within a flower, and three cups made like almond blossoms in the next branch, another bulb within a flower. It was just so for the six branches go-

ing out of the *menorah*. ²⁰ Also within the *menorah* were four cups made like almond blossoms, bulbs and flowers, ²¹ with a bulb under two branches of one piece, a second bulb under two branches of another piece, and a bulb under two branches of a third piece, for six branches extending out of it. ²² Their bulbs and their branches were one piece with it, an entire hammered work of pure gold.

²³ He also made the seven lamps, along with tongs and censers of pure gold. ²⁴ He made them from a talent of pure gold, along with all the pieces.

²⁵ He made the altar of incense from acacia wood, a cubit long, a cubit wide, squared, and two cubits high. The horns were one piece with it. ²⁶ Then he overlaid it with pure gold on top, on the sides all around and over its horns. Also he made a crown of gold for it all around. ²⁷ He made two golden rings for it underneath the crown, on two sides as holders for poles in order to carry it. ²⁸ He made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold.

²⁹ Then he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, the blend of a perfumer.

Altar for Sacrifices

38 He then made the altar for burnt offering from acacia wood. It was square, five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high. ² He also made the horns on the four corners from one piece, and overlaid it with bronze. ³ Then he made all the utensils for the altar—the pots and the shovels, the basins, the forks and the fire pans. He made all the utensils from bronze. ⁴ He also made a bronze grating net for the altar, under the ledge around it, reaching halfway up. ⁵ He cast four rings for the four ends of the bronze grating, to be holders for the poles. ⁶ He made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with bronze. ⁷ Then he put the poles into the rings on the sides of the altar to carry it, and he made it hollow, out of boards.

⁸ He made the basin and the base from bronze, with mirrors from the women who served at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

⁹ Then he made the courtyard. For the south side the hangings of the courtyard were finely twisted linen, 100 cubits long. ¹⁰ There were 20 pillars and 20 bronze bases. The hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver. ¹¹ Likewise, for the north side, 100 cubits long, with 20 bronze pillars and bases, and the hooks for the pillars and their bands were silver. ¹² For the west side the hangings were 50 cubits, with ten pillars and their ten bases, as well as the hooks for the pillars and their silver bands. ¹³ Likewise, for the east side, 50 cubits long. ¹⁴ The hangings for one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with three pillars and their bases. ¹⁵ Similarly for the other side, on either side of the gate of the courtyard were hangings of 15 cubits, with their three pillars and three bases. ¹⁶ All the hangings of the courtyard all around were of finely twisted

linen. ¹⁷ The bases for the pillars were bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver, the overlaying of their capitals were silver, and all the pillars of the courtyard were ringed with silver.

¹⁸ The curtain for the gate of the courtyard was the work of a color weaver, of blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen. It was 20 cubits long and five cubits high, like the hangings of the courtyard. ¹⁹ Their four pillars and four bases were bronze. Their hooks along with the overlaying of their capitals and their bands were silver. ²⁰ All the pegs of the Tabernacle and the courtyard all around were bronze.

Parashat Pekudei

²¹ These are the accounts of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, as they were recorded according to the commandment of Moses, by the service of the Levites, under the hand of Ithamar son of Aaron the *kohen*.

²² Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur of the tribe of Judah made all that *ADONAI* commanded Moses. ²³ Along with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, a craftsman, a skillful workman, and a weaver of colors, in blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen.

²⁴ The entirety of the gold that was used for the work of the Sanctuary, including the gold of the offering, was 29 talents [†] and 730 shekels, according to the Sanctuary shekel. ²⁵ The silver from those numbered from the congregation was 100 talents and 1,775 shekels, according to the Sanctuary shekel— ²⁶ that is, a beka, or half a shekel per head, according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, for everyone who was recorded, from 20 years old and upward, for 603,550 men.

²⁷ The 100 talents of silver were for casting the bases of the Sanctuary, and the bases for the inner curtain, 100 bases for 100 talents, a talent for each base. ²⁸ The 1,775 shekels he made into hooks for the pillars, overlaid their capitals, and made bands for them.

²⁹ The bronze from the offering was 70 talents and 2,400 shekels. ³⁰ With it he made the bases for the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, the bronze altar, the bronze grating, all the utensils for the altar, ³¹ along with the bases of the courtyard all around, the bases for the gate of the courtyard, as well as all the pegs of the Tabernacle and the pegs for the courtyard all around.

Holy Garments for Aaron and His Sons

39 Next they made woven garments of blue, purple and scarlet, for ministering in the holy place. They made the holy garments for Aaron, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

² He made the ephod of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen. ³ They hammered the gold into thin plates, and cut it into threads, to work it in with the blue, purple and scarlet, within the fine linen, the work of a skillful craftsman. ⁴ Then they made shoul-

der pieces for it, joined together at the two ends. ⁵ The artfully woven band on the ephod, with which to gird it, was of the same piece and the same kind of workmanship of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

⁶ They placed the onyx stones, enclosed in settings of gold, etched with the engravings of a signet seal, according to the names of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁷ He put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, to be memorial stones for *Bnei-Yisrael*, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

⁸ He made the breastplate, the work of a skillful craftsman, like the work of the ephod, of gold, blue, purple, scarlet and finely twisted linen. ⁹ It was square and folded doubled, a span long and a span wide.

¹⁰ They mounted within it four rows of stones. A row of ruby, topaz and emerald were the first row. ¹¹ In the second row were a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond. ¹² In the third row were a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst, ¹³ and in the fourth row were a beryl, an onyx and a jasper. They were enclosed in fittings of gold within their settings. ¹⁴ The stones corresponded to the names of *Bnei-Yisrael*, like the engravings of a signet seal, each one according to its name for the twelve tribes.

¹⁵ They attached braided chains to the breastplate, of wreathed work from pure gold. ¹⁶ They made two settings of gold, and two golden rings, and set the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. ¹⁷ They attached the two golden chains to the two rings at the ends of the breastplate. ¹⁸ The other two ends of the chains they placed on the two settings, and fastened them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, in the front. ¹⁹ They also made two golden rings, and set them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge that was toward the side of the ephod facing inward.

²⁰ They made two more rings of gold, and put them on the two shoulder pieces of the ephod underneath, in the front, enclosed by their coupling, above the artfully woven band of the ephod. ²¹ Then they bound the breastplate by the rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue thread, so that it would rest on the artfully woven band and not be loosened from the ephod, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

²² He also made the robe of the ephod from woven work, all of blue, ²³ with a hole in the center of the robe, and a binding woven around the hole as a collar, so that it would not be torn. ²⁴ They also made, on the hem of the robe, pomegranates of blue, purple, scarlet and twisted linen. ²⁵ Then they made bells of pure gold and put the bells between the pomegranates on the hem of the robe all around, between the pomegranates, ²⁶ a bell and a pomegranate, then another bell and a pomegranate, all around on the hem of the robe, to minister in, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

²⁷ Then they made the sashes of fine linen, woven work for Aaron and for his sons, ²⁸ the turban of fine linen, the headwear, the linen undergarments of finely twisted linen, ²⁹ along with the tunic of checkered

[†] A talent

work, in blue, purple and scarlet, the work of a color weaver, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

³⁰ Finally they made the plate of the holy coronet from pure gold, and wrote an inscription on it, like the engraving of a signet seal: HOLY TO *ADONAI*. ³¹ They tied to it a blue thread, to fasten onto the turban above, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

³² So all the work of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, was finished. *Bnei-Yisrael* did everything according to what *ADONAI* had commanded Moses—they did it just so. ³³ Then they brought the Tabernacle to Moses, along with the tent and all of its furnishings, its clasps, its boards, its crossbars, its pillars, and its bases; ³⁴ along with the covering of ram skins dyed red, and the covering of sealskins, the veil of the curtain; ³⁵ as well as the Ark of the Testimony with its poles, and the atonement cover; ³⁶ the table and all of its utensils, the showbread; ³⁷ the pure *menorah* with its lamps to be set in order, along with all of its utensils, and oil for the light; ³⁸ the golden altar, the anointing oil, the sweet incense, and the curtain for the entrance of the tent; ³⁹ the bronze altar, its grating and its poles along with all of its utensils, and the basin and its base; ⁴⁰ the hangings for the courtyard, with its pillars, its bases and the curtain for the gate of the courtyard, with its cords and its pegs, along with all the instruments for the service of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting; ⁴¹ as well as the woven garments for ministering in the Sanctuary, the holy garments for Aaron the *kohen* and for his sons to serve as *kohanim*.

⁴² According to everything that *ADONAI* had commanded Moses, *Bnei-Yisrael* had done all the work just so. ⁴³ When Moses saw the entire work, and that they had done it just as *ADONAI* had commanded, Moses blessed them.

Setting up the Tabernacle

40 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²“On the first day of the first month, you will set up the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting. ³You are to put the Ark of the Testimony there, and screen off the Ark with the curtain. ⁴Then bring in the table, and set in order the bread that is on it. Bring in the *menorah* and light its lamps. ⁵Set the golden incense altar in front of the Ark of the Testimony, and hang the curtain over the entrance of the Tabernacle.

⁶“Set the altar of burnt offering before the entrance of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting. ⁷Set up the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and put water in it. ⁸Set up the courtyard all around, and hang the curtain of the gate of the courtyard.

⁹“Take the anointing oil and anoint the Tabernacle, and everything within it, and consecrate it, along with all of its furnishings, and it will be holy. ¹⁰Also you are to anoint the altar of burnt offering with all of its utensils and consecrate the altar. The altar will be most

holy. ¹¹Then you are to anoint the basin along with its base and sanctify it.

¹²“Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and wash them with water. ¹³Put the holy garments on Aaron, anoint him and consecrate him, so that he may minister to Me as a *kohen*. ¹⁴Also bring his sons and put tunics upon them. ¹⁵You are to anoint them, as you did their father, so that they too may minister to Me as *kohanim*. Their anointing will be for an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.” ¹⁶Moses did so, just as *ADONAI* had commanded him.

¹⁷Now it happened during the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the Tabernacle was raised up. ¹⁸Moses raised the Tabernacle, and laid its bases, set up the framework of boards, put in the crossbars and set up its pillars. ¹⁹Then he spread the tent over the Tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on it, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

²⁰He placed the Testimony into the Ark, set the poles on the Ark, and put the atonement cover on top of the Ark. ²¹He brought the Ark into the Tabernacle, set up the curtain as a screen, and screened off the Ark of the Testimony, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

²²Then he set up the table inside the Tent of Meeting, on the side of the Tabernacle northward, outside the curtain. ²³He set a row of bread in order upon it before *ADONAI*, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses. ²⁴Then he placed the *menorah* in the Tent of Meeting, over against the table, on the south side of the Tabernacle. ²⁵Then he lit the lamps before *ADONAI*, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

²⁶Next he placed the golden altar in the Tent of Meeting before the curtain, ²⁷and he burned sweet spices of incense there, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses. ²⁸He hung the curtain over the entrance of the Tabernacle. ²⁹Then he set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the grain offering, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

³⁰Next he set up the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing, ³¹so that Moses, Aaron and his sons could wash their hands and their feet there. ³²When they went into the Tent of Meeting and when they came near to the altar, they washed, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

³³He set up the courtyard around the Tabernacle and the altar and set up the screen at the gate of the courtyard. So Moses finished the work.

Glory Fills the Tabernacle

³⁴Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of *ADONAI* filled the Tabernacle. ³⁵Moses was unable to enter into the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud resided there and the glory of *ADONAI* filled the Tabernacle.

³⁶ Now whenever the cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, *Bnei-Yisrael* went onward, throughout all their journeys. ³⁷ But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not move out until the day that it was.

³⁸ For the cloud of *ADONAI* was on the Tabernacle by day and a fire was there by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

Leviticus

Leviticus Introduction

Known in the English Bible as a priestly manual for the Levites, Leviticus gives voice to the way a priestly nation is to enter the holy presence of the living God. The Hebrew name of the book highlights the narrative aspect of Israel's spiritual journey, as explained by God at Sinai: —meaning “and He called.” Though it contains many instructions for priests, readers do well to consider how it gives important information for all.

In the days of , every Jewish child would learn the opening words of as one's very first introduction to , “God's Instruction.” The rabbis used to say, “Let the pure come and occupy themselves with the things that are pure.” The child would listen to the Word and then be given honey to associate God's Word with “sweetness.” God's is sweet. Only a whole offering or —giving God your all—was needed to maintain a wholehearted love for God (Lev. 1:4). But when this relationship was broken, something more was required: a life for a life—thus a sacrifice, an often bloody ordeal described and accentuated in this book.

Leviticus teaches that both a sin offering and a guilt offering are required to restore the relationship with God that has been cut off by iniquities, transgressions, and rebelliousness. The sin offering cleanses, and the guilt offering provides economic remedy for wrongs. The guilt offering must be a living sacrifice, a blood offering, that cannot be reduced—even if the wrongdoer lacks resources to purchase the sacrifice. To satisfy this lawful demand on our behalf, Messiah's life had to be poured out as a living sacrifice (Lev. 17:11 cf. Lev. 5:11-13). offering of his life with redemptive significance fulfilled the demand for atonement (Heb. 9:22; Isa. 53:10).

Leviticus taught priests how to maintain the ritual purity of the Tabernacle, so that the Holy One could dwell in the nation's midst (Lev. 8:15, 19, 16:14-16). In the New Covenant community, the inner person's thought life must be similarly cleansed (Matt. 5:17-20; 2 Cor. 10:5-6). Here, the sanctity of the inner person must be pure because the New Covenant priest is granted access to the Holy One in heaven itself (Heb. 9:21, 23-26, 10:19-22; Eph. 2:6). In fact, the “one who overcomes” could be given opportunity to sit enthroned with Messiah Himself (Rev. 3:21). Small wonder Messiah calls His holy ones () His friends (John 15:15-17). Though Leviticus pertains to the Levites, it thus really pertains to all.

Leviticus Headings

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Parashat Vayikra

Offerings Without Defect

1 Now *ADONAI* called to Moses and spoke to him out of the Tent of Meeting, saying: ²“Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and tell them: When anyone of you brings an offering [†] to *ADONAI*, you may present your offering of livestock, from the herd or from the flock. ³“If his sacrifice is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to present a male without blemish. He is to offer it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, so that he may be accepted before *ADONAI*. ⁴ He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, so that it will be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. ⁵ He is to slaughter the bull before *ADONAI*. Then Aaron’s sons, the *kohanim*, are to present the blood and splash it around on the altar that is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁶ He is to skin the burnt offering and cut it into pieces. ⁷ The sons of Aaron the *kohen* are to place fire on the altar and arrange wood upon the fire. ⁸ Then Aaron’s sons, the *kohanim*, shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat upon the wood that is on the fire which is atop the altar. ⁹ But its innards and its legs he is to wash with water. The *kohen* should burn it all up as smoke on the altar, for a burnt offering made by fire—a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*. ¹⁰“If his sacrifice is from the flock, from the sheep or from the goats, for a burnt offering, he should bring a male without blemish. ¹¹ He is to slaughter it on the north side of the altar before *ADONAI*. Aaron’s sons, the *kohanim*, are to splash its blood around on the altar. ¹² He is to cut it into pieces, with its head and its fat. The *kohen* should then arrange them upon the wood that is on the fire that is atop the altar, ¹³ but the

innards and the legs he is to wash with water. The *kohen* is to offer it all, and burn it on the altar. It is a burnt offering, made by fire—a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*.

¹⁴“If his sacrifice to *ADONAI* is a burnt offering of birds, then he should bring his offering of turtledoves or young pigeons. ¹⁵ The *kohen* is to bring it to the altar, wring off its head, and burn it on the altar. Then its blood is to be drained out on the side of the altar. ¹⁶ Also he is to cut out its digestive tract with its filth, and cast it beside the altar on the east side, into the place of the fat ashes. ¹⁷ He should tear it by its wings, but not divide it up. The *kohen* should burn it upon the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. It is a burnt offering, made by fire—a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*.

Matzah Flour Offerings

2 “When anyone brings a sacrifice offering of grain to *ADONAI*, his offering should be of fine flour, and he is to pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. ² He is to bring it to Aaron’s sons, the *kohanim*, and he shall take from there his handful of its fine flour, and of its oil, with all its frankincense. Then the *kohen* shall burn up as smoke its memorial portion on the altar, an offering made by fire—a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*. ³ What is left of the grain offering is for Aaron and his sons, a most holy portion of the offerings to *ADONAI* made by fire.

⁴“When you bring a sacrifice offering of grain baked in the oven, it is to consist of *matzah* cakes of fine flour mixed with oil or *matzah* wafers anointed with oil. ⁵ If your sacrifice is a grain offering from the pan, it is to consist of fine flour, mixed with oil, *matzah*. ⁶ You should cut it in pieces and pour oil on it. It is a grain offering.

⁷“Now if your sacrifice is a grain offering of the pan, it is to be made of fine flour with oil. ⁸ When you bring

[†] Hebrew *Korba*

the grain offering that is made of these things to *ADONAI*, it is to be presented to the *kohen* and he is to bring it to the altar. ⁹The *kohen* is to take from the grain offering its memorial portion, and burn it up as smoke on the altar, an offering made by fire—a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*. ¹⁰What is left of the grain offering is for Aaron and his sons, a most holy portion of the offerings to *ADONAI* made by fire.

¹¹“Every grain offering which you present to *ADONAI* should be made without *hametz*, for you are not to burn up as smoke any *hametz* nor any honey as a sacrifice made by fire to *ADONAI*. ¹²As a gift of firstfruits you may offer them to *ADONAI*, but they are not to ascend for a soothing aroma on the altar. ¹³Also you are to season with salt every sacrifice of your grain offering. You are never to allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your sacrifices you must offer salt.

¹⁴“If you bring a grain offering of firstfruits to *ADONAI*, you are to present for the grain offering of your firstfruits of fresh ears of barley, scorched with fire—crushed grain of fresh ears. ¹⁵You are then to put oil and frankincense on it. It is a grain offering. ¹⁶The *kohen* shall burn up as its memorial portion part of its crushed grain and part of its oil, along with all its frankincense. It is an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*.

Shalom Offerings

3 “Now if his offering is a sacrifice of fellowship offerings, if from the herd, whether male or female, he is to offer one without blemish before *ADONAI*. ²He shall lay his hand on the head of his offering and slaughter it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. Then Aaron’s sons, the *kohanim*, are to splash the blood around on the altar. ³He is to bring from the sacrifice of fellowship offerings an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*, the fat that covers the innards, all the fat that is on the entrails, ⁴as well as the two kidneys and the fat that is on them which is by the loins, plus the cover on the liver that he must remove with the kidneys. ⁵Aaron’s sons are to burn it up as smoke on the altar on top of the burnt offering, which is over the wood that is on the fire. It is an offering made by fire—a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*.

⁶“If his gift for a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to *ADONAI* is from the flock, he is to offer a male or female without blemish. ⁷If he is bringing a lamb for his offering, he should present it before *ADONAI*. ⁸He is to lay his hand on the head of his offering and slaughter it before the Tent of Meeting. Aaron’s sons are to splash its blood around on the altar. ⁹From the sacrifice of fellowship offerings he should bring a gift made by fire to *ADONAI*. Its fat—the entire tail fat cut away close to the backbone, along with the fat that covers the innards and all the fat that is on the entrails, ¹⁰as well as the two kidneys and the fat that is over them which is by the loins, plus the cover on the liver that he is to remove with the kidneys. ¹¹The *kohen* is to burn

it up as smoke on the altar—as a food offering made by fire to *ADONAI*.

¹²“If his offering is a goat then he should present it before *ADONAI*. ¹³He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it before the Tent of Meeting. Aaron’s sons are to splash its blood around on the altar. ¹⁴From it he is to offer as his sacrifice an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*, the fat that covers the innards, all the fat that is on the entrails, ¹⁵the two kidneys and the fat that is over them, which is by the loins, and the cover on the liver, which he must remove with the kidneys. ¹⁶The *kohen* is to burn them on the altar. It is the food of the offering made by fire, for a soothing aroma. All fat is for *ADONAI*.

¹⁷“It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings, that you must eat neither fat nor blood.”

Sacrifices for Unintentional Sins

4 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: If anyone sins unintentionally in any of *ADONAI*’s *mitzvot* that are not to be done, and commits any one of them ³—or if the anointed *kohen* sins so as to bring guilt on the people—then let him offer for his sin which he has committed, a young bull without blemish to *ADONAI* for a sin offering. ⁴He is to bring the bull to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before *ADONAI*, lay his hand on the head of the bull, and slaughter it before *ADONAI*. ⁵The anointed *kohen* should take some of the blood of the bull, and bring it to the Tent of Meeting. ⁶The *kohen* is to dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before *ADONAI*, before the curtain of the Sanctuary. ⁷The *kohen* should put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before *ADONAI*, which is in the Tent of Meeting, and he is to pour out all of the rest of the blood of the bull at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁸He is to take all the fat of the bull of the sin offering off of it, the fat that covers the innards, all the fat that is on the entrails, ⁹the two kidneys and the fat that is over them which is by the loins, and the cover on the liver, which he is to remove with the kidneys, ¹⁰just as it is removed from the bull of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings. The *kohen* should burn them up as smoke on the altar of burnt offering. ¹¹The bull’s hide, all its flesh, with its head, along with its legs, its innards and its dung— ¹²the entire bull—he is to carry outside the camp to a clean place, where the fat ashes are poured out, and burn it over wood in the fire. It is to be burned on top of the place of pouring fat ashes.

¹³“Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins, but the deed is hidden from the eyes of the community, yet they have done one of *ADONAI*’s *mitzvot* that are not to be done, then they are guilty. ¹⁴When the sin that they committed becomes known, then the community is to offer a young bull for a sin offering, and bring it before the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁵The elders of the

congregation are to lay their hands on the head of the bull before *ADONAI*, and the bull is to be slaughtered before *ADONAI*.¹⁶ The anointed *kohen* should bring some of the blood from the bull to the Tent of Meeting.¹⁷ Then the *kohen* is to dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before *ADONAI*, before the curtain.¹⁸ He is to put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is before *ADONAI*, in the Tent of Meeting, and the rest of the blood he is to pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.¹⁹ He is to take all its fat from it, and burn it up as smoke on the altar.²⁰ He is also to do with the bull just as he did with the bull of the sin offering—he must do the same with it. So the *kohen* shall make atonement for them—and they will be forgiven.²¹ Then he is to carry the bull outside the camp and burn it as he burned the first bull. It is the sin offering for the community.

²² “When a ruler sins and unwittingly does one of the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* his God that are not to be done, then he is guilty.²³ When his sin that he committed is made known to him, he is to bring as his offering a goat, a male without blemish.²⁴ He is to lay his hand on the head of the goat and slaughter it in the place where they slaughter the burnt offering before *ADONAI*. It is a sin offering.²⁵ The *kohen* should take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering. He is to pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering.²⁶ He is to burn all its fat on the altar, just like the fat of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings. So the *kohen* shall make atonement for him concerning his sin—and he will be forgiven.

²⁷ “When anyone of the common people sins unwittingly by doing one of *ADONAI*’s *mitzvot* that are not to be done, then he is guilty.²⁸ When his sin that he committed is made known to him, then he is to bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for his sin that he committed.²⁹ He is to lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and then slaughter it at the place of burnt offering.³⁰ The *kohen* is to take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering. He is to pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar.³¹ He is to take away all its fat, just like the fat is taken away from off of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings. And the *kohen* should burn it on the altar for a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*. So the *kohen* is to make atonement for him—and he will be forgiven.

Sin Offerings

³² “Now if he brings a lamb as his sacrifice for a sin offering, he is to bring a female without blemish.³³ He is to lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and slaughter it at the place where they slaughter the burnt offering.³⁴ The *kohen* should take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering. Then all the

rest of its blood he is to pour out at the base of the altar.³⁵ He must remove all its fat, just as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of fellowship offerings. Then the *kohen* is to burn them on the altar, on *ADONAI*’s offerings by fire. So the *kohen* shall make atonement for him over the sin that he committed—and he will be forgiven.

5 “If a soul sins—after hearing a charge of an oath, and he is a witness whether he has seen or otherwise known—if he fails to report it, then he will bear his guilt.

² “Or if a person touches any unclean thing—whether it is the carcass of an unclean animal or the carcass of unclean livestock or the carcass of unclean creeping things, though it is hidden from him, still he is unclean and he will be guilty.

³ “Or if he touches some human uncleanness, whatever his filth is by which he is unclean, though it is hidden from him, when he knows of it, then he will be guilty.

⁴ “Or if a person swears rashly with his lips to do evil or to do good—about anything that one might utter rashly by an oath, though it is hidden from him, when he realizes it, then he will be guilty of one of these.

⁵ “So it will be, when one becomes guilty of one of these things, he should confess about what he has sinned.¹⁶ Then he is to bring his trespass offering to *ADONAI* for his sin that he committed: a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, as a sin offering. So the *kohen* is to make atonement for him over his sin.

⁷ “But if one cannot afford a lamb, then he should bring, as his trespass offering for the sin he committed, two turtledoves or two young pigeons, to *ADONAI*. One is for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.⁸ He is to bring them to the *kohen*, who will present the one for the sin offering first, and twist its head from its neck but not sever it completely.⁹ He is to sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, while the rest of the blood is to be drained out at the base of the altar. It is a sin offering.¹⁰ He is to make the second a burnt offering, according to the regulation. So the *kohen* is to make atonement for one over his sin that he committed—and he will be forgiven.

¹¹ “But if one cannot afford two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he is to bring as his offering for the sin he has committed a tenth of an ephah[†] of fine flour as a sin offering. He is to put no oil on it nor put any frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering.¹² He is to bring it to the *kohen*, then the *kohen* is to take his handful of it as the memorial portion and burn it up as smoke on the altar, on *ADONAI*’s offerings by fire. It is a sin offering.¹³ The *kohen* is to make atonement for him over his sin that one has committed in any of these things—and he will be forgiven. The rest belongs to the *kohen*, just like the meal offering.”

† cf. 1 John 1:9†† About two quarts.

¹⁴ ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁵ "If anyone commits a faithless act and sins unwittingly against the holy things of ADONAI, then he is to bring his trespass offering to ADONAI: a ram without blemish from the flock, according to your value in silver shekels after the shekel of the Sanctuary, for a trespass offering. ¹⁶ He is to make restitution for that which he has done wrong in regard to the holy thing, and is required to add a fifth part to it, and give it to the *kohen*. So the *kohen* will make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering—and he will be forgiven.

¹⁷ "Now if anyone sins and one of ADONAI's commandments that are not to be done, though he did not know it, still he is guilty and will bear his iniquity. ¹⁸ He is to bring to the *kohen* a ram without blemish from the flock, according to your value, as a trespass offering. Then the *kohen* is to make atonement for him over the sin that he committed unknowingly—and he will be forgiven. ¹⁹ It is a trespass offering. He is absolutely guilty before ADONAI."

Mitzvot of Restitution

²⁰ (6:1) Then ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ²¹ (6:2) "Suppose anyone sins and commits a faithless act against ADONAI by dealing falsely with his neighbor in a matter of a deposit or a pledge of hands, or through robbery, or has extorted from his neighbor, ²² (6:3) or has found what was lost and lied about it, swearing falsely—so sinning in one of any of these things that a man may do. ²³ (6:4) Then it will be, when he has sinned and has become guilty, that he must restore what he took by robbery, or what he got by extortion, or the deposit that was committed to him, or what was lost that he found, ²⁴ (6:5) or any thing about which he has sworn falsely, he is to restore it in full, and add a fifth part more to it. He must give it to the one to whom it belongs on the day of presenting his trespass offering. ²⁵ (6:6) He is to bring his trespass offering to ADONAI, a ram without blemish from the flock, according to your value, for a trespass offering, to the *kohen*. ²⁶ (6:7) The *kohen* shall make atonement for him before ADONAI, and he will be forgiven concerning whatever he may have done to become guilty."

Parashat Tzav

Torah of Burnt Offering

⁶ (8) ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ² (9) "Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the *Torah* of the burnt offering. The burnt offering should remain on the hearth atop the altar all night until the morning, while the fire of the altar is kept burning on it. ³ (10) The *kohen* is to put on his linen garment, with his linen undergarments on his body. He is to remove the fat ashes from where the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar and put them beside the al-

tar. ⁴ (11) Then he is to take off his garments, put on other ones, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place.

⁵ (12) The fire on the altar is to be kept burning on it—it must not go out. Each morning the *kohen* is to burn wood on it, laying the burnt offering in order upon it, and burning up as smoke the fat of the fellowship offerings. ⁶ (13) Fire is to be kept burning on the altar continually—it must not go out.

Torah of Grain Offering

⁷ (14) "Now this is the *Torah* of the grain offering. Aaron's sons are to offer it to ADONAI in front of the altar. ⁸ (15) So he is to lift up from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with some of its oil and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering, and burn it up as smoke on the altar for a soothing aroma, as its memorial portion to ADONAI. ⁹ (16) Then what is left from it Aaron and his sons are to eat. It is to be eaten as *matzah* in a holy place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁰ (17) It must not be baked with *hametz*. I have given it as their portion of My offerings made by fire. It is most holy, like the sin offering and like the trespass offering. ¹¹ (18) Every male among the children of Aaron may eat it, as their portion forever throughout your generations from the offerings of ADONAI made by fire. Whoever touches them will become holy."

¹² (19) ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ¹³ (20) "This is the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they are to offer to ADONAI on the day when he is anointed: the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a continual grain offering, half of it in the morning, and half of it in the evening. ¹⁴ (21) It is to be made with oil on a pan. When it is soaked, you should bring it in. You are to present the grain offering in baked pieces as a soothing aroma to ADONAI. ¹⁵ (22) The anointed *kohen* who will be in his place from among his sons is to offer it. As an eternal statute, it must be entirely burnt up as smoke to ADONAI. ¹⁶ (23) Thus every grain offering of a *kohen* is to be a whole-offering—it should not be eaten."

Sin and Guilt Offerings

¹⁷ (24) ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁸ (25) "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying: 'This is the *Torah* of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered, the sin offering is to be slaughtered before ADONAI. It is most holy. ¹⁹ (26) The *kohen* who offers it for sin should eat it. It must be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the Tent of Meeting. ²⁰ (27) Whatever touches its flesh will be holy. When any of its blood is splattered on a garment, you are to wash it in a holy place. ²¹ (28) But the earthen vessel in which it is boiled is to be broken, and if it is boiled in a bronze vessel, it is to be scoured, then rinsed in water. ²² (29) Every male among the *kohanim* is to eat of it—it is

most holy. ²³ (30) But no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the Tent of Meeting to make atonement in the Holy Place is to be eaten—it must be burned up with fire.

7 “This is the *Torah* of the trespass offering. It is most holy. ² In the place where they slaughter the burnt offering, he is to slaughter the trespass offering. And he is to splash its blood around on the altar. ³ He shall offer all of its fat, the fat tail and the fat that covers the innards, ⁴ along with the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, which is by the loins, plus the cover on the liver that he is to remove with the kidneys. ⁵ Then the *kohen* shall burn them up as smoke on the altar for an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*. It is a trespass offering. ⁶ Every male among the *kohanim* may eat it. It is to be eaten in a holy place—it is most holy.

Fellowship Offerings for *Kohanim*

⁷ “As is the sin offering, so is the trespass offering, there is one *Torah* for them: they are for the *kohen* who makes atonement with them. ⁸ The *kohen* who offers anyone’s burnt offering, that *kohen* is to have for himself the hide of the burnt offering which he has offered. ⁹ Every meal offering that is baked in the oven, and all that is prepared on the flat plate and on the pan, is to belong to the *kohen* who offers it. ¹⁰ Every grain offering, whether mixed with oil or dry, belongs to all the sons of Aaron equally.

¹¹ “Now this is the *Torah* of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings which may be offered to *ADONAI*. ¹² If he brings it for a thanksgiving, then he is to present it with the sacrifice of thanksgiving *matzah* cakes mixed with oil, *matzah* wafers anointed with oil, and fine flour cakes mixed with oil. ¹³ He is to present his offering with the sacrifice of his fellowship offerings for thanksgiving along with cakes of bread with *hametz*. ¹⁴ From each he is to offer one out of every offering as a gift to *ADONAI*. It will belong to the *kohen* who sprinkles the blood of the fellowship offerings. ¹⁵ The meat of the sacrifice of his fellowship offerings for thanksgiving is to be eaten on the day of his offering. He is not to leave any of it until the morning.

¹⁶ “But if the sacrifice of his offering is a vow or a freewill offering, it is to be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice. On the next day what remains of it may be eaten. ¹⁷ But what remains of the meat of the sacrifice on the third day is to be burned up with fire. ¹⁸ If any of the meat of the sacrifice of his fellowship offerings is eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted, nor will it be credited to him who offers it. It will be a foul thing—and the soul who eats any from it will bear his own iniquity.

¹⁹ “The meat that touches any unclean thing is not to be eaten. It is to be burned up with fire. As for the meat, everyone who is clean may eat it, ²⁰ but the soul who eats of the meat of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings belonging to *ADONAI*, having his uncleanness

on him, that soul is to be cut off from his people. ²¹ If anyone touches any unclean thing, whether the uncleanness of man, or an unclean animal or any unclean detestable thing, and eats some of the meat of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings belonging to *ADONAI*, that soul is to be cut off from his people.”

²² *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²³ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: You are to eat no fat of a bull or sheep or goat. ²⁴ The fat of a dead animal and the fat of a torn animal may be used for any other service, but you must not eat it. ²⁵ For if anyone eats the fat of the animal from which an offering is made by fire to *ADONAI*, then the soul who eats it is to be cut off from his people.

²⁶ “You are not to eat any blood, whether it is from a bird or an animal, in any of your dwellings. ²⁷ Whoever it is who consumes any blood, that soul is to be cut off from his people.”

²⁸ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁹ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: Whoever brings the sacrifice of his fellowship offerings to *ADONAI* is to present his offering to *ADONAI* out of the sacrifice of his fellowship offerings. ³⁰ With his own hands he is to bring *ADONAI*’s offerings by fire. He is to present the fat with the breast, so that the breast may be waved for a wave offering before *ADONAI*. ³¹ The *kohen* is to burn up the fat as smoke on the altar, but the breast will belong to Aaron and his sons. ³² The right thigh you are to give to the *kohen* for a contribution out of the sacrifices of your fellowship offerings. ³³ The one among Aaron’s sons who offers the blood of the fellowship offerings and the fat is to have the right thigh for a portion. ³⁴ For the breast of the wave offering and the thigh contribution I have taken from *Bnei-Yisrael* out of the sacrifices of their fellowship offerings and have given them to Aaron the *kohen* and to his sons as their portion forever from *Bnei-Yisrael*.”

³⁵ This is the anointed portion of Aaron and the anointed portion of his sons out of the offerings of *ADONAI* made by fire, on the day when he presented them to serve *ADONAI* in the office of *kohen*. ³⁶ *ADONAI* commanded these to be given to them from *Bnei-Yisrael* on the day that he anointed them. It is their portion forever throughout their generations.

³⁷ This is the *Torah* of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the ordination offering, and the sacrifice of fellowship offerings, ³⁸ which *ADONAI* commanded Moses at Mount Sinai, on the day He commanded *Bnei-Yisrael* to present their offerings to *ADONAI*, in the wilderness of Sinai.

Consecration of the *Kohanim*

8 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Take Aaron and his sons with him, the garments, the anointing oil, the bull of the sin offering, the two rams and the basket of *matzot*. ³ Then assemble all the congregation at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.”

⁴ So Moses did as *ADONAI* commanded him. When the congregation was assembled at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, ⁵ Moses said to the congregation, "This is what *ADONAI* has commanded to be done."

⁶ Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water. ⁷ He put the tunic on Aaron, tied the sash on him, clothed him with the robe, put the ephod on him, and tied the skillfully decorated sash of the ephod around him and fastened it on him. ⁸ He then placed the breastplate on Aaron, and inside the breastplate he put the *Urim* and the *Thummim*. ⁹ He set the turban on his head, and on front of the turban he set the golden plate, the holy crown, just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses. ¹⁰ Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the Tabernacle and all that was in it, and so consecrated them. ¹¹ He sprinkled the oil on the altar seven times and anointed the altar and all its utensils, the basin with its stand, to consecrate them. ¹² He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to consecrate him. ¹³ Then Moses brought Aaron's sons, and clothed them with tunics, tied sashes on them, and fastened headbands on them, as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

¹⁴ Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering. ¹⁵ Moses then slaughtered it, took the blood and dabbed it onto the horns of the altar with his finger, and so purified the altar. Then he poured out the blood at the base of the altar and consecrated it, to make atonement for it. ¹⁶ He then took all the fat that was on the innards, the cover of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat, and burned it up as smoke on the altar. ¹⁷ But the bull and its hide, its flesh and its dung, he burned with fire outside the camp, as *ADONAI* had commanded. ¹⁸ He then presented the ram of the burnt offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. ¹⁹ Then Moses slaughtered it and splashed the blood around on the altar. ²⁰ After he cut the ram into its pieces, Moses burned the head, the pieces, and the fat. ²¹ He washed the innards and the legs with water. Then Moses burned the whole ram up in smoke on the altar. It was a burnt offering for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to *ADONAI*, as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

²² Then he presented the second ram, the ram of ordination, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram. ²³ Moses slaughtered it, took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand and on the great toe of his right foot. ²⁴ Then Moses brought Aaron's sons and put some of the blood on the tips of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands and on the great toes of their right feet. Then Moses splashed the blood around on the altar. ²⁵ He took the fat, the fat tail, and all the fat that was on the innards, as well as the cover of the liver, the two kidneys with their fat and the right thigh. ²⁶ Then out of the basket of

matzah that was before *ADONAI*, he took one *matzah* cake, one cake of oiled bread and one wafer, and placed them on the fat and on the right thigh. ²⁷ He put all these in Aaron's hands and in the hands of his sons, and waved them for a wave offering before *ADONAI*. ²⁸ Then Moses took them from their hands and burned them up in smoke on the altar with the burnt offering. They were a consecration for a soothing aroma. It was an offering by fire to *ADONAI*. ²⁹ Moses took the breast and waved it for a wave offering before *ADONAI*. It was Moses' portion of the ram of ordination, just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

³⁰ Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood which was on the altar, and sprinkled it on Aaron, on his garments, and on his sons, and on his sons' garments with him. So he consecrated Aaron, his garments, his sons and his sons' garments with him.

³¹ Moses then said to Aaron and to his sons, "Boil the meat at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and eat it there, along with the bread that is in the basket of ordination, as I commanded, saying: 'Aaron and his sons are to eat it.' ³² What remains of the meat and of the bread you shall burn with fire.

³³ "You are not to go out from the entrance of the Tent of Meeting for seven days, until the days of your ordination are fulfilled, for he will be filling your hands for seven days. ³⁴ What has been done this day, *ADONAI* has commanded to be done, in order to make atonement for you. ³⁵ You are to stay at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting day and night for seven days, and keep *ADONAI*'s command, so that you do not die, for so I have been commanded." ³⁶ Thus Aaron and his sons did all the things that *ADONAI* commanded through Moses.

Parashat Shemini

Kohanim Begin Their Ministry

9 Now it happened on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron, his sons, and the elders of Israel. ² Then he said to Aaron, "Take a calf from the herd for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, both without blemish, and offer them before *ADONAI*. ³ You are to speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: Take a male goat for a sin offering, along with a calf and a lamb, both yearlings without blemish, for a burnt offering, ⁴ plus a bull and a ram for fellowship offerings, to sacrifice before *ADONAI*, along with a grain offering mixed with oil. For today *ADONAI* appears to you."

⁵ So they brought what Moses commanded before the Tent of Meeting, and the entire congregation drew near and stood before *ADONAI*. ⁶ Moses said, "This is what *ADONAI* commanded that you shall do, so that the glory of *ADONAI* may appear to you." ⁷ Moses said to Aaron, "Draw near to the altar, and bring your sin offering, and your burnt offering, and make atone-

ment for yourself and for the people. † Then present the offering for the people, and make atonement for them, as *ADONAI* commanded.”

⁸ So Aaron drew near to the altar, and slaughtered the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. ⁹ The sons of Aaron presented the blood to him. Then he dipped his finger in the blood, dabbed it onto the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the base of the altar. ¹⁰ But the fat, the kidneys and the cover from the liver of the sin offering he burned up as smoke on the altar, as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses. ¹¹ The flesh and the hide he burned in a fire outside the camp. ¹² Aaron slaughtered the burnt offering, then his sons presented the blood to him and he splashed it around on the altar. ¹³ They handed the burnt offering to him piece by piece, along with the head, and he burned them up as smoke on the altar. ¹⁴ He washed the innards and the legs and he offered them in smoke upon the burnt offering on the altar. ¹⁵ Then he presented the people's gift, took the goat of the sin offering which was for the people, slaughtered it, and offered it for sin, just like the first one. ¹⁶ He presented the burnt offering and offered it according to the decree.

¹⁷ Then Aaron presented the grain offering, filling his hand with some of it and burning it up as smoke on the altar, alongside the burnt offering of the morning. ¹⁸ He also slaughtered the bull and the ram as the sacrifice of fellowship offerings for the people. Then his sons brought him the blood, which he splashed around on the altar, ¹⁹ as well as the fat from the bull and the ram, the fat tail, and the layer over the innards along with the kidneys and the covering of the liver. ²⁰ They put the fat upon the breasts, and he burned it on the altar. ²¹ But the breasts and the right thigh Aaron waved for a wave offering before *ADONAI*, as Moses had commanded. ²² Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them. † Then he stepped down from presenting the sin offering, the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings.

²³ Moses and Aaron then went into the Tent of Meeting. When they came back out and blessed the people, the glory of *ADONAI* appeared to all the people. ²⁴ Fire came out from the presence of *ADONAI*, and devoured the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

Holy Fire Consumes Unauthorized Fire

10 Now Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu each took his own censer, put fire in it, laid incense over it, and offered unauthorized fire before *ADONAI*—which He had not commanded them. ² So fire came out from the presence of *ADONAI* and consumed them. So they died before *ADONAI*. ³ Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what *ADONAI* spoke of, saying:

“To those who are near Me
I will show myself holy.

Upon the faces of all the people
I will be glorified.”

Then Aaron kept silent.

⁴ Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Aaron's uncle Uzziel, and said to them, “Come near, carry your relatives away from the front of the Sanctuary to outside of the camp.” ⁵ So they drew near and carried them, still in their tunics, outside of the camp, as Moses had said.

⁶ Then Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons: “Do not uncover your heads or tear your clothes, so you may not die and He will not be angry with the entire congregation. But let your kinsmen—the whole house of Israel—mourn over the burning that *ADONAI* has kindled. ⁷ You must not go out from the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, or you will die, for the anointing oil of *ADONAI* is on you.” So they acted according to the word of Moses.

⁸ *ADONAI* spoke to Aaron saying: ⁹ “Do not drink wine or fermented drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you go into the Tent of Meeting, so that you do not die. This is to be a statute forever throughout your generations. ¹⁰ You are to make a distinction between the holy and the common and between the unclean and the clean. ¹¹ And you are to teach *Bnei-Yisrael* all the statutes which *ADONAI* has spoken to them through Moses.”

¹² Moses spoke to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his surviving sons: “Take the grain offering left over from *ADONAI*'s offerings by fire, and eat it without *hametz* beside the altar, for it is most holy. ¹³ You are to eat it in a holy place, because it is your portion and your sons' portion of the offerings of *ADONAI* made by fire. For so I have been commanded. ¹⁴ You are to eat the breast that was waved and the thigh that was presented in a clean place—you, your sons and your daughters with you—for they are given as your portion, and your children's portion, out of the sacrifices of the fellowship offerings of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁵ They are to bring the thigh that is presented and the breast that is waved with fat portions scorched by fire, to wave it as a wave offering before *ADONAI*. So it will be yours and your sons' with you, a share forever, as *ADONAI* has commanded.”

¹⁶ Then Moses searched carefully for the goat of the sin offering and noticed it had been burned up. So he snapped at Eleazar and Itamar, the surviving sons of Aaron, saying: ¹⁷ “Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the place of the Sanctuary, since it is most holy, and He gave it to you in order to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before *ADONAI*? ¹⁸ Look, its blood was not brought into the inner part of the sanctuary. You certainly should have eaten it in the Sanctuary, as I commanded.”

¹⁹ But Aaron said to Moses, “Behold, today they presented their sin offering and their burnt offering before *ADONAI*. When things like these have happened to me, would it have been good in the eyes of *ADONAI* if I

† cf. Heb. 5:3; 7:27. †† cf. Luke 24:50.

had eaten the sin offering today?"²⁰ When Moses heard this, it was good in his eyes.

Kashrut for Holiness

11 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them: ²"Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: These are the living things which you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth. ³Whatever has a split, divided hoof and chews cud among the animals—that you may eat.

⁴"Nevertheless, you should not eat of those that only chew cud, or have a split hoof. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof, is unclean to you. ⁵The coney, though it chews the cud yet does not have a divided hoof, so it is unclean to you. ⁶The hare, though it chews the cud, does not split the hoof, so it is unclean to you. ⁷The pig, though it has a split, divided hoof, does not chew cud, so it is unclean to you. ⁸You are not to eat meat from them, nor are you to touch their carcasses. They are unclean to you.

⁹"From all that are in the waters, you may eat whatever has fins and scales, within the waters, in the seas and in the rivers. Those you may eat. ¹⁰But any that do not have fins and scales in the seas or the rivers, among those that swarm on the waters, or among any of the living creatures that are in the waters, they are loathsome to you. ¹¹They are to be detestable to you. You shall not eat meat from them and you should detest their carcasses. ¹²Whatever has neither fins nor scales in the waters, that is a detestable thing to you.

¹³"Among the birds you should detest the following—they are not to be eaten—they are loathsome: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, ¹⁴the red kite, any kind of black kite, ¹⁵any kind of raven, ¹⁶the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, ¹⁷the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, ¹⁸the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, ¹⁹the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe, and the bat.

²⁰"All flying insects that walk on all fours are detestable to you. ²¹Yet you may eat from all winged creeping things that go on all fours, which have legs above their feet, with which to hop on the earth. ²²You may eat from any kind of locust, any kind of katydid, any kind of cricket and any kind of grasshopper. ²³But all winged creeping things that have four feet are loathsome to you.

²⁴"Moreover, by these also you will become unclean: whoever touches their carcasses shall be unclean until the evening. ²⁵Whoever carries any part of their carcass is to wash his clothes, and will be unclean until the evening. ²⁶Every animal with a separating hoof but not split, or does not chew cud, is unclean to you. Everyone who touches them will become unclean.

²⁷So whatever moves on its paws, among all animals that go on all fours, is unclean to you. Whoever touches their carcasses will be unclean until the evening.

²⁸Whoever carries their carcasses, is to wash his

clothes and will be unclean until the evening. They are unclean to you.

²⁹"Among the creeping things that creep on the earth, the following are unclean to you: the weasel, the rat, any kind of great lizard, ³⁰the gecko, the monitor lizard, the wall lizard, the skink and the chameleon. ³¹Among all that creep these are the ones that are unclean to you. Whoever touches them when they are dead, will be unclean until the evening. ³²Whatever falls on them when they are dead will become unclean, whether it is any vessel of wood, or clothing, or skin, or sackcloth. Whatever vessel it is, with which any work is done, it must be put into water, and it will be unclean until the evening, then it will be clean.

³³"Now if any of them falls into a clay pot, everything that is in it will become unclean, and you are to break it. ³⁴Any food that may be eaten but has water on it from such a pot will become unclean. Also any drink that may be drunk in any such pot will become unclean. ³⁵Everything on which part of their carcass falls will become unclean. An oven or stove for pots is to be broken in pieces. They are unclean and will be unclean to you. ³⁶Nevertheless, a spring or a cistern for collecting water will be clean, though anyone who touches their carcass will become unclean. ³⁷If part of a carcass falls on any seed for sowing that has yet to be sown, it is clean. ³⁸But if water is put on the seed, and part of a carcass falls on it, it is unclean to you. ³⁹If any animal that you may eat dies, the one who touches its carcass will become unclean until the evening. ⁴⁰He who eats of its carcass is to wash his clothes, and be unclean until the evening. Also, the one who carries its carcass is to wash his clothes, and be unclean until the evening.

⁴¹"Every creeping thing that crawls on the earth is detestable—it should not be eaten. ⁴²Whatever moves on its belly or crawls on all fours or has many feet among all the creeping things that crawl on the earth, these you are not to eat, for they are detestable. ⁴³You are not to contaminate yourselves with any creeping thing that crawls nor make yourselves unclean with them or defiled by them.

⁴⁴"For I am *ADONAI* your God. Therefore, sanctify yourselves, and be holy, for I am holy. You are not to defile yourselves with any kind of creeping thing that moves on the earth. ⁴⁵For I am *ADONAI* who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. † Therefore, you shall be holy, for I am holy.

⁴⁶"This is the *Torah* of the animal, the bird, every living creature that moves in the waters, and every creature that creeps on the earth, ⁴⁷to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the living thing that may be eaten and the living thing that may not be eaten."

† cf. 1 Pet. 1:16.

Parashat Tazria

Niddah Rest for New Mothers

12 Then ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, instructing: If a woman conceives and bears a male child, then she will be unclean for seven days, as in the days of her *niddah* she will be unclean. ³In the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin is to be circumcised. ⁴She must wait during the blood of purification for 33 days. ^{††}She is not to touch any holy thing, nor come into the Sanctuary, until the days of her purifying are completed. ⁵But if she bears a female child, then she will be unclean for two weeks, as in her *niddah*, and she is to wait in the blood of purification for 66 days.

⁶“When the days of her purification are completed for a son or for a daughter, she is to bring to the *kohen*, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, a year old lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtledove, for a sin offering. ⁷He is to present it before ADONAI and make atonement for her. Then she will be cleansed from the discharge of her blood. This is the *Torah* for her who gives birth, whether to a male or a female child. ⁸If she cannot afford a lamb, then she is to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, [‡]one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. Then the *kohen* will make atonement for her, and she will be clean.”

Tzara'at: Supernatural Skin Disease

13 Then ADONAI spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying: ²“When a man has a swelling on the skin of his body or a scab or a bright spot, and it becomes the plague-mark of *tzara'at* in his flesh, then he should be brought to Aaron the *kohen*, or to one of his sons, the *kohanim*. ³The *kohen* is to examine the plague of *tzara'at* on his skin, and if the hair in the plague has turned white, and the appearance of the plague is deeper than the body's skin, it is the plague of *tzara'at*. Thus the *kohen* should examine him and pronounce him unclean. ⁴If the bright spot is white in the skin of his body, but its appearance is not deeper than the skin and its hair has not turned white, then the *kohen* is to isolate the infected person for seven days. ⁵The *kohen* should examine him on the seventh day, and behold, if he sees the plague has not spread in the skin, then the *kohen* is to isolate him for seven more days.

⁶“The *kohen* is to examine him again on the seventh day, and behold, if the plague has faded and has not spread in the skin, then the *kohen* should pronounce him clean. It is a scab. He is to wash his clothes, and be clean. ⁷But if the scab spreads on the skin, after he has shown himself to the *kohen* for his cleansing, he is to show himself to the *kohen* once again. ⁸The *kohen*

is to examine him, and if the scab has spread on the skin, then the *kohen* should pronounce him unclean. It is *tzara'at*.

⁹“When one has a plague of *tzara'at*, he is to be brought to the *kohen*. ¹⁰The *kohen* is to examine him, and behold, if there is a white swelling in the skin and it has turned the hair white and if there is raw flesh in the swelling, ¹¹it is a chronic *tzara'at* in the skin of his flesh, and the *kohen* is to pronounce him unclean. He is to isolate him, for he is unclean.

¹²“Suppose the *tzara'at* breaks out above the flesh, and so far as it all appears in the eyes of the *kohen*, covers all the skin of the infected person from his head to his feet. ¹³Then the *kohen* will see, and behold, if the *tzara'at* has covered all of his body, he is to pronounce him clean of the plague. Since it has all turned white, he is clean. ¹⁴But whenever raw flesh appears upon him, he will be unclean. ¹⁵The *kohen* is to examine the raw flesh, and pronounce him unclean. The raw flesh is unclean—it is *tzara'at*. ¹⁶Or, if the raw flesh changes and turns white, then he must come to the *kohen*. ¹⁷The *kohen* is to examine him, and behold, if the plague has turned white, then the *kohen* shall pronounce him clean of the plague. He is clean. ^{††}

¹⁸“When the body has a boil on its skin and it has healed, ¹⁹but in the place of the boil there is a white swelling or a bright reddish-white spot, then it should be shown to the *kohen*. ²⁰The *kohen* is to examine it, and behold, if its appearance is lower than the skin and its hair has turned white, then the *kohen* is to pronounce him unclean. It is a plague of *tzara'at* that has broken out within the boil. ²¹But if the *kohen* examines it and sees there are no white hairs within, and if it is not deeper than the skin but is faded, then the *kohen* is to isolate him seven days. ²²If it spreads in the skin, then the *kohen* is to pronounce him unclean. It is a plague. ²³But if the bright spot stays in its place and has not spread, it is merely the scar from the boil—the *kohen* is to pronounce him clean.

²⁴“Or suppose the body has a burn from fire on its skin, and the raw flesh of the burn becomes a bright spot, reddish-white, or white. ²⁵Then the *kohen* is to examine it, and behold, if the hair in the bright spot has turned white and its appearance is deeper than the skin, it is *tzara'at*. It has broken out in the burning, and the *kohen* is to pronounce him unclean—it is the plague of *tzara'at*. ²⁶But if the *kohen* examines it and sees there is no white hair in the bright spot, and it is not lower than the skin but is faded, then the *kohen* is to isolate him seven days. ²⁷The *kohen* is to examine him on the seventh day. If it has spread in the skin, then the *kohen* is to pronounce him unclean. It is the plague of *tzara'at*. ²⁸If the bright spot stays in its place, and has not spread in the skin but is faded, it is the swelling from the burn, and the *kohen* should pronounce him clean, for it is merely a scar from the burn.

† cf. Luke 2:21. †† cf. Luke 2:22. ‡ cf. Luke 2:22-24.

†† cf. Luke 12:12-14.

²⁹ “When a man or woman has a plague on the head or on the chin, ³⁰ then the *kohen* is to examine the plague, and behold, if its appearance is deeper than the skin, and the hair in it is yellow and thin, then the *kohen* is to pronounce him unclean. It is a scab—*tzara’at* of the head or the chin. ³¹ If the *kohen* examines the plague of the scab, and behold, its appearance is no deeper than the skin and there is no black hair within, then the *kohen* is to isolate the person infected with the scab for seven days. ³² On the seventh day the *kohen* is to examine the plague, and behold, if the scab has not spread and there is no yellow hair in it, and the appearance of the scab is no deeper than the skin, ³³ then he shall be shaved, but he is not to shave the scab. The *kohen* is then to isolate the one who has the scab for seven more days. ³⁴ On the seventh day, the *kohen* is to examine the scab, and behold, if the scab has not spread in the skin and its appearance is no deeper than the skin, then the *kohen* should pronounce him clean. He is to wash his clothes, and be clean. ³⁵ But if the scab spreads in the skin after his cleansing, ³⁶ then the *kohen* is to examine him, and behold, if the scab has spread in the skin, the *kohen* may not look for the yellow hair, he is unclean. ³⁷ But if he sees the scab is stopped and black hair has grown in it, the scab is healed, and he is clean. The *kohen* shall pronounce him clean.

³⁸ “Suppose a man or a woman has bright spots on the skin of the body—bright white spots. ³⁹ Then the *kohen* is to examine them, and behold, if the bright spots on the skin of their body are a dull white, it is a harmless rash broken out in the skin. He is clean.

Baldness is Clean

⁴⁰ “If a man’s hair has fallen from his head, he is bald. He is clean. ⁴¹ Or if the borders of his face become bald, his forehead is bald. He is clean. ⁴² But if on the baldhead or bald forehead, there is a reddish-white plague, it is *tzara’at* breaking out in his baldhead or bald forehead. ⁴³ Then the *kohen* is to examine him, and behold, if the rising of the plague is reddish-white on his bald head or bald forehead, like the appearance of *tzara’at* in the skin of the flesh, ⁴⁴ he is a man with *tzara’at*. He is unclean. The *kohen* shall definitely pronounce him unclean—his plague-mark is on his head.

Unclean! Unclean!

⁴⁵ “The one with *tzara’at* who has the plague-mark should wear torn clothes, the hair of his head is to hang loose, he is to cover his upper lip and cry, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ ⁴⁶ All the days during which the plague is on him he will be unclean. He is unclean. He is to dwell alone. Outside of the camp will be his dwelling.

⁴⁷ “Also when a garment has a mark of *tzara’at* on it—whether it is a woolen or a linen garment, ⁴⁸ whether it is woven or textured, linen or wool, leather, or anything made from leather— ⁴⁹ or if the

mark is greenish or reddish within the garment or in the leather, or in the weaving or the texture, or in anything made from leather, it is the plague of *tzara’at*, and should be shown to the *kohen*. ⁵⁰ The *kohen* is to examine the plague and isolate it for seven days.

⁵¹ Then he is to reexamine the plague on the seventh day. If the plague has spread in the garment, either in the weaving, the texture or the leather, whatever the use for the leather may be, the plague is a destructive mildew. It is unclean. ⁵² He is to burn the garment or the weaving, or the texture, wool or linen, or anything of leather, in which the plague resides, for it is a destructive mildew. It is to be burned in the fire.

⁵³ “If the *kohen* examines it, and behold, the plague has not spread in the garment, either in the weaving, the texture, or in anything made of leather, ⁵⁴ the *kohen* should command that they wash the thing which has the mark, and he is to isolate it seven more days.

⁵⁵ “Then the *kohen* is to reexamine it, after the mark has been washed, and behold, if the mark has not changed its color and has not spread, it is unclean. You are to burn it in the fire, whether the rot is inside or outside. ⁵⁶ If the *kohen* looks, and sees the mark has faded after it has been washed, then he is to tear it out of the garment, or the leather, or weaving, or texture. ⁵⁷ But if it appears again in the garment, either in the weaving, the texture, or in anything made of leather, it is spreading. You are to burn with fire whatever has the mark. ⁵⁸ The garment, or weaving, or texture, or whatever leather item it is that you have washed, if the mark has departed from it, is to be washed a second time, and will become clean.”

⁵⁹ This is the *Torah* for a mark of *tzara’at* in a garment of wool or linen, either in the weaving, the texture, or in anything of leather, to pronounce it clean or to pronounce it unclean.

Parashat Metzora

Purification of One with *Tzara’at*

14 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ² “This is the *Torah* of the one with *tzara’at* in the day of his cleansing. He should be brought to the *kohen*, ³ and the *kohen* is to go to the outside of the camp. The *kohen* is to examine him, and behold, if the mark of *tzara’at* is healed in one with *tzara’at*, ⁴ then the *kohen* is to command that two clean living birds, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop be brought for the one being cleansed. ⁵ The *kohen* should command them to kill one of the birds in a clay pot over living water. ⁶ As for the living bird, he is to take it, the cedar wood, the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them with the living bird into the blood of the bird that was killed over the living water. ⁷ He is to sprinkle on the one being cleansed from the *tzara’at* seven times and pronounce

† cf. Matt. 8:4.

him clean, then release the living bird over the open field.

⁸“The one to be cleansed must wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe himself in water. Then he should be clean. After that he may come into the camp, but is to dwell outside his tent for seven days. ⁹Then on the seventh day, he is to shave all his hair from his head, his beard, and his eyebrows—he must shave off all his hair. He is to wash his clothes, and bathe his body in water. Then he will be clean.

¹⁰“On the eighth day he is to take two male lambs without blemish, a one-year-old ewe lamb without blemish, three tenths of a pint of fine flour as a grain offering, mingled with oil, and a pint of oil. ¹¹The *kohen* who cleanses him is to set the man who is to be cleansed along with those items before *ADONAI*, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ¹²The *kohen* should then take one of the male lambs, and offer it for a trespass offering, with the pint of oil, and wave them as a wave offering before *ADONAI*.

¹³“Then he is to slaughter the male lamb in the place where they slaughter the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the Sanctuary area. For the sin offering like the trespass offering belongs to the *kohen*. It is most holy. ¹⁴Then the *kohen* is to take some of the blood of the trespass offering and dab it on the tip of the right ear of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. ¹⁵The *kohen* should then take some of the pint of oil and pour it into the palm of his own left hand. ¹⁶He is to dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand and sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before *ADONAI*. ¹⁷Then the *kohen* should dab some of the rest of the oil that is in his hand on the tip of the right ear of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the blood of the trespass offering. ¹⁸From what remains of the oil that is in his hand, the *kohen* is to dab on the head of the one being cleansed. In this way the *kohen* will make atonement for him before *ADONAI*.

¹⁹“The *kohen* should offer the sin offering and make atonement for the one being cleansed because of his uncleanness. Afterward he is to slaughter the burnt offering. ²⁰Then the *kohen* is to present the burnt offering along with the grain offering on the altar. So the *kohen* should make atonement for him, and he will be clean.

²¹“If he is poor and cannot afford so much, then he should take one male lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, plus one tenth of an ephah of fine flour mingled with oil for a grain offering, a pint of oil, ²²two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to afford. The one should be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering.

²³“On the eighth day he is to bring them to the *kohen* for his cleansing, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before *ADONAI*. ²⁴The *kohen* is to take the

lamb of the trespass offering and the pint of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before *ADONAI*. ²⁵He is to slaughter the lamb of the trespass offering. The *kohen* is to take some of the blood of the trespass offering and dab it on the tip of the right ear of the one being cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁶The *kohen* should then pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand. ²⁷He is to sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before *ADONAI*. ²⁸Then the *kohen* is to dab some of the oil that is in his hand on the tip of the right ear of the one being cleansed, also on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the place of the blood of the trespass offering. ²⁹The rest of the oil that is in his hand the *kohen* is to dab on the head of the one being cleansed, to make atonement for him before *ADONAI*. ³⁰He is to offer one of the turtledoves or the young pigeons, from what his hand can afford, ³¹the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the grain offering. The *kohen* should make atonement for him being cleansed before *ADONAI*.”

³²This is the *Torah* for one on who is the mark of *tzara'at*, who is not able to afford the sacrifice for his cleansing.

Purification of a House

³³ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying:

³⁴“Suppose you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put a mark of *tzara'at* in a house in the land you possess. ³⁵Then the one who owns the house should come and tell the *kohen*, saying: ‘Something like a mark has appeared in my house.’ ³⁶The *kohen* is to order the house emptied before he goes in to examine the mark, so that nothing in the house might be made unclean. Then afterward the *kohen* is to enter to inspect the house. ³⁷He is to examine the mark, and behold, if the mark is in the walls of the house with hollow streaks, greenish or reddish, and appears deeper than the wall, ³⁸then the *kohen* is to go out of the house to the door and close up the house for seven days. ³⁹Then the *kohen* is to come again on the seventh day, and behold, if the mark has spread in the walls of the house, ⁴⁰then the *kohen* is to command that they take out the stones which are marked and throw them into an unclean place outside of the city. ⁴¹He should also have the inside of the house scraped all throughout, and they are to dump the mortar that they scraped off outside of the city into an unclean place. ⁴²They may then take other stones and put them in the place of those stones. Likewise he can take other mortar, and plaster the house.

⁴³“But suppose the contamination returns, breaking out in the house, after he has pulled out the stones and after he has scraped the house, and it has been re-plastered. ⁴⁴Then the *kohen* is to go examine, and

behold, if the plague has spread within the house, it is a destructive mildew inside. It is unclean. ⁴⁵ He is to break down the house, its stones, its timber, along with all the house's mortar, and carry them out of the city into an unclean place.

⁴⁶ "Moreover, whoever goes into the house while it is shut up will be unclean until the evening. ⁴⁷ The one who lies down in the house must wash his clothes, and he who eats in the house must wash his clothes too.

⁴⁸ "But if the *kohen* comes in, inspects it, and behold, the plague has not spread within the house after it was re-plastered, then he should pronounce the house clean, because the contamination is healed. ⁴⁹ In order to cleanse the house he is to take two birds, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop. ⁵⁰ He is to kill one of the birds in a clay pot over living water. ⁵¹ Then he is to take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet and the living bird, and dip them into the blood of the slain bird as well as the living water, and sprinkle the house seven times. ⁵² He should cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, with the living water, with the living bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop and the scarlet. ⁵³ But he is to let the living bird go out of the city into the open field. So he is to make atonement for the house, and it will be clean."

⁵⁴ This is the *Torah* for any mark of *tzara'at*—even for a scab, ⁵⁵ or the *tzara'at* in a garment or for a house ⁵⁶ or for a swelling, a scab, or a bright spot— ⁵⁷ to teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean.

This is the *Torah* of *tzara'at*.

Purification From Discharges

15 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying: ² "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and tell them: When any man has a fluid discharge from his body, because of his discharge he is unclean. ³ This is to be his uncleanness in his discharge. Whether his body flows with his discharge or his body obstructs his discharge, it is his uncleanness.

⁴ "Every bed on which he who has the discharge lies will become unclean, and everything he sits on will be unclean. ⁵ Whoever touches his bed is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening. ⁶ Whoever sits on anything on which the man who has the discharge sat is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening. ⁷ Whoever touches the body of the one who has the discharge is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening. ⁸ Or if the one who has the discharge spits on someone who is clean, then he also is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

⁹ "Any saddle the one who has the discharge rides on will be unclean. ¹⁰ Whoever touches anything that was under him will be unclean until the evening. Whoever

carries them is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

¹¹ "Also anyone the person with the discharge touches without rinsing his hands in water should wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

¹² "A clay pot that one with the discharge touches should be broken, and every wooden vessel should be rinsed in water.

¹³ "When the one who has a fluid discharge is cleansed of his issue, then he is to count for himself seven days for his purification and wash his clothes. Then he is to bathe his body in running water, and he will be clean. ¹⁴ On the eighth day he is to take two turtle doves or two young pigeons, and come before *ADONAI* at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and give them to the *kohen*. ¹⁵ The *kohen* is to offer them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. So the *kohen* should make atonement for him before *ADONAI* for his fluid discharge.

¹⁶ "If any man has an emission of semen, then he is to bathe his whole body in water and be unclean until the evening. ¹⁷ Every garment and all leather with semen on it are to be washed with water, and will be unclean until the evening. ¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman and there is an emission of semen, they should both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the evening.

¹⁹ "If a woman has a discharge, and her discharge from her body is blood, she should be in her *niddah* seven days. And whoever touches her will be unclean until the evening. ²⁰ Everything that she lies on in her *niddah* will become unclean. Also everything that she sits on will become unclean. ²¹ Whoever touches her bed is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening. ²² Whoever touches anything that she sits on is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening. ²³ If it is on the bed or on anything where she sits, when he touches it, he will be unclean until the evening. ²⁴ If any man lies with her, so that her *niddah* gets on him, he will be unclean for seven days and every bed where he lies will be unclean.

²⁵ "Now if a woman has a discharge of her blood for many days not during her *niddah* or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her *niddah* all the days of the discharge of her uncleanness should be as in the days of her *niddah*. She is unclean. ²⁶ Every bed where she lies all the days of her discharge will be like her bed during her *niddah*, and everything she sits on will become unclean like the uncleanness of her *niddah*. ²⁷ Whoever touches these things will become unclean and is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the evening.

²⁸ "But if she is cleansed of her discharge, then she is to count off seven days for herself, and after that she will be clean. ²⁹ On the eighth day she is to take two

† cf. Matt. 9:20.

turtledoves or two young pigeons, and bring them to the *kohen*, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

³⁰ The *kohen* is to offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. So the *kohen* will make atonement for her before *ADONAI* for the uncleanness of her discharge.

³¹ "So you are to keep *Bnei-Yisrael* separate from their uncleanness, so they will not die in their uncleanness by defiling My Tabernacle that is in their midst."

³² This is the *Torah* for one who has a discharge or for one who has an emission of semen, which causes him to become unclean, ³³ as well as for her who has her period of *niddah*, and for the man or woman who has a discharge, or the one who lies with her who is unclean.

Parashat Acharei Mot

16 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they approached the presence of *ADONAI* and died. ² *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holiest Place behind the curtain †—before the atonement cover which is on the Ark—so that he would not die. For I will be appearing in the cloud over the atonement cover. ††

Yom Kippur Service

³ "In this way should Aaron come into the Sanctuary: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. ⁴ He is to put on the holy linen garment, have the linen undergarments on his body, put on the linen sash, and wear the linen turban—they are the holy garments. He should bathe his body in water, and put them on.

⁵ "Then he is to take from the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* two he-goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. ⁶ Then Aaron is to offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself and make atonement for himself and his house. ⁷ Then he is to take the two goats and present them before *ADONAI* at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁸ Aaron will then cast lots for the two goats—one lot for *ADONAI*, and the other lot for the scapegoat. ⁹ Aaron is to present the goat on which the lot for *ADONAI* fell and make it a sin offering. ¹⁰ But the goat upon which the lot for the scapegoat ‡ fell is to be presented alive before *ADONAI*, to make atonement upon it, †† by sending it away as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

¹¹ "Also Aaron is to present the bull of the sin offering which is for himself and so make atonement for himself and his house. He is to slaughter the bull of the sin offering which is for himself. ††¹² He is to take a firepan full of coals of fire from off the altar before *ADONAI* plus two handfuls of sweet powdered incense and bring it within the curtain. ¹³ Then he is to put the

incense on the fire before *ADONAI*, so that the cloud of the incense may cover the atonement cover that is on the Ark, so that he would not die. ¹⁴ He is then to take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the atonement cover, on the east side. Before the atonement cover he is to sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. †††

¹⁵ "Then he is to slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, bring its blood behind the curtain, and do with it as he did with the blood of the bull—sprinkle it upon the atonement cover, and before the atonement cover. †††¹⁶ So he is to make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of *Bnei-Yisrael* and because of their transgressions, all their sins. ⁵ He is to do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their impurities. ¹⁷ No one is to be in the Tent of Meeting when he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until he comes out, and has made atonement for himself and for his household, and for all the assembly of *Israel*.

¹⁸ "Then he is to go out to the altar that is before *ADONAI* and make atonement for it. He is to take some of the bull's blood and some of the goat's blood and dab it around on the horns of the altar. ¹⁹ He is to sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of *Bnei-Yisrael*.

²⁰ "When he has finished atoning for the Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, then he is to present the live goat. ²¹ Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of *Bnei-Yisrael* and all their transgressions, all their sins. He should place them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. ²² The goat will carry all their iniquities by itself into a solitary land and he is to leave the goat in the wilderness.

²³ "Then Aaron is to come into the Tent of Meeting, take off the linen garments that he put on when he went into the Holy Place, and leave them there. ²⁴ He is to bathe himself with water in a holy place, put on his garments, and come out to offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, to make atonement for himself and for the people.

²⁵ "Then he is to burn up fat of the sin offering in smoke on the altar. ²⁶ The man who leaves the goat as a scapegoat is to wash his clothes and bathe his body in water. Afterward he may come into the camp.

²⁷ "The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, should be carried outside the camp, and their hides, their flesh, and their dung burned with fire. ††²⁸ The one who burns them is to wash his clothes and bathe his body in water. Then afterward he may come into the camp.

† cf. Heb. 6:19; 9:7,25. †† cf. Heb. 9:5. ‡ Hebrew Azazel for removal †† cf. Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2. †† cf. Heb. 7:27; 9:7.

††† cf. Heb. 9:25. ††† Hebrew Kapporet mercy seat § cf. Heb. 2:17. §† cf. Heb. 13:11.

²⁹“It is to be a statute to you forever, that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you are to afflict your souls, and do no kind of work—both the native-born and the outsider dwelling among you. ³⁰For on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. From all your sins you will be clean before *ADONAI*. ³¹It is a *Shabbat* of solemn rest to you, and you are to afflict your souls. It is a statute forever. ³²The *kohen* who is anointed and who is consecrated to be *kohen* in his father’s place will make the atonement, and put on the linen garments, the holy garments. ³³He is to make atonement for the Holy Sanctuary, for the Tent of Meeting, for the altar, for the *kohanim*, and for all the people of the assembly. ³⁴“This will be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for *Bnei-Yisrael* once in the year because of all their sins.” It was done as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

Sacrifice of Life in Blood

17 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to Aaron, to his sons, and to all *Bnei-Yisrael*, and say to them: This is the word which *ADONAI* has commanded. ³Anyone from the house of Israel who slaughters a bull, a lamb or a goat in the camp or outside the camp, ⁴but has not brought it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to offer it as a sacrifice to *ADONAI* before the Tabernacle—let bloodguilt be charged to that man. He has shed blood—that man is to be cut off from among his people. ⁵Thus *Bnei-Yisrael* may bring their sacrifices that they were making in the open field to *ADONAI*, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to the *kohen*, and offer them as sacrifices of fellowship offerings to *ADONAI*. ⁶The *kohen* is to sprinkle the blood on the altar of *ADONAI* at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and burn up the fat as smoke for a soothing aroma to *ADONAI*. ⁷They are no longer to offer their sacrifices to the goat-demons after which they play the prostitute. This will be a statute forever to them throughout their generations.

⁸“Then you are to say to them: Anyone from the house of Israel, or from the outsiders dwelling among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, ⁹but does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to sacrifice it to *ADONAI*, is to be cut off from his people.

¹⁰“Anyone from the house of Israel, or from the outsiders dwelling among them, who eats any kind of blood, I will set my face against that soul—the one who eats blood—and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹For the life of the creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your lives—for it is the blood that makes atonement because of the life. ¹²Therefore, I have said to *Bnei-Yisrael*: No person among you may eat blood, nor may any outsider dwelling among you eat blood.

¹³“Any person from *Bnei-Yisrael*, or from the outsiders dwelling among them, who hunts as game any

animal or bird that may be eaten, must drain its blood and cover it with dust. ¹⁴For the life of every creature, its blood is in its life. Therefore I said to *Bnei-Yisrael*: You are not to eat the blood of any kind of creature, for the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it is to be cut off.

¹⁵“Everyone who eats what dies naturally or is torn by animals—whether he is native-born or a foreigner—is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water. He will be unclean until the evening, then he will be clean. ¹⁶But if he does not wash them or bathe his body, then he will bear his iniquity.”

18 *ADONAI* said to Moses: ²“Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: I am *ADONAI* your God. ³You are not to act as they do in the land of Egypt, where you used to live. Nor are you to act as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, nor are you to walk in their customs. ⁴You are to obey My ordinances and keep My statutes and walk in them—I am *ADONAI* your God. ⁵So you are to keep My statutes and My ordinances. The one who does them will live by them. I am *ADONAI*.

Incest Forbidden

⁶“None of you is to come near anyone who is his close relative to uncover their nakedness. I am *ADONAI*.

⁷“You are not to uncover the nakedness of your father or your mother. She is your mother. You shall not uncover her nakedness. ⁸You are not to uncover the nakedness of your father’s wife, for it is your father’s nakedness. ⁹You are not to uncover the nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother, whether born at home or elsewhere. ¹⁰You are not to uncover the nakedness of your son’s daughter, or of your daughter’s daughter, for theirs is your own nakedness. ¹¹You are not to uncover the nakedness of the daughter of your father’s wife, conceived by your father, since she is your sister. ¹²You are not to uncover the nakedness of your father’s sister, for she is your father’s direct relative.

¹³You are not to uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister, for she is your mother’s direct relative.

¹⁴You are not to uncover the nakedness of your father’s brother by approaching his wife, for she is your aunt. ¹⁵You are not to uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law, for she is your son’s wife. You are not to uncover her nakedness. ¹⁶You are not to uncover the nakedness of your brother’s wife, because that is your brother’s nakedness. ¹⁷You are not to uncover the nakedness of both a woman and her daughter. You are not to take her son’s daughter, or her daughter’s daughter, to uncover her nakedness, for they are direct relatives. That is wickedness. ¹⁸You are not to marry your wife’s sister, to be a rival, uncovering her nakedness, while her sister is still alive.

Other Forbidden Relations

¹⁹“You are not to approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in the impurity of her *niddah*.
²⁰You are not to lie sexually with your neighbor’s wife and defile yourself with her.

²¹“You are not to give any of your children in sacrifice to Molech, and defile the Name of your God. I am *ADONAI*.

²²“You are not to lie with a man, as with a woman—that is an abomination. ²³You are not to lie with any animal to defile yourself with it, nor is any woman to give herself to an animal, to lie down with it—that is a perversion.

²⁴“Do not defile yourselves in any of these things, for in all of these ways the nations which I am casting out before you were defiled. ²⁵The land has become defiled, so I will punish its iniquity, and the land will vomit out its inhabitants. ²⁶You, however, are to keep My statutes and My ordinances, and do none of these abominations, neither the native-born, nor the outsider dwelling among you.

²⁷“For all these abominations were done by the men of the land who were before you, and the land became defiled. ²⁸If you defile it, the land will vomit you out as it vomited out the nation that was before you. ²⁹For whoever does any of these detestable things, the souls that do them are to be cut off from the midst of their people. ³⁰Therefore, you are to keep My charge, so that you do not practice any of these detestable customs that were practiced before you, so that you do not defile yourselves by them. I am *ADONAI* your God.”

Parashat Kedoshim

Holiness Code

19 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²“Speak to all the congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* and tell them: You shall be *kedoshim*, for I, *ADONAI* your God, am holy.

³“Each one of you is to respect his mother and his father, and keep My *Shabbatot*. I am *ADONAI* your God.

⁴“Do not turn to idols, or make molten gods for yourselves. I am *ADONAI* your God.

⁵“When you bring a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to *ADONAI*, you are to offer it so that you may be accepted. ⁶It is to be eaten the same day you offer it, and the next day. But if anything remains until the third day, it is to be burned with fire. ⁷If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is disgusting. It will not be accepted. ⁸Rather, anyone who eats it will bear his iniquity, since he has profaned what is holy to *ADONAI*, and that soul will be cut off from his people.

⁹“When you reap the harvest of your land, you are not to reap to the very corners of your field, nor are you to gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰You are

not to pick the remnants of your vineyard, nor are you to gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. Instead, you are to leave them for the poor and for the outsider. I am *ADONAI* your God.

¹¹“You are not to steal. You are not to lie. You are not to deceive one another.

¹²“You are not to swear by My Name falsely, and so profane the Name of your God. I am *ADONAI*.

¹³“You are not to oppress your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of a hired servant are not to remain with you all night until the morning.

¹⁴“You are not to curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God. I am *ADONAI*.

¹⁵“You are to do no injustice in judgment. You are not to be partial toward the poor nor show favoritism toward the great, but you are to judge your neighbor with fairness.

¹⁶“You are not to go up and down as a talebearer among your people. You are not to endanger the life of your neighbor. I am *ADONAI*.

¹⁷“You are not to hate your brother in your heart. Instead, you are to firmly rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. ¹⁸You are not to take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. † I am *ADONAI*.

¹⁹“You must keep My statutes. You are not to cross-breed different kinds of animals. You are not to sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor are you to wear a garment woven of two kinds of material.

²⁰“If a man lies sexually with a woman who is a slave girl, pledged to be married to another man, but not ransomed or given her freedom, they are both to be punished. But they are not to be put to death, because she was not free. ²¹He is to bring his trespass offering to *ADONAI*, to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting—a ram for a guilt offering. ²²The *kohen* is to make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before *ADONAI* for his sin that he committed, and the sin that he committed will be forgiven him.

²³“When you come into the land and have planted all kinds of trees for food, you are to consider their fruit as forbidden. Three years it will be forbidden to you. It is not to be eaten. ²⁴Then in the fourth year all its fruit will be holy, for giving praise to *ADONAI*. ²⁵In the fifth year you may eat its fruit. So it will yield its increase to you. I am *ADONAI* your God.

²⁶“You are not to eat any meat with the blood still in it, nor are you to use enchantments, or practice sorcery.

²⁷“You are not to round off the hair on the sides of your heads, nor are you to mar the edge of your beard. ²⁸You are not to make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead or make any tattoo marks upon yourself. I am *ADONAI*.

† cf. Mark 12:31.

²⁹ “Do not defile your daughter, to make her a prostitute, so that the land does not fall into prostitution, and become full of wickedness.

³⁰ “You are to keep My *Shabbatot*, and reverence My Sanctuary. I am *ADONAI*.

³¹ “Do not turn to those who are mediums or to soothsayers. Do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am *ADONAI* your God.

³² “You are to rise up in the presence of the gray-haired and honor the presence of the elderly. So you will fear your God. I am *ADONAI*.

³³ “If an outsider dwells with you in your land, you should do him no wrong. ³⁴ The outsider dwelling among you shall be to you as the native-born among you. You should love him as yourself—for you dwelled as outsiders in the land of Egypt. I am *ADONAI* your God.

³⁵ “You must not be dishonest in judgment—in measurements of length, weight or of quantity. ³⁶ You are to have honest balances, honest weights, honest bushel-measure and an honest gallon. † I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. ³⁷ You must observe all My statutes and all My ordinances—do them. I am *ADONAI*.”

Idols and the Occult

20 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses saying: ² “Moreover, you are to tell *Bnei-Yisrael*: Anyone from *Bnei-Yisrael* or from the outsiders dwelling in Israel, who gives any of his children to Molech, shall surely be put to death. The people of the land are to stone him with rocks. ³ I also will set My face against such a person and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given his children to Molech, defiling My Sanctuary and profaning My holy Name. ⁴ But if the people of the land all hide their eyes from that person, when he gives of his seed to Molech, and do not put him to death, ⁵ then I will set My face against that man and against his family, and will cut him off, along with all who play the prostitute after him with Molech, from among their people.

⁶ “The soul that turns to mediums or to soothsayers, prostituting himself with them, I will set My face against that soul and will cut him off from among his people. ⁷ So consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am *ADONAI* your God. ⁸ You are to keep My statutes, and do them. I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies you.

⁹ “Any man who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or mother, and his blood should be on him.

¹⁰ “The man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, who commits adultery with his friend’s wife, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

¹¹ “If a man lies with his father’s wife, and has uncovered his father’s nakedness, both of them shall surely be put to death, and their blood shall be on them. ¹² If

a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed a perversion, and their blood shall be on them. ¹³ If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination, and they shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be on them. ¹⁴ If a man takes a wife and her mother, it is wickedness. They shall be burned with fire—both he and they, so that there may be no wickedness among you. ¹⁵ If a man lies with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you are to kill the animal. ¹⁶ If a woman approaches any animal, and lies down with it, you are to kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death, and their blood shall be on them. ¹⁷ If a man takes his sister, his father’s daughter, or his mother’s daughter, and sees her nakedness, and she his, it is a shameful thing. They are to be cut off in the sight of the children of their people, for he has uncovered his sister’s nakedness, and will bear his iniquity. ¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman during her *niddah* and exposes her nakedness, he has exposed her flow and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them are to be cut off from among their people. ¹⁹ You are not to uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister, or your father’s sister, for the one who does that has made his close relative naked, and will bear his iniquity. ²⁰ If a man lies with his aunt, he has uncovered his uncle’s nakedness. They shall bear their sin, and die childless. ²¹ If a man takes his brother’s wife, it is an impurity. He has uncovered his brother’s nakedness, and they will be childless.

²² “Now you are to keep all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them, so that the land where I am bringing you to dwell will not vomit you out. ²³ You are not to walk in the ways of the nation which I am casting out before you, for they did all these things and therefore I abhorred them. ²⁴ But I have said to you, ‘You will inherit their land and I will give it to you to possess it, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am *ADONAI* your God, who has set you apart from the peoples.

²⁵ “Also you are to make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean. And you are not to make your souls detestable by an animal or by a bird, or by anything with which the ground teems, which I have set apart as unclean for you. ²⁶ You are to be holy to Me, for I, *ADONAI*, am holy, and have set you apart from the peoples, so that you would be Mine.

²⁷ “A man or a woman who is a medium or is a soothsayer shall surely be put to death. They shall stone them with rocks, and their blood shall be on them.”

† Hebrew *hin*

Parashat Emor

Holiness Code for *Kohanim*

21 Then *ADONAI* said to Moses: "Speak to the *kohanim*, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: A *kohen* is not to allow himself to become unclean for the dead among his people, ² except for his relatives that are nearest to him—his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, ³ or his virgin sister who is near to him, who has had no husband. For her he may allow himself to become unclean. ⁴ But he is not to defile himself—a husband among his people—and so profane himself.

⁵ " *Kohanim* are not to shave their heads, nor shave off the corners of their beards, nor make any cuttings in their flesh. ⁶ They are to be holy to their God, and not profane the Name of their God, for they present the offerings of *ADONAI* made by fire, the bread of their God. Therefore they are to be holy. ⁷ They are not to marry women who are defiled as prostitutes, or profane. Neither should they marry women divorced from their husbands, for a *kohen* is holy to his God. ⁸ Therefore you are to sanctify him, because he offers the bread of your God. He shall be holy to you, for I, *ADONAI*, who sanctifies you, am holy.

⁹ "The daughter of any *kohen*, if she profanes herself by playing the prostitute, profanes her father. She is to be burned with fire.

¹⁰ "He who is the *kohen gadol* among his brothers, upon whose head the anointing oil is poured and is consecrated to put on the garments, is not to let the hair of his head hang loose or tear his clothes, ¹¹ nor should he go near any dead person, defiling himself, even for his father or his mother. ¹² He is not to go out of the Sanctuary or profane the Sanctuary of his God—for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him. I am *ADONAI*.

¹³ "He should take a wife in her virginity. ¹⁴ A widow, or one divorced, or one who has been defiled as a prostitute, he is not to marry. He is to take a virgin from his own people as a wife, ¹⁵ so as not to corrupt his offspring among his people. For I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies him."

¹⁶ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁷ "Say to Aaron: None of your offspring throughout their generations who has a defect may approach to offer the food of his God. ¹⁸ Any man who has a defect is not to draw near: no one blind or lame or disfigured or deformed, ¹⁹ or a man who has a crippled foot or crippled hand ²⁰ or a hunchback or dwarf, or who has an eye defect or a rash or scabs, or who has damaged testicles. ²¹ None of the offspring of Aaron the *kohen* who has a defect should come near to present the offerings of *ADONAI* made by fire. Since he has a defect, he is not to come near to offer the food of his God. ²² He may eat the food of his God, both from the most holy and the

holy. ²³ But he is not to approach the curtain or come near the altar, because of the defect on him, so that he may not desecrate My sanctuaries, for I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies them."

²⁴ So Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons, and to all *Bnei-Yisrael*.

22 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ² "Tell Aaron and his sons to separate themselves from the holy things of *Bnei-Yisrael*, which they consecrate to Me, so that they would not profane My holy Name. I am *ADONAI*. ³ Tell them, if anyone of all your offspring throughout your generations approaches the holy things, which *Bnei-Yisrael* consecrate to *ADONAI*, while in a state of uncleanness, that soul will be cut off from before Me. I am *ADONAI*.

⁴ "None of the offspring of Aaron who has *tzara'at* or has a discharge should eat of the holy things until he is clean. Whoever touches anything that is unclean by the dead or a man whose seed discharges from him ⁵ or who touches any creeping thing that may make him unclean or a person who is unclean—whatever his uncleanness— ⁶ the person who touches any such thing will be unclean until the evening, and is not to eat of the holy things, unless he has bathed his body in water. ⁷ When the sun sets, he will become clean, and afterward he may eat of the holy things, because it is his food. ⁸ A carcass or what is torn by beasts he is not to eat, becoming unclean by it. I am *ADONAI*.

⁹ "Therefore *kohanim* shall keep My charge, so that they do not become guilty of sin and die should they profane it. I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies them.

¹⁰ "No layman is to eat from the holy offering. A foreigner living with the *kohanim* or a hired servant is not to eat from the holy offering. ¹¹ But if a *kohen* buys a slave purchased by his money, that one may eat from it. Also those born in his house may eat his food. ¹² If a *kohen*'s daughter is married to a layman, she is not to eat from the gifts of the holy offerings. ¹³ But if a *kohen*'s daughter is a widow or divorced, and has no child and has returned to her father's house as in her youth, she may eat from her father's food. But no layman may eat any of it.

¹⁴ "If anyone eats something holy unwittingly, then he is to add a fifth to it and give the holy offering to the *kohen*. ¹⁵ They are not to profane the holy offerings of *Bnei-Yisrael*, which they lift up to *ADONAI*, ¹⁶ so causing them to bear the iniquity that brings guilt when they eat the holy offerings. For I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies them."

¹⁷ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁸ "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, and to all *Bnei-Yisrael*, and say to them: Whoever is from the house of Israel, or one of the outsiders in Israel who brings his offering, whether it be any of their vows or any of their freewill offerings that they present to *ADONAI* for a burnt offering— ¹⁹ for you to be accepted—you are to offer a male without blemish, from the bulls, the sheep or the goats. ²⁰ But whatever has a blemish you are not to

present, for it will not be acceptable on your behalf.

^{†21} Whoever brings a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to *ADONAI* to fulfill a vow or for a freewill offering, either from the herd or the flock, it must be unblemished to be accepted—there must be no defect on it. ²² The blind, injured, maimed, having an abnormal growth or festering or a running sore are not to be offered to *ADONAI*, or given as an offering by fire on the altar to *ADONAI*. ²³ For a freewill offering you may present a bull or a lamb that has any deformity or lacking in its parts, but for a vow it will not be accepted. ²⁴ Whatever has its testicles bruised, crushed, broken or cut, you are not to offer to *ADONAI*, nor are you to do so in your own land. ²⁵ Moreover, you are not to offer the food of your God from the hand of an outsider from any of these animals. For their corruption is within them—they have a defect. They will not be accepted on your behalf.”

²⁶ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁷ “When a bull, a sheep or a goat is born, then it is to remain seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day onward it will be accepted as the gift of an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*. ²⁸ If it is a cow or ewe, you are not to slaughter it along with its young, both in one day. ²⁹ When you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to *ADONAI*, you are to present it so that you may be accepted. ³⁰ It is to be eaten on the same day. You are to leave none of it until the morning. I am *ADONAI*.

³¹ “So you are to keep My *mitzvot* and do them. I am *ADONAI*. ³² You must not profane My holy Name, for I will be made holy among *Bnei-Yisrael*. I am *ADONAI* who makes you holy, ³³ who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. I am *ADONAI*.”

Biblical Feasts

23 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and tell them: These are the appointed *moadim* of *ADONAI*, which you are to proclaim to be holy convocations—My *moadim*.

³ “Work may be done for six days, but the seventh day is a *Shabbat* of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You are to do no work—it is a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI* in all your dwellings.

Pesach and Feast of *Matzot*

⁴ “These are the appointed feasts of *ADONAI*, holy convocations which you are to proclaim in their appointed season. ⁵ During the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening, is *ADONAI*’s Passover. ⁶ On the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of *Matzot* to *ADONAI*. For seven days you are to eat *matzah*. ⁷ On the first day you are to have a holy convocation and you should do no regular work. ⁸ Instead you are to present an offering made by fire to *ADONAI* for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation, when you are to do no regular work.”

Bikkurim and *Shavuot*

⁹ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁰ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and tell them: When you have come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you are to bring the omer ^{††} of the firstfruits of your harvest to the *kohen*. ¹¹ He is to wave the omer before *ADONAI*, to be accepted for you. On the morrow after the *Shabbat*, the *kohen* is to wave it. ¹² On the day when you wave the omer you are to offer a male lamb without blemish, one year old, as a burnt offering to *ADONAI*. ¹³ The grain offering with it should be two tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil—an offering made by fire to *ADONAI* for a soothing aroma. Its drink offering with it should be a quarter of a gallon [‡] of wine. ¹⁴ You are not to eat bread, roasted grain, or fresh grain until this same day—until you have brought the offering of your God. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

¹⁵ “Then you are to count from the morrow after the *Shabbat*, from the day that you brought the omer ^{††} of the wave offering, seven complete *Shabbatot*. ¹⁶ Until the morrow after the seventh *Shabbat* you are to count fifty days, ^{‡‡} and then present a new grain offering to *ADONAI*. ¹⁷ You are to bring out of your houses two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two tenths of an ephah of fine flour. They are to be baked with *hametz* as firstfruits to *ADONAI*. ¹⁸ You are to present, along with the bread, seven one-year-old lambs without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They will become a burnt offering to *ADONAI*, with their meal offering, and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to *ADONAI*. ¹⁹ Also you are to offer one male goat for a sin offering and a pair of year-old male lambs for a sacrifice of fellowship offerings. ²⁰ The *kohen* is to wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before *ADONAI*, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to *ADONAI* for the *kohen*. ²¹ You are to make a proclamation on the same day that there is to be a holy convocation, and you should do no regular work. This is a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

²² “Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you are not to reap to the furthest corners of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Rather you are to leave them for the poor and for the outsider. I am *ADONAI* your God.”

Fall Festivals

²³ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁴ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you are to have a *Shabbat* rest, a memorial of blowing (*shofarot*), ^{‡‡†} a holy convocation. ²⁵ You are to do no regular work, and you are to present an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*.”

†† About 6 pints of barley flour. ‡ Hebrew *hin* †† A measure of flour. ‡‡ cf. Acts 2:1. ‡‡† pl. of *shofar*, Feast of Trumpets

† cf. Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19.

²⁶ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁷ “However, the tenth day of this seventh month is *Yom Kippur*, [†] a holy convocation to you, so you are to afflict yourselves. You are to bring an offering made by fire to *ADONAI*. ²⁸ You are not to do any kind of work on that set day, for it is *Yom Kippur*, to make atonement for you before *ADONAI* your God. ²⁹ For anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people. ³⁰ Anyone who does any kind of work on that day, that person I will destroy from among his people. ³¹ You should do no kind of work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. ³² It is to be a *Shabbat* of solemn rest for you, and you are to humble your souls. On the ninth day of the month in the evening—from evening until evening—you are to keep your *Shabbat*.”

³³ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ³⁴ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and say: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Feast of *Sukkot*, for seven days to *ADONAI*. ^{††35} On the first day there is to be a holy convocation—you are to do no laborious work. ³⁶ For seven days you are to bring an offering by fire to *ADONAI*. The eighth day will be a holy convocation to you, and you are to bring an offering by fire to *ADONAI*. It is a solemn assembly—you should do no laborious work.

³⁷ “These are the *moadim* of *ADONAI*, which you are to proclaim to be holy convocations, to present an offering by fire to *ADONAI*—a burnt offering, a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, each on its own day, ³⁸ besides those of the *Shabbatot* of *ADONAI* and besides your gifts, all your vows and all your freewill offerings which you give to *ADONAI* .

³⁹ “So on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruits of the land, you are to keep the Feast of *ADONAI* for seven days. The first day is to be a *Shabbat* rest, and the eighth day will also be a *Shabbat* rest. ⁴⁰ On the first day you are to take choice fruit of trees, branches of palm trees, [‡] boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and rejoice before *ADONAI* your God for seven days. ⁴¹ You are to celebrate it as a festival to *ADONAI* for seven days in the year. It is a statute forever throughout your generations—you are to celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² You are to live in *sukkot* for seven days. All the native-born in Israel are to live in *sukkot*, ⁴³ so that your generations may know that I had *Bnei-Yisrael* to dwell in *sukkot* when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am *ADONAI* your God.”

⁴⁴ So Moses declared to *Bnei-Yisrael* the *moadim* of *ADONAI* .

Eternal Light and Bread

24 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Order *Bnei-Yisrael* to bring to you pure olive oil, beaten for the light, to keep a lamp burning continually. ³ Outside of the curtain of the Testimony, in the Tent of

Meeting, Aaron is to keep it in order from evening to morning before *ADONAI* continually. It is to be a statute forever throughout your generations. ⁴ He is to keep the lamps in order on the pure gold *menorah* before *ADONAI* continually.

⁵ “Also you are to take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes of it, with two tenths of an ephah in each cake. ⁶ Then you are to set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure gold table before *ADONAI* . ⁷ Set pure frankincense on each row, as a memorial portion for the bread, an offering by fire to *ADONAI* . ⁸ Every *Yom Shabbat* he is to set it in order before *ADONAI* continually. It is an everlasting covenant on behalf of *Bnei-Yisrael* . ⁹ It belongs to Aaron and his sons, and they are to eat it in a holy place, for it is most holy to him among the offerings of *ADONAI* by fire, as a perpetual statute.”

Justice and Restitution

¹⁰ Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among *Bnei-Yisrael*, and a fight broke out between the Israelite woman’s son and an Israelite man. ¹¹ The Israelite woman’s son blasphemed the Name, and cursed, so they brought him to Moses. His mother’s name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. ¹² They put him in custody, until the will of *ADONAI* could be declared to them.

¹³ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁴ “Bring the one who cursed, out of the camp, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and have the entire congregation stone him.

¹⁵ “Then you will speak to *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying: Whoever curses his God will bear his sin. ¹⁶ Whoever blasphemes the Name of *ADONAI* must surely be put to death. The whole congregation must stone him. The outsider as well as the native-born, when he blasphemes the Name, is to be put to death.

¹⁷ “Whoever mortally strikes down any man must surely be put to death. ¹⁸ Whoever mortally strikes down an animal is to make restitution—life for life. ¹⁹ If anyone injures his neighbor, as he has done, the same is to be done to him: ²⁰ fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. ^{‡†} Just as he has injured someone, so it should it be done to him.

²¹ “Whoever kills an animal is to make restitution, but the one who kills a man is to be put to death. ²² You are to have one standard of justice for the outsider as well as the native-born, for I am *ADONAI* your God.”

²³ So Moses spoke to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and they led the one who had cursed out of the camp, then stoned him with rocks. Thus *Bnei-Yisrael* did as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

[†] Day of Atonement ^{††} Feast of Tabernacles
[‡] cf. John 12:13.

^{‡†} cf. Matt. 5:38.

Parashat Behar

Shabbat Year and Jubilee

25 Then *ADONAI* said to Moses on Mount Sinai, 2 "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and tell them: When you come into the land which I give you, then the land is to keep a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI*. 3 For six years you may sow your field and for six years you may prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits. 4 But in the seventh year there is to be a *Shabbat* rest for the land—a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI*. You are not to sow your field or prune your vineyard. 5 You are not to reap what grows by itself during your harvest nor gather the grapes of your untended vine. It is to be a year of *Shabbat* rest for the land. 6 Whatever the *Shabbat* of the land produces will be food for yourself, for your servant, for your maid-servant, for your hired worker and for the outsider dwelling among you. 7 Even for your livestock and for the animals that are in your land—all its increase will be enough food.

8 "You are to count off seven *Shabbatot* of years—seven times seven years, so that the time is seven *Shabbatot* of years—49 years. 9 Then on the tenth day of the seventh month, on *Yom Kippur*, you are to sound a *shofar* blast—you are to sound the *shofar* all throughout your land. 10 You are to make the fiftieth year holy, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It is to be a Jubilee to you, when each of you is to return to his own property and each of you is to return to his family. 11 That fiftieth year will be your Jubilee. You are not to sow, or reap that which grows by itself, or gather from the untended vines. 12 Since it is a Jubilee, it is to be holy to you. You will eat from its increase out of the field.

13 "In this Year of Jubilee each of you will return to his property.

14 "If you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you are not to wrong one another.

15 Corresponding to the number of years after the Jubilee you are to purchase land from your neighbor's hand. He is to sell it to you based on the number of years of crops. 16 In proportion to the extent of years you may increase its price, or decrease its price in proportion to the fewness of years, because he is selling a number of harvests to you. 17 You are not to cheat one another, but fear your God, for I am *ADONAI* your God.

18 "Therefore you are to keep My statutes and observe My ordinances, and carry them out, so that you may live securely in the land. 19 Then the land will yield its fruit, and you may eat your fill and live there in safety. 20 Now if you ask: What are we to eat during the seventh year if, see, we are not to sow, nor gather in our increase? 21 Now I will command My blessing to you in the sixth year, so that it will yield a harvest sufficient for three years. 22 When you sow during the

eighth year, you will still be eating the old, stored harvest until the harvest of the ninth year comes in.

23 "Moreover, the land is not to be sold permanently, because the land is Mine. For you are sojourners with Me. 24 For any land you possess, you are to provide for redemption of the land.

25 "If your brother becomes poor and sells some of his property, then his nearest kinsman may come and redeem what his brother has sold. 26 If a man has no kinsman-redeemer, but he himself recovers and finds sufficient means to redeem it, 27 then let him reckon the years since its sale and restore the surplus to the man to whom he sold it. Then he will return to his property. 28 But if he is not able to get it back for himself, then what he has sold is to remain in the hand of the one who has bought it until the Year of Jubilee. Then in the Jubilee it should be released, so he may return to his property.

29 "If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it has been sold. For a full year he has the right of redemption. 30 But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city will belong permanently to the one who bought it throughout his generations. It will not be released in the Jubilee. 31 But the houses of the villages that have no wall around them are to be considered as open country. They have redemption rights and are to be released in the Jubilee.

32 "But as for the towns of the Levites, the Levites may have a permanent right of redemption for the houses in the towns of their possession. 33 The Levites may redeem a house sold in the town of its possession. Also it should be released in the Jubilee, for the houses of the Levitical towns are their possession among *Bnei-Yisrael*. 34 But the fields in the pasturelands of their cities may not be sold, for it is their permanent possession.

35 "If your brother has become poor and his hand cannot support himself among you, then you are to uphold him. He may live with you like an outsider or a temporary resident. 36 Take no excessive interest from him, but fear your God, so that your brother can live with you. 37 You are not to lend him your money at interest, nor give him your food for profit. 38 I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God.

39 "If your brother has grown poor among you and sells himself to you, you must not subject him to slave labor. 40 Let him stay with you as a hired worker or as a temporary resident. He will work for you until the Year of Jubilee, 41 then he is to be released from you—he and his children with him—and may return to his own family and to the property of his fathers. 42 For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. They are not to be sold in a slave sale. 43 You are

not to rule over him with harshness, but fear your God.

⁴⁴“As for your male and female slaves whom you may acquire out of the nations that are around you—from them you may buy male and female slaves. ⁴⁵You may also acquire from among the children of the foreigners dwelling among you, as well as from their families who are with you—those born in your land—they may also become your property. ⁴⁶You may also leave them an inheritance for your children after you, to receive as a possession. These may become your slaves permanently. But over your brothers, *Bnei-Yisrael*, you must not rule over one another with harshness.

⁴⁷“If an outsider or sojourner with you becomes rich, while your brother beside him has become poor and sells himself to the outsider dwelling among you or to a member of the outsider’s family, ⁴⁸after he is sold he may be redeemed. One of his brothers may redeem him, ⁴⁹or his uncle or his uncle’s son may redeem him, or anyone who is a close relative to him from his family may also redeem him. Or if he has grown rich, he may redeem himself. ⁵⁰He is to calculate with the one who bought him, from the year that he sold himself to the Year of Jubilee, and the price of his sale will be in proportion to the number of years. Like the days of a hired worker it will be with him. ⁵¹If there are still many years, in proportion to those he is to reimburse the price of his redemption from his purchase price. ⁵²If there remain only a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he should calculate with him in proportion to his years of service he is to reimburse the price of his redemption. ⁵³He will stay with him as a hired worker, year by year. But he is not to rule with harshness over him in your sight. ⁵⁴Even if he is not redeemed by these means, then he will still be released in the Year of Jubilee—he and his children with him. ⁵⁵For *Bnei-Yisrael* are My servants—My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I am *ADONAI* your God.

26 “You are not to make idols for yourselves, nor raise up an engraved image or a standing-stone, or place any carved stone in your land to bow down to it. For I am *ADONAI* your God.

²“You are to keep My *Shabbatot* and have reverence for My Sanctuary. I am *ADONAI*.

Parashat Bechukotai

Faithfulness Ensures Blessings

³“If you walk in My statutes, keep My *mitzvot* and carry them out, ⁴then I will give you rains in their season, the land will yield its crops, and the trees of the field will yield their fruit. ⁵Your threshing will last until grape gathering, the grape gathering will last until the sowing time, you will eat your bread to the full, and live securely in your land.

⁶“I will bring *shalom* in the land, and you will lie down, with no one making you afraid. I will remove dangerous beasts from the land and no sword will pass through your land. ⁷You will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword. ⁸Five of you will chase 100 and 100 of you will chase 10,000, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you.

⁹“I will turn toward you, make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. ¹⁰You will eat the old harvest and clear out the old because of the new. ¹¹I will set My Tabernacle among you, and My soul will not abhor you. ¹²I will walk among you and will be your God, and you will be My people. ¹³I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, so that you would not be their slaves, and I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk upright.

Faithlessness Ensures Misery

¹⁴“But if you will not listen to Me, nor carry out all these *mitzvot*, ¹⁵and if you reject My statutes and if your soul abhors My ordinances, so that you do not keep all My *mitzvot*, but instead break My covenant, ¹⁶then I will do the following to you in return. I will appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever that will dim the eyes and cause the soul to pine away. You will sow your seed in vain, because your enemies will eat it. ¹⁷I will set My face against you and you will be routed before your enemies. Those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee when no one pursues you.

¹⁸“If you, in spite of these things, will not listen to Me, then I will chastise you seven times more for your sins. ¹⁹I will break your pride of power. I will make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze. ²⁰Also your strength will be spent in vain, for your land will not yield its increase, nor will the trees of the land yield their fruit.

²¹“If you keep walking contrary to Me and will not listen to Me, then I will multiply the plagues on you seven times like your sins. ²²I will send the wild animals among you, which will rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you so few in number that your roads will become deserted.

²³“Now if in spite of these things you will not be chastened by Me, but walk contrary to Me instead, ²⁴then I will also walk contrary to you. Then I will strike you, I Myself, seven times for your sins. ²⁵I will bring a sword upon you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant, and you will be gathered together inside your cities. I will send the pestilence among you and you will be given into the hand of the enemy. ²⁶When I break your staff of bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread by weight, so that you will eat but not be satisfied.

²⁷“Yet, if in spite of this you will not listen to Me but walk contrary to Me, ²⁸then I will walk contrary to you

† cf. Rev. 21:3.

in wrath. So I will chastise you seven times for your sins. ²⁹ You will eat the flesh of your sons and you will eat the flesh of your daughters. ³⁰ I will destroy your high places and cut down your altars of incense, cast your dead bodies upon the bodies of your idols, and My soul will abhor you. ³¹ I will lay waste your cities and devastate your sanctuaries. I will not smell your soothing aromas. ³² I will make the land desolate and your enemies settling there will be astonished at it. ³³ I will scatter you among the nations and I will draw out the sword after you. So your land will become a desolation and your cities will become a waste. ³⁴ Then the land will enjoy its *Shabbatot* all the days of its desolation, while you are in the land of your enemies. Then the land will rest and enjoy its *Shabbatot*. ³⁵ As long as it lies desolate it will have rest, that rest which it did not have from your *Shabbatot*, when you lived on it.

³⁶ "As for those who remain, I will bring weakness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies, so that the sound of a driven leaf will put them to flight, and they will flee as one flees from the sword and fall, even when no one is pursuing. ³⁷ They will stumble over one another, as if before the sword, when no one pursues, and you will have no strength to stand before your enemies. ³⁸ You will perish among the nations and the land of your enemies will devour you. ³⁹ Those of you who are left in the land of your enemies will rot away because of their iniquity, and because of the iniquities of their fathers they will rot away with them.

ADONAI Remembers His Own

⁴⁰ "But if they confess their iniquity and that of their fathers, in the treachery they committed against Me, and how they walked contrary to Me ⁴¹ —in return I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies—and if at that time their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled, so that they accept the punishment for their iniquity, ⁴² then I will remember My covenant with Jacob and also My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. ⁴³ But the land will be deserted by them and will enjoy its *Shabbatot* while it lies desolate without them, and they will accept the punishment of their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes.

⁴⁴ "Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I hate them into utter destruction, and break My covenant with them, for I am ADONAI their God. ⁴⁵ But for their sake I will remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am ADONAI."

⁴⁶ These are the statutes, ordinances and laws, which ADONAI made between Himself and *Bnei-Yisrael* at Mount Sinai by Moses.

Divine Appraisals

²⁷ Then ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying: ² "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: When anyone makes a special vow to ADONAI involving the valuation of persons, ³ then your valuation of a male from 20 years old to 60 years old should be 50 shekels of silver, after the shekel of the Sanctuary. ⁴ If it is a female, then your valuation should be 30 shekels. ⁵ If the person is from five years to 20 years old, then your valuation is to be 20 shekels for a male and ten shekels for a female. ⁶ If the person is from one month to five years old, then your valuation is to be five shekels of silver for a male and three shekels of silver for a female. ⁷ If the person is from 60 years old and upward, if it is a male, then your valuation is to be 15 shekels and for a female ten shekels. ⁸ But if he is poorer than your valuation, then he is to be set before the *kohen* and the *kohen* will set a value for him, in keeping with what the one who made the vow can afford.

⁹ "Now if it is an animal that may be brought as an offering to ADONAI, anything that one gives to ADONAI will be holy. ¹⁰ He is not to replace it or exchange it, either good for bad, or bad for good. But if he does exchange one animal for another, then both it and the one for which it is exchanged will become holy. ¹¹ If it is any sort of unclean animal that may not be brought as an offering to ADONAI, then he is to set that animal before the *kohen*. ¹² The *kohen* is to evaluate it, whether it is good or bad. As the *kohen* values it, so it will be. ¹³ But if he would redeem it, then he is to add a fifth to its valuation.

¹⁴ "If a man consecrates his house as holy to ADONAI, then the *kohen* is to evaluate it, whether it is good or bad. As the *kohen* evaluates it, so it will stand. ¹⁵ If the one who dedicates it would redeem his own house, then he is to add a fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it will become his.

¹⁶ "If one consecrates to ADONAI part of the field of his possession, then your valuation is to be in proportion to the seed to sow it: an omer of barley at 50 shekels of silver. ¹⁷ If he dedicates his field from the Year of Jubilee, it will stand according to your own valuation. ¹⁸ But if he dedicates his field after the Jubilee, then the *kohen* is to calculate for him the money according to the years that remain until the Year of Jubilee, with a deduction to be made from your valuation. ¹⁹ If he who dedicated the field would ever redeem it, then he is to add a fifth of the money of your valuation to it, and it will remain his. ²⁰ But if he will not redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to someone else, it may not be redeemed anymore. ²¹ But the field, when it is released in the Jubilee, will be holy to ADONAI as a consecrated field. It will be owned by the *kohanim*.

²² "Now if one consecrates to ADONAI a field that he has bought, which is not from the fields of his possession, ²³ then the *kohen* is to calculate for him the

worth of your valuation up to the Year of Jubilee, and give your valuation on that day as a holy thing to *ADONAI*. ²⁴In the Year of Jubilee the field is to return to the one from whom it was bought, to the one to whom the possession of the land belongs. ²⁵All your valuations should be according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, 20 gerahs to the shekel.

²⁶“But the firstborn among animals, which is made a firstborn to *ADONAI*, may be dedicated by anyone. Whether an ox or sheep, it belongs to *ADONAI*. ²⁷If it is an unclean animal, then he is to buy it back according to your valuation, and add a fifth of the value to it. But if it is not redeemed, then it is to be sold according to your valuation.

²⁸“Nevertheless, no devoted thing which a man sets apart from all that he has for *ADONAI*, whether man or animal, or from the field of his possession, may be

sold or redeemed. Every devoted thing is most holy to *ADONAI*.

²⁹“No one who may be set apart from men for destruction is to be ransomed. He is surely to be put to death.

³⁰“All the tithe of the land whether from the seed of the land, or the fruit of the trees, belongs to *ADONAI*, for it is holy to *ADONAI*. ³¹If a man redeems anything of his tithe he must add a fifth part to it. ³²From all the tithe of the herds or the flocks, whatever passes under the rod, a tenth will be holy to *ADONAI*. ³³One is not to inquire if it is good or bad, nor exchange it. Or if he does exchange it, then both it and that for which it is exchanged will become holy, and may not be redeemed.”

³⁴These are the *mitzvot* which *ADONAI* commanded Moses for *Bnei-Yisrael* on Mount Sinai.

Numbers

Numbers Introduction

The book's English name, "Numbers," comes from the Greek Septuagint word . This makes reference to the census taken. In Hebrew, however, Numbers is known as meaning "in the wilderness." The book recounts Israel's journey with God through the wilderness—and notes how all too often they walked without Him and suffered numerical attrition as a result.

The book begins with the Hebrews encamped at Mount Sinai; then, it moves with them to Kadesh Barnea, at the border of Canaan. From there, twelve spies departed on a reconnaissance mission, but they returned with an evil report. Thus dispirited Israelites eventually leave and wander till they make their way to the steppes of Moab at journey's end, east of the Jordan River.

In the wilderness, God builds the character needed for His nation to enter into its inheritance when the time is right. The book begins with the nation still camped at Mount Sinai—just after the priests have received instruction, and the Tabernacle has been erected. This attended to, it is time to restructure the new generation to cleave to God and make their way to the land He gave them to inherit. Two weeks after Passover, during the counting period, a census is taken. The army is numbered, as is the priesthood. At the center of the camp, stands the Tabernacle. It is surrounded by the priesthood, which functions as the gatekeeper to keep the unholy or the unclean from entering the zone of greatest holiness, where God resides.

When the cloud of God's guidance lifts and moves, the Tabernacle moves along with it. Israel moves through forty-two resting places in thirty-eight years—including a single stop at Kadesh Barnea for nineteen years. The Hebrews walk in circles till the first generation dies off. Only the humble and faithful Joshua and Caleb, the priests, the women, the children, who saw Moses bring down the Tablets and those now being born, will live to inherit the Land. Only those who cleave to God will remain alive when the time comes to cross over. The book concludes, after covering thirty-eight years, with elderly priests, a next-generation army, women, and children perched outside the Land—all standing at the steppes of Moab, awaiting final instructions from Moses.

With the New Covenant noting how Israel's wilderness affairs are "examples for us" (1 Cor. 10:1-13, esp. v. 6), we all do well to read this book with an open heart and with a fresh set of eyes, desiring to see how the ancient Word applies to our lives in the modern world.

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Parashat Bamidbar

Census of Fighting Men

¹ In the wilderness of Sinai, on the first day of the second month in the second year from the Exodus from the land of Egypt, *ADONAI* spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting saying, ² "Do a head count of all the community of *Bnei-Yisrael* by their families and their ancestral house, with a total of every male one by one. ³ You and Aaron are to muster by their divisions every son from 20 years and upward available to serve in the army of Israel. ⁴ One man from each tribe, each head of his father's household, is to assist you.

⁵ "These then are the names of the men who will assist you: from Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur. ⁶ From

Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai. ⁷ From Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab. ⁸ From Issachar, Nethanel son of Zuar. ⁹ From Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon. ¹⁰ From the sons of Joseph—from Ephraim, Elishama son of Ammihud, from Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur. ¹¹ From Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni. ¹² From Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

¹³ "From Asher, Pagiel son of Ochran. ¹⁴ From Gad, Eliasaph son of Deuel. ¹⁵ From Naphtali, Ahira son of Enan." ¹⁶ These were those selected from the community, princes of their ancestral tribes. They were heads of the thousands of Israel.

¹⁷ So Moses and Aaron took these men designated by name. ¹⁸ They assembled all the community on the first day of the second month. They declared their lineage according to their families, the households of their forefathers, with the number of the names of

those 20 years old and upward being listed individually.¹⁹ Moses numbered Israel in the wilderness of Sinai just as *ADONAI* had commanded him.

²⁰ The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn (their generations, their families, by their ancestral households, according to the count of their names, every male from 20 years and upward, all available for the army),²¹ those counted from the tribe of Reuben were 46,500.

²² From the sons of Simeon (their generations, according to their families, their ancestral households, whose names were counted by polls, every male 20 years and upward, every one who would go with the army),²³ they counted from the tribe of Simeon 59,300.

²⁴ From the sons of Gad (their generations according to their families, to their ancestral households, in the count of names of every male 20 years old and upward, every one available to go out with the army),²⁵ those counted from the tribe of Gad were 45,650.

²⁶ From the sons of Judah (their generations, by their families, their ancestral households, the count of their names, all who would go out with the army),²⁷ those counted from the tribe of Judah were 74,600.

²⁸ From the sons of Issachar (their generations, according to their families, their ancestral households, by number of the names of every male 20 years old and upward, going out with the army),²⁹ those counted from the tribe of Issachar were 54,400.

³⁰ From the sons of Zebulun (their generations, according to their families, to their ancestral households, by number of the names of everyone 20 years old and upward going out with the army),³¹ those counted from the tribe of Zebulun were 57,400.

³² From the sons of Joseph—the sons of Ephraim (their generations according to their families, to their ancestral households, by count of the names of all those 20 years old and upward going out with the army),³³ those numbered from the tribe of Ephraim were 40,500.

³⁴ From the sons of Manasseh (their generations according to their families, their ancestral households, by number of the names of those 20 years old and upward going out with the army),³⁵ those counted from the tribe of Manasseh were 32,200.

³⁶ From the sons of Benjamin (their generations by their families, their ancestral households, by number of the names of everyone 20 years old and upward going out with the army),³⁷ those numbered from the tribe of Benjamin were 35,400.

³⁸ From the sons of Dan, (their generations by their families, their ancestral households, by number of everyone 20 years old and upward who would go out with the army),³⁹ those numbered from the tribe of Dan were 62,700.

⁴⁰ From the sons of Asher (their generations by their families, their ancestral households, by number everyone 20 years old and upward who could go out with

the army),⁴¹ those counted from the tribe of Asher were 41,500.

⁴² From the sons of Naphtali (their generations by their families, their ancestral households, by number everyone 20 years old and upward who would go out with the army),⁴³ those counted from the tribe of Naphtali were 53,400.

⁴⁴ These were the ones numbered—Moses, Aaron and the princes of Israel counted them. Each of the twelve men represented his ancestral house.⁴⁵ So all those counted from *Bnei-Yisrael*, according to their ancestral houses, from 20 years old and up—all able to go out with the army in Israel—⁴⁶ all those who were counted totaled 603,550.

Duties of the Levites

⁴⁷ The Levites, however, were not counted by the tribe of their ancestors,⁴⁸ for *ADONAI* told Moses saying,⁴⁹ "Definitely you are not to number the tribe of Levi, nor take the sum of them among *Bnei-Yisrael*.⁵⁰ Instead, you are to appoint the Levites over the Tabernacle of the Testimony, over all its implements and all pertaining to it. They are to carry the Tabernacle and all its utensils, tend to it and camp around it.

⁵¹ "Whenever the Tabernacle sets out, the Levites are to dismantle it, and whenever the Tabernacle is pitched, the Levites are to set it up. But the commoner who comes near to it must be put to death.

⁵² " *Bnei-Yisrael* will encamp, each man with his own camp, each with his own standard, according to their own divisions.⁵³ The Levites are to camp around the Tabernacle of the Testimony, so that there will be no wrath unleashed on the community of *Bnei-Yisrael*. So the Levites are to maintain care of the Tabernacle of the Testimony."

⁵⁴ So *Bnei-Yisrael* did—all that *ADONAI* commanded Moses, so they did.

Order of Ancestral Households

2 *ADONAI* said to Moses and Aaron saying,² "Let each man encamp under his own standard among the banners of their ancestral house at an appropriate distance around the Tent of Meeting.³ Those camping on the east—toward the sunrise—will be of the standard of Judah, according to their divisions. Nahshon son of Amminadab, is the prince of the sons of Judah.⁴ His division, by their number, is 74,600.

⁵ "Camping next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar. The prince of the sons of Issachar is Nethanel son of Zuar.⁶ Their division, by their number, is 54,400.

⁷ Next, the tribe of Zebulun. The prince of the sons of Zebulun is Eliab son of Helon.⁸ His division, by count, is 57,400.

⁹ "All those numbered to Judah's camp, by their divisions, are 186,400. They are to advance first.

¹⁰ "The standard of the camp of Reuben shall be on the south side, by their divisions. The prince of the

sons of Reuben is Elizur son of Shedeur. ¹¹ His division, by their number, is 46,500. ¹² Those camping next to them are the tribe of Simeon. The prince of the sons of Simeon is Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai. ¹³ His division, by their number, is 59,300. ¹⁴ Next, the tribe of Gad. The prince of the tribe of Gad is Eliasaph son of Reuel. ¹⁵ His division, by their numbers, is 45,650.

¹⁶ "All those numbered to the camp of Reuben are 151,450. They are to set out second.

¹⁷ "Then the Tent of Meeting will move out with the camp of the Levites, which is in the middle of the camps—just as they were in camp, each person in his own place under his own appropriate standard.

¹⁸ "On the west will be the standard of the camp of Ephraim, by their divisions. The prince of the sons of Ephraim is Elishama son of Ammihud. ¹⁹ His division, by their numbers, is 40,500. ²⁰ Next to him is the tribe of Manasseh. The prince of the sons of Manasseh is Gamaliel, son of Pedahzur. ²¹ His division, by their numbers, is 32,200. ²² Next, the tribe of Benjamin. The prince of the sons of Benjamin is Abidan son of Gideoni. ²³ His division, by their numbers, is 35,400.

²⁴ "All those numbered to the camp of Ephraim are 108,100, by their divisions. They are to advance third.

²⁵ "The standard of the camp of Dan shall be on the north, according to their divisions. The prince of the sons of Dan is Ahiezer, son of Ammishaddai. ²⁶ His division, by their numbers, is 62,700. ²⁷ Next to him will encamp the tribe of Asher. The prince of the sons of Asher is Pagiel, son of Ocran. ²⁸ His division, by their numbers, is 41,500. ²⁹ Next, tribe of Naphtali. The prince of the sons of Naphtali is Ahira son of Enan. ³⁰ His division, by their numbers, is 53,400.

³¹ "All those numbered to the camp of Dan are 157,600. They are to advance last by their standards.

³² "These are the numbers of *Bnei-Yisrael*, in accordance with their ancestral households. All those counted according to their divisions are 603,550."

³³ However, the Levites were not counted among *Bnei-Yisrael*, just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses. ³⁴ So *Bnei-Yisrael* acted in accordance with all that *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

Thus they camped by their standards and set out, each man according to their families and their ancestral houses.

The Levite Families and Duties

3 These are the generations of Aaron and Moses current at the time *ADONAI* spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai. ² These are the names of Aaron's sons: Nadab the firstborn, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ³ These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed *kohanim* whom he consecrated to be priests. ⁴ But Nadab and Abihu died before *ADONAI* for offering unauthorized fire † before *ADONAI* in the Sinai wilderness—they had no children. So Eleazar and Ithamar served as *kohanim* under Aaron their father.

⁵ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ "Gather the tribe of Levi near, and appoint them to attend to Aaron the *kohen*. ⁷ They are to keep watch over duties for him and the entire community before the Tent of Meeting while performing the service of the Tabernacle. ⁸ They are to tend to all the implements of the Tent of Meeting and the service of *Bnei-Yisrael* while performing the service of the Tabernacle. ⁹ You are to give the Levites to Aaron and his sons. Out of *Bnei-Yisrael* they are dedicated entirely to him. ¹⁰ You are to appoint Aaron and his sons to maintain the priesthood; any commoner who approaches must be executed."

¹¹ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses saying, ¹² "See, I have taken the Levites from among *Bnei-Yisrael* in place of the firstborn who open the womb among *Bnei-Yisrael*. The Levites will be Mine, ¹³ because all the firstborn are Mine. In the day when I was striking down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated to Myself every firstborn in Israel—whether man or animal—as Mine. I am *ADONAI*."

¹⁴ *ADONAI* spoke in the Sinai wilderness to Moses saying, ¹⁵ "Count the sons of Levi. According to their ancestral house, by their families, every male a month old and upward you are to number them." ¹⁶ So Moses numbered them in accordance with the word of *ADONAI*, just as he was commanded.

¹⁷ These were the sons of Levi, by their names: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁸ These then were the names of the sons of Gershon—Libni and Shimei. ¹⁹ The sons of Kohath by their families were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ²⁰ The sons of Merari, by their families, are Mahli and Mushi. These then were the families of the Levites by their ancestral households.

²¹ To Gershon belonged the family of the Libnites and the family of the Shimeites. These were the families of the Gershonites. ²² The number of every male one month old and upward who were counted was 7,500. ²³ The Gershonites were to camp behind the Tabernacle on the west. ²⁴ The prince of the ancestral house of the Gershonites was Eliasaph son of Lael. ²⁵ The duties of the sons of Gershon in the Tent of Meeting were the Tabernacle, the tent, its coverings, the curtain of the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶ the curtains of the courtyard, the screen of the entrance of the courtyard around the Tabernacle and altar, its ropes and all related to its use.

²⁷ To Kohath belonged the family of the Amramites, the family of the Izharites, the Hebronites and the Uzzielites. These were the Kohathite families. ²⁸ The number of every male one month old and upward was 8,600. Their duties were caring for the Sanctuary. ²⁹ The Kohathite families were to camp along the side of the Tabernacle on the south. ³⁰ The prince of the ancestral household of the Kohathites was Elizaphan son of Uzziel. ³¹ They were responsible for the Ark, the table, the *menorah*, the altars, and the implements of

† Or foreign.

the Sanctuary used in service with them, the curtain and all involved with its use.

³² The chief prince of the Levites was Eleazar son of Aaron the *kohen* appointed over those whose responsibility was the care of the Sanctuary.

³³ To Merari belonged the families of the Mahlites and the Mushites. These were the families of Merari.

³⁴ Their number by count of every male one month old and upward was 6,200. ³⁵ The prince of the household of the father of the Merarites was Zuriel son of Abihail. They were to camp on the north side of the Tabernacle. ³⁶ The sons of Merari were appointed over the care of the frames of the Tabernacle, its crossbars, posts, bases, and all equipment for its use, ³⁷ the posts of the surrounding courtyard, their bases, pegs and ropes.

³⁸ Those camping in front of the Tent of Meeting, on the east, toward the sunrise, were Moses, Aaron, and his sons. They were to care for the Sanctuary on behalf of *Bnei-Yisrael*. But anyone unauthorized who approached had to be executed.

³⁹ All the Levites counted by Moses and Aaron at the word of *ADONAI*, by their families, inclusive of every male one month old and upward, were 22,000.

Redemption of the Firstborn

⁴⁰ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Count every firstborn male of *Bnei-Yisrael* from one month old and upward and make a list of their names. ⁴¹ Set the Levites apart for me in place of all the firstborn of *Bnei-Yisrael*, and, all the livestock of the Levites in place of the firstborn of the livestock of *Bnei-Yisrael*. I am *ADONAI*." ⁴² So Moses counted all the firstborn of *Bnei-Yisrael* as *ADONAI* commanded him. ⁴³ The sum total of the firstborn males of *Bnei-Yisrael*, one month old and upward, listed by name, was 22,273.

⁴⁴ Again *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁴⁵ "Take the Levites in place of all the firstborn of *Bnei-Yisrael*, and the livestock of the Levites in place of their livestock. The Levites will be Mine. I am *ADONAI*." ⁴⁶ To redeem the 273 firstborn of *Bnei-Yisrael* exceeding the number of the Levites, ⁴⁷ you are to collect five shekels for each, based on the shekel of the Sanctuary, which is 20 gerahs. ⁴⁸ Give the money for the redemption of the extra ones of the firstborn of them to Aaron and his sons."

⁴⁹ Hence Moses collected the redemption money for those exceeding the number redeemed by the Levites. ⁵⁰ From the firstborn of *Bnei-Yisrael* he collected silver weighing 1,365 shekels, according to the Sanctuary shekel. ⁵¹ Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons, just as *ADONAI* commanded him, in accordance with the mouth of *ADONAI*.

Preparing the Sanctuary to Move

4 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ² "Take a census of the sons of Kohath from

among the sons of Levi, by their families and by their ancestral households, ³ everyone from 30 years of age to 50, all who come to serve doing the work in the Tent of Meeting.

⁴ "This is the task of the sons of Kohath in the Tent of Meeting—the most holy things. ⁵ Whenever the camp is about to move out, Aaron and his sons are to take down the shielding curtain ^{††} and cover the Ark of the Testimony with it. ⁶ Then they are to cover this with porpoise hide, then spread over it a cloth of solid blue. Then they are to put its poles in place.

⁷ "Then over the table of the Presence they are to spread a solid blue cloth, then lay on it the plates, ladles, bowls, and jars for the drink offering. The bread that is continually there is to remain there. ⁸ Over them they are to spread a solid scarlet cloth, cover it with a covering of porpoise hide, then install its poles.

⁹ "Then they are to take a blue cloth and cover the *menorah* for light, along with its lamps, tongs, snuffers and oil jars that they use to tend to it. ¹⁰ They then are to wrap it and all its accessories in a cover of porpoise hide and place it all on a carrying frame.

¹¹ "Over the golden altar they are to spread a blue cloth and cover that with a covering of porpoise hide, then put its poles in place.

¹² "They are to take all the utensils used for the service of the ministry of the Sanctuary, wrap them in a blue cloth, cover them with porpoise hide, and place them on a carrying frame.

¹³ "They are to remove the ashes from the altar, then spread over it a purple cloth. ¹⁴ They are to put onto it all the utensils with which they tend to the altar, among them the firepans, meat forks, shovels and sprinkling bowls. They are to spread over it a covering of porpoise hide and install its poles.

¹⁵ "When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the Sanctuary and all its holy implements, and when the camp is ready to move out, after this the sons of Kohath may come to do the carrying. But they must not touch the holy items or they will die. These are the task of the sons of Kohath with regard to the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁶ "Eleazar son of Aaron the *kohen* will have charge of the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the regular grain offering and the anointing oil. He is to have charge of the Tabernacle and all that is in it, including its holy items and all its implements."

¹⁷ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ¹⁸ "You are not to let the families of the tribe of the Kohathites be cut off from among the Levites. ¹⁹ Do this for them so that they may live and not die whenever they approach the most holy items—Aaron and his sons are to go into the Sanctuary and assign each man his job and his responsibility. ²⁰ But the Kohathites are not to go in to look at what is holy, not even momentarily, or they will die."

† A gerah

†† cf. Matt. 27:51. ‡ cf. Heb. 9:2.

Parashat Naso

²¹ Again *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²² "Take a census also of the sons of Gershon, by their ancestral households and by their families. ²³ Count all the males from 30 to 50 years of age, everyone coming to work in the service of the Tent of Meeting. ²⁴ This is the task of the Gershonite families in working and carrying burdens. ²⁵ They are to carry the curtains of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, its covering, the outer covering of porpoise hide, the curtains for the entrance for the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶ the curtains surrounding the courtyard and the altar, the curtain for the entrance, the ropes and all the equipment used in its operations. They are to do all that needs to be done with these things.

²⁷ "The sons of the Gershonites are to do all their tasks, whether carrying or doing other work, according to the word of Aaron and his sons. You are to assign to them all that is their responsibility to carry. ²⁸ This is the duty of the families of the sons of the Gershonites regarding the Tent of Meeting. Their duty will be under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the *kohen* .

²⁹ "Next, count the sons of Merari, according to their families and their ancestral houses, ³⁰ sons 30 years old and upward to 50, everyone coming to work in the service of the Tent of Meeting. ³¹ This is their task in the service of the Tent of Meeting: the frames of the Tabernacle, its crossbars, posts and bases, ³² as well as the posts of the surrounding courtyard, plus their bases, tent pegs, ropes, and all their paraphernalia with everything related to their operation. Assign to them by name their duties and tasks. ³³ This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari as they work under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the *kohen* ."

³⁴ So Moses, Aaron, and the princes of the community counted the sons of the Kohathites according to their families and their ancestral households. ³⁵ All the men who came to do the service of the Tent of Meeting, from 30 to 50 years of age, ³⁶ were counted by families—2,750. ³⁷ This was the total of those in the families of the Kohathites, every one serving in the Tent of Meeting—Moses and Aaron counted them according to the mouth of *ADONAI* by Moses's hand.

³⁸ The sons of Gershon were counted according to their families and their ancestral households. ³⁹ Males from 30 years old and upward to 50, all those coming into the work of the service of the Tent of Meeting, ⁴⁰ numbered according to their families and ancestral households 2,630. ⁴¹ These were those counted from the families of the sons of Gershon, each serving in the Tent of Meeting—Moses and Aaron counted according to the mouth of *ADONAI* .

⁴² Those were counted from the families and ancestral households of the sons of Merari, ⁴³ from 30 years of age upward to 50, who came to the work of the ser-

vice of the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁴ Numbered by their families, they were 3,200. ⁴⁵ These were those numbered from the families of the sons of Merari by Moses and Aaron in accordance with the mouth of *ADONAI* by Moses's hand.

⁴⁶ Thus Moses, Aaron and the princes of Israel counted all the Levites by their families and by their ancestral houses. ⁴⁷ All the men from 30 to 50 years old who came to do the work of the service and of carrying the Tent of Meeting ⁴⁸ numbered 8,580.

⁴⁹ From the mouth of *ADONAI* by Moses's hand, each man was assigned his work and his burden to carry. So they were counted, as *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

Purity in the Camp

5 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Command *Bnei-Yisrael* to send out from the camp everyone with *tzara'at* , who has some kind of discharge, or any contaminated by a dead body. ³ Whether male or female, you are to send them outside the camp so as not to defile the camp where I am dwelling among them." ⁴ This *Bnei-Yisrael* did, sending them outside the camp. Just as *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, so *Bnei-Yisrael* did.

⁵ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ "Say to *Bnei-Yisrael* : Whenever a man or woman commits any sins against any person, thus breaking faith with *ADONAI* , that soul bears guilt. ⁷ That person is to confess the sin he has committed, make full restitution for his wrong, add one fifth to it and give it to the one he wronged. ⁸ But if that person has no close relative to whom to pay the restitution, the restitution belongs to *ADONAI* . It is to be given to the *kohen* along with the ram of atonement with which he is to make atonement for him.

⁹ "Every contribution from all the sacred things that *Bnei-Yisrael* brings to the *kohen* will belong to him. ¹⁰ Each one's sacred holy gifts are his own, but whatever each man gives to the *kohen* belongs to that *kohen* ."

Jealousy Ritual

¹¹ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: Suppose some man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, ¹³ and another man has sexual relations with her, but it is hidden from her husband's eyes and her impurity is not detected. Yet there was no witness against her and she was not caught in the act. ¹⁴ Then a spirit of jealousy overcomes him and he is suspicious of his wife, when she is impure. Or a spirit of jealousy overcomes him and he suspects his wife, yet she is not impure.

¹⁵ "Then he should take his wife to the *kohen* . He must also bring a tenth of an ephah of barley flour as an offering for her. He is not to pour oil or put incense

† cf. *Jacob* 5:16; *1 John* 1:9.

on it, because it is an offering for jealousy, a reminder offering drawing attention to guiltiness.

¹⁶“The *kohen* is to bring her near and have her stand before *ADONAI*. ¹⁷ Then the *kohen* is to take some holy water in a clay jar and take some dust from the floor of the Tabernacle and put it into the water. ¹⁸ Then the *kohen* will have the woman stand before *ADONAI*, loosen the woman’s hair, put into her hands the reminder offering, the offering for jealousy, while in the *kohen*’s own hands are the bitter waters that bring a curse. ¹⁹ Then the *kohen* will have her swear under oath, then say to the woman, ‘If no man other than your husband has slept with you, and if you have not gone astray into impurity from your husband, may this bitter water that brings a curse not harm you. ²⁰ If, however, you have gone astray from your husband and if you became impure and had sexual relations with a man other than your husband’— ²¹ Then the *kohen* is to have the woman swear under this oath of a curse, and say to the woman—‘then let *ADONAI* cause you to be cursed and denounced among your people when *ADONAI* causes your thigh to rot and your belly to swell. ²² May this water which brings a curse enter your body and cause your belly to swell and your thigh to rot.’

“The woman is to say, ‘Amen, amen!’

²³“Then the *kohen* is to write these curses on a scroll and wash them into the waters of bitterness. ²⁴ The *kohen* will then have the woman drink the bitter water bearing curses, so that the water of the curses of bitterness enters her. ²⁵ The *kohen* is to take the jealousy offering from the woman’s hand, wave the offering before *ADONAI* and bring it to the altar. ²⁶ The *kohen* is to take a handful of the grain offering and burn it up in smoke on the altar as a memorial offering. The *kohen* will then have the woman drink the water.

²⁷“When she is made to drink the water that carries the curse, if she has defiled herself and been unfaithful to her husband, it will enter her and cause bitterness—her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away. She will be accursed among her people. ²⁸ If, however, the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will be free from guilt and be able to have children.

²⁹“This is the *Torah* regarding jealousy, when a woman goes astray from her husband and defiles herself, ³⁰ or when a spirit of jealousy comes over a man and he jealously suspects his wife. The *kohen* is to have her stand before *ADONAI* and apply this entire *Torah* to her. ³¹ The husband will be free of guilt, but that woman will bear her guilt.”

Nazirite Vows

6 Again *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: Any man or woman who desires to vow a Nazirite vow to be separate for *ADONAI*, ³ is to abstain from wine and any other fer-

mented drink. He is not to drink any vinegar made from wine or any fermented drink, or any grape juice, or eat grapes or raisins.

⁴“All during his days as a Nazirite he is not to eat anything from the grapevine—even the seeds or skins. ⁵ All the duration of his Nazirite vow, no razor is to come on his head until the time of his consecration to *ADONAI* is over. He is to be holy, and the hair of his head is to grow long. ⁶ All the days of his separation to *ADONAI*, he is not to go near a dead body. ⁷ Even if his father, mother, brother or sister should die, he is not to make himself unclean, because his consecration to God is on his head. ⁸ All the days of his separation, he is to be consecrated to *ADONAI*.

⁹“Now if someone should die suddenly in his presence, thereby defiling his dedicated head, he is to shave his head on the day of his purification—the seventh day. ¹⁰ Then on the eighth day, he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to the *kohen* at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ¹¹ The *kohen* is to offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. He is to make atonement for him because he sinned through the corpse. He must consecrate his head on the same day. ¹² He will be dedicated to *ADONAI* for the days of his Nazirite separation. He is to bring a year-old male lamb as a guilt offering. The previous days will not count because he was contaminated during his Nazirite separation.

¹³“Then this is the *Torah* of the Nazirite when his period of separation is over. He must be brought to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁴ He is to present his offering to *ADONAI*: a year-old male lamb without flaw as a burnt offering, a year-old female lamb without flaw as a sin offering, a flawless ram as a fellowship offering, ¹⁵ along with a basket of *matzah* cakes made of fine flour mixed with oil and *matzah* wafers spread with oil, along with their grain and drink offerings.

¹⁶“The *kohen* will offer these before *ADONAI*, and present his sin offering and burnt offering. ¹⁷ Then he is to sacrifice the ram as a fellowship offering to *ADONAI*, along with the basket of *matzot*. The *kohen* will also present the grain and drink offerings. ¹⁸ The Nazirite is then to shave the hair of his dedication at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and he is to take the hair of his dedication and put it into the fire of the fellowship offering sacrifice. ¹⁹ The *kohen* is to take the boiled shoulder of the ram and one *matzah* cake and one *matzah* wafer from the basket, and he is to place them into the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved the hair of his dedication. ²⁰ The *kohen* will wave them before *ADONAI* as a wave offering. They are holy, and belong to the *kohen* along with the breast that was waved and the thigh that was presented. Afterward, the Nazirite may drink wine.

²¹ This is the *Torah* regarding the Nazirite who vows his offering to *ADONAI* with regard to his consecration, besides whatever else he can afford. He must fulfill the

† Nazir one separate consecrated

†† cf. Acts 21:26.

vow he has made, in accordance with the *Torah* of his consecration.”

Aaronic Benediction

²² Again *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²³ “Speak to Aaron and to his sons saying: Thus you are to bless *Bnei-Yisrael*, by saying to them:

²⁴ ‘*ADONAI* bless you and keep you!

²⁵ *ADONAI* make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you! †

²⁶ *ADONAI* turn His face toward you and grant you *shalom*!

²⁷ In this way they are to place My Name over *Bnei-Yisrael*, and so I will bless them.”

Offerings of Tribal Princes

7 When Moses finished setting up the Tabernacle, he anointed and consecrated it and all its implements, the altar and all its utensils, and he anointed and consecrated them. ² Then the princes of Israel, heads of their ancestral houses—they were tribal princes in charge over those who were numbered—gave offerings. ³ They brought as their gift before *ADONAI* six covered carts and twelve oxen. A cart came from every two princes and an ox from each one of them. They presented them before the Tabernacle.

⁴ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁵ “Accept these from them to use in the service of the Tent of Meeting. Give them to the Levites to use as each man’s work requires.”

⁶ So Moses took the carts and the oxen and he gave them to the Levites. ⁷ He gave two carts and four oxen to the sons of Gershon, as their work required, ⁸ and four carts and eight oxen to the sons of Merari, as their work required, under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the *kohen*. ⁹ But to the sons of Kohath he did not give any because their responsibility was carrying the holy items on their shoulders.

¹⁰ When the altar was anointed, the princes brought their dedication offerings and presented them before the altar. ¹¹ For *ADONAI* had said to Moses, “Each day one of the princes is to bring his offering for the altar’s dedication.”

¹² Bringing his offering on the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah. ¹³ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels by the shekel of the Sanctuary, both of them filled with fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, ¹⁴ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ¹⁵ one young bull from the herd, one ram, one male lamb a year old as a burnt offering, ¹⁶ one male goat as a sin offering, ¹⁷ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs one year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Nahshon son of Amminadab.

¹⁸ On the second day, Nethanel son of Zuar, prince of Issachar, brought his offering. ¹⁹ The offering he brought was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ²⁰ one gold ladle of 10 shekels filled with incense, ²¹ one young bull, one ram and one male lamb one year old for a burnt offering, ²² one male goat for a sin offering, ²³ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs one year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Nethanel son of Zuar.

²⁴ On the third day was the prince of the sons of Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon. ²⁵ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, both according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ²⁶ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ²⁷ one young bull, one ram and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ²⁸ one male goat for a sin offering, ²⁹ two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Eliab son of Helon.

³⁰ On the fourth day was the prince of the sons of Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur. ³¹ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ³² one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ³³ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ³⁴ one male goat for a sin offering, ³⁵ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Elizur son of Shedeur.

³⁶ On the fifth day was the prince of the sons of Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai. ³⁷ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ³⁸ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ³⁹ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ⁴⁰ one male goat for a sin offering, ⁴¹ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

⁴² On the sixth day was the prince of the sons of Gad, Eliasaph son of Deuel. ⁴³ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁴⁴ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ⁴⁵ one young bull, one ram and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ⁴⁶ one male goat for a sin offering, ⁴⁷ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fel-

† cf. *Rom.* 1:7.

lowship offering. This was the offering of Eliasaph son of Deuel.

⁴⁸ On the seventh day was the prince of the sons of Ephraim, Elishama son of Ammihud. ⁴⁹ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁵⁰ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ⁵¹ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ⁵² one male goat for a sin offering, ⁵³ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Elishama son of Ammihud.

⁵⁴ On the eighth day was the prince of the sons of Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur. ⁵⁵ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁵⁶ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ⁵⁷ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ⁵⁸ one male goat for a sin offering, ⁵⁹ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

⁶⁰ On the ninth day was the prince of the sons of Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni. ⁶¹ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁶² one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ⁶³ one young bull, one ram and one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ⁶⁴ one male goat for a sin offering, ⁶⁵ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Abidan son of Gideoni.

⁶⁶ On the tenth day came the prince of the sons of Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai. ⁶⁷ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁶⁸ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ⁶⁹ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old as a burnt offering, ⁷⁰ one male goat for a sin offering, ⁷¹ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

⁷² On the eleventh day came the prince of the sons of Asher, Pagiel son of Ochrán. ⁷³ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁷⁴ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold filled with incense, ⁷⁵ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old as a burnt offering, ⁷⁶ one male goat

for a sin offering, ⁷⁷ and two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Pagiel son of Ochrán.

⁷⁸ On the twelfth day came the prince of the sons of Naphtali, Ahira son of Enán. ⁷⁹ His offering was one silver plate weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the shekel of the Sanctuary, both filled with fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, ⁸⁰ one ladle of 10 shekels of gold, filled with incense, ⁸¹ one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old for a burnt offering, ⁸² one male goat for a sin offering, ⁸³ and two young bulls, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old to be sacrificed as a fellowship offering. This was the offering of Ahira son of Enán.

⁸⁴ This was the dedication offering from the princes of Israel for the day when the altar was to be anointed: twelve silver plates, twelve silver basins, twelve gold ladles. ⁸⁵ Each silver plate was of 130 shekels, and each silver basin was of 70 shekels. Altogether, the silver utensils weighed 2,400 shekels according to the shekel of the Sanctuary.

⁸⁶ The ten gold ladles filled with incense each weighed 10 shekels, by the shekel of the Sanctuary. Altogether, the gold ladles totaled 120 shekels.

⁸⁷ The total of the livestock for the burnt offering was twelve young bulls, twelve rams, and twelve male lambs a year old, along with their grain offering. Twelve male goats were sin offerings. ⁸⁸ The total number of livestock used for sacrifice of fellowship offerings was 24 oxen, 60 rams, 60 male goats and 60 male lambs a year old. These were the dedicatory offerings for the altar after it was anointed.

⁸⁹ When Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with *ADONAI*, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the atonement cover † atop the Ark of Testimony between the *cheruvim*. So he spoke with Him.

Parashat Beha'alotecha

Dedication of the Levites

8 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Speak to Aaron and say to him: When you erect the lamps, the seven lamps are to illuminate the area in front of the *menorah*." ³ Aaron did so. He erected the lamps facing forward so they illuminated the area in front of the *menorah*, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses. ⁴ Now this is how the *menorah* was made: hammered gold from its base to its blossoms. Just as was the pattern that *ADONAI* had shown to Moses, so he made the *menorah*.

⁵ Again *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁶ "Take the Levites from among *Bnei-Yisrael* and ceremonially cleanse them. ⁷ This is what you must do to them to make them clean: Sprinkle the purifying water on

† Or, mercy seat

hakappuret

them, † then have them shave their whole bodies and wash their clothes, thus purifying themselves.

⁸“Then they are to take a young bull with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, plus a second young bull for a sin offering. ⁹Bring the Levites before the Tent of Meeting, and gather the whole community of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁰Bring the Levites before *ADONAI*, *Bnei-Yisrael* will lay their hands on the Levites, ¹¹ and Aaron will present the Levites before *ADONAI* as a wave offering from *Bnei-Yisrael*. Then they may go about the work of the service of *ADONAI*.

¹²“The Levites are to lay their hands on the heads of the bulls. Use one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to *ADONAI* to make atonement for the Levites. ¹³Have the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons and present them as a wave offering to *ADONAI*. ¹⁴In this way you are to set apart the Levites from *Bnei-Yisrael* to be Mine. ¹⁵After you have purified them and presented them as a wave offering, the Levites will come to do their work at the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁶For they are the ones from among *Bnei-Yisrael* given to Me in place of all the first from the wombs of *Bnei-Yisrael*. I have taken them for Myself.

¹⁷“For every firstborn among *Bnei-Yisrael* is Mine, whether human or animal. On the day I struck down the firstborn of the land of Egypt, I sanctified them for Myself. ††¹⁸ So I am taking the Levites in place of the firstborn of *Bnei-Yisrael*, ¹⁹ and I am giving the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among *Bnei-Yisrael*, to do the work on behalf of *Bnei-Yisrael* in the Tent of Meeting, and to make atonement for them—so that there would be no plague among them for coming too close to the Sanctuary.”

²⁰So Moses, Aaron and the entire community of *Bnei-Yisrael* did so with the Levites. All that *ADONAI* had commanded Moses regarding the Levites, so *Bnei-Yisrael* did to them. ²¹The Levites also purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes. Aaron presented them as a wave offering before *ADONAI*, and, he made atonement for them to purify them. ²²After that, the Levites came to do their tasks before Aaron and his sons in the Tent of Meeting, just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses concerning the Levites.

²³ *ADONAI* again spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴“This is for the Levites. Men 25 years old and upward are to present themselves for service to work in the Tent of Meeting. ²⁵But at the age of 50 he is to retire from his service and work no longer. ²⁶He may assist his brothers in the Tent of Meeting to do their duties, but he himself will no longer do the work. Thus, you are to assign to the Levites their responsibilities.”

Second Month Passover

⁹ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses in the Sinai wilderness in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt saying, ²“*Bnei-Yisrael* is to observe Passover at its appointed time. ³You are to

celebrate it at its appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, with all its rules and regulations.”

⁴ So Moses told *Bnei-Yisrael* to observe Passover. ⁵ They celebrated Passover at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month in the Sinai wilderness. In accordance with all that *ADONAI* commanded Moses, so *Bnei-Yisrael* did. ‡

⁶ However, there were some men who could not celebrate Passover because of being defiled by a dead body. So they came to Moses and Aaron on that same day, ⁷ and these men said to him, “We have become unclean because of a dead man’s body. Why should we be kept from presenting the offering of *ADONAI* at the appointed time with the rest of *Bnei-Yisrael*?”

⁸ Moses answered them, “Wait, and I will inquire what *ADONAI* commands concerning you.”

⁹ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰“Say to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying: If any man, whether you or your descendants, becomes unclean because of a dead body, or is away on a long journey, he may yet observe *ADONAI*’s Passover. ¹¹ They are to celebrate it at twilight on the fourteenth day of the second month. With *matzot* and bitter herbs they are to eat it. ¹² They are not to leave any of it until morning, or break any bones. When they celebrate Passover they are to observe all its regulations.

¹³“But the person who is clean and not away on a journey, yet neglects to celebrate Passover, that soul shall be cut off from his people because that person did not present *ADONAI*’s offering at the appointed time. That man will bear his sin.

¹⁴“If an outsider living among you would celebrate Passover to *ADONAI* according to the requirement, so he should do. There will be for you the same regulation for the outsider and the native of the land.”

The Cloud as the Guide

¹⁵ On the day the Tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered the Tabernacle. By evening until morning, the cloud above the Tent of Testimony had an appearance like fire. ¹⁶ It was that way continually. The cloud covered it, and by night it appeared like fire. ¹⁷ Whenever the cloud lifted up from above the Tent, then *Bnei-Yisrael* would set out, and at the place where the cloud settled, there *Bnei-Yisrael* would encamp. ¹⁸ At the mouth of *ADONAI*, *Bnei-Yisrael* would set out, and at the mouth of *ADONAI* they would encamp. All the days that the cloud remained over the Tabernacle, they would remain in camp.

¹⁹ When the cloud would remain over the Tabernacle many days, *Bnei-Yisrael* would obey the command of *ADONAI* and not set out. ²⁰ At times the cloud stayed over the Tabernacle only a few days. At *ADONAI*’s word they would encamp, and at *ADONAI*’s word they would set out.

† cf. Heb. 9:13-14. †† cf. Luke 2:23.

‡ cf. Matt. 26:17.

²¹ At times the cloud remained only from evening until morning. When the cloud would lift, they would set out. Whether by day or by night, when the cloud lifted, they would set out. ²² Whether for two days or a month or a year, while the cloud remained over the Tabernacle, *Bnei-Yisrael* remained camped and would not set out. But when it would lift, they would set out. ²³ At *ADONAI*'s word they would encamp, and at the mouth of *ADONAI* they set out. They obeyed *ADONAI*'s order by Moses's hand.

Silver Trumpets for Assembly

10 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Make two trumpets of hammered silver for yourself. They are for summoning the community and having the camps set out. ³ Whenever both are sounded, the whole community is to gather toward you at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁴ But if only one is sounded, the princes—the heads of the tribes of Israel—are to gather toward you. ⁵ When you sound the trumpet the first time, the camp of those camped on the east is to set out. ⁶ When you sound the trumpet blast the second time, the camp of those camped on the south is to set out. Short blasts will be the signal for their moving out. ⁷ To gather the whole national community, you are to sound the sustained blasts, but not the short blasts. ⁸ The sons of Aaron will blow the trumpets. This is to be an eternal ordinance for you as well as for your generations to come.

⁹ "Whenever you go to war in your own land against the enemy who is hostile to you, you are to sound short blasts of alarm. Then you will be remembered before *ADONAI* your God and be delivered from your enemies.

¹⁰ "Also at your days of rejoicing, feasts and new moons, you are to blow on the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. They will then be a reminder for you before *ADONAI* your God. I am *ADONAI* your God!"

Journey From Sinai

¹¹ On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted up from above the Tabernacle of the Testimony. ¹² Then *Bnei-Yisrael* set out on their travels in the Sinai wilderness. The cloud came to rest in the wilderness of Paran. ¹³ So they set out the first time by the mouth of *ADONAI* by Moses's hand.

¹⁴ The standard of the camp of the sons of Judah set out first by their divisions. Over them was Nahshon son of Amminadab. ¹⁵ Over the division of the tribe of the sons of Issachar was Nethanel son of Zuar. ¹⁶ Over the division of the tribe of the sons of Zebulun was Eliab son of Helon.

¹⁷ Then the Tabernacle was disassembled, and the sons of Gershon and Merari, who were carrying it, set out. ¹⁸ The standard of the camp of Reuben then set out, by their divisions. Over his division was Elizur son

of Shedeur. ¹⁹ Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, was over the division of the tribe of the sons of Simeon. ²⁰ Over the division of the tribe of the sons of Gad was Eliasaph son of Deuel.

²¹ Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy items. The Tabernacle was to be erected before their arrival.

²² The standard of the camp of the sons of Ephraim set out next, by their divisions. Over his division was Elishama son of Ammihud. ²³ Over the division of the tribe of the sons of Manasseh was Gamaliel son of Pedahzur. ²⁴ Over the division of the tribe of the sons of Benjamin was Abidan son of Gideoni.

²⁵ The standard of the camp of the tribe of the sons of Dan, being the rear guard of all the camps, set out by their divisions. Over his division was Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai. ²⁶ Pagiel son of Ochran, was over the division of the tribe of the sons of Asher. ²⁷ Ahira son of Enan, was over the division of the tribe of the sons of Naphtali.

²⁸ This is the order by which *Bnei-Yisrael*, by their divisions, set out.

²⁹ Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out to the place about which *ADONAI* said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will do good to you, because *ADONAI* has spoken goodness to Israel."

³⁰ But he said to him, "I will not go, because I would rather go to my own country and to my own people."

³¹ But he said, "Do not leave us now, because you know where we should camp in the wilderness. You can be like eyes to us. ³² If you come with us, we will share with you whatever good *ADONAI* gives to us."

³³ So they advanced from the mountain of *ADONAI*, a trip of three days, the Ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* going ahead of them for those three days to seek out a resting place for them. ³⁴ The cloud of *ADONAI* was over them by day when they advanced from the camp.

³⁵ Whenever the Ark would set out, Moses would say: "Arise, *ADONAI*! May Your enemies be scattered! May those who hate You flee from before You!"

³⁶ Then whenever it came to rest, he would say: "Return, *ADONAI*, to the myriad thousands of Israel!"

Seventy Elders to Share the Burden

11 The people were murmuring in the ears of *ADONAI* about hardship, and when *ADONAI* heard, His anger burned. The fire of *ADONAI* blazed among them, ravaging the outskirts of the camp. ² The people cried out to Moses, so Moses prayed to *ADONAI* and the fire died out. ³ The name of that place was thus called Taberah because fire from *ADONAI* had burned among them.

⁴ The grumblers among them began to have cravings, so *Bnei-Yisrael* began to wail repeatedly, saying, "If we could just eat some meat! ⁵ We remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt, for free—the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic!"

⁶ But now we have no appetite. We never see anything but this manna."

⁷ Now the manna was similar to coriander seed and had an appearance like gum resin. ⁸ The people went about, gathered it up, and ground it in a hand mill or crushed it in a mortar. They cooked it in a pot or made it into cakes. It had a taste like something made with olive oil. ⁹ When the dew descended on the camp at night, the manna descended with it.

¹⁰ Moses heard the people wailing by their families, each man at the door to his tent. *ADONAI*'s anger became very hot, and Moses was troubled.

¹¹ So Moses asked *ADONAI*, "Why have You brought trouble on Your servant? Haven't I found favor in Your eyes—that You laid the burden of all these people on me? ¹² Did I conceive all these people, or did I give birth to them, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom just as the nurse carries an infant'—to the land You promised to their fathers? ¹³ Where can I get meat for all these people? For they wail to me saying, 'Give us meat to eat!' ¹⁴ I am not able to carry all these people by myself! The load is too heavy for me! ¹⁵ If this is how You are treating me, kill me now! If I have found favor in Your eyes, kill me please—don't let me see my own misery!"

¹⁶ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Bring me 70 of the elders of Israel whom you know to be elders of the people and their leaders. Take them to the Tent of Meeting, so they may stand with you there. ¹⁷ Then I will come down and speak with you there, and, I will take some of the *Ruach* that is on you and will place it on them. They will carry with you the burden of the people, so you will not be carrying it alone." †

¹⁸ "Now to the people say: Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because you will eat meat, for you wailed in *ADONAI*'s ears saying, 'If only we could eat meat! It was better for us in Egypt!' Now *ADONAI* will give you meat and you will eat! ¹⁹ You will eat—not for one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, ²⁰ but for an entire month—until it is coming out of your nostrils and it becomes loathsome to you! For you rejected *ADONAI* who is among you, and you wailed to His face saying, 'Why did we ever leave Egypt?'"

²¹ Moses then said, "600,000 foot soldiers—the people I am in the middle of—yet You say, 'I am going to give them meat to eat for an entire month?' ²² If flocks and herds were slaughtered, would they have enough? Or if all the fish in the sea were caught, would they have enough?"

²³ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Is *ADONAI*'s arm too short? Now you will see whether My word will come true for you or not."

Seventy Elders Prophesying

²⁴ So Moses went out and told the people *ADONAI*'s words. He gathered 70 of the elders of the people and

† cf. Acts 6:1-6.

had them stand around the Tent. ²⁵ *ADONAI* descended in the cloud and spoke with him. He took some of the *Ruach* that was on him and placed it on each of the 70 elders. It so happened that when the *Ruach* first rested on them, they prophesied—but never again.

²⁶ Two men, however, had remained in the camp. The name of one was Eldad and the name of the other was Medad. The *Ruach* rested on them. They were among those listed, but they had not gone out to the Tent. So they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷ A young man ran and told Moses and said, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!"

²⁸ Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses since his youth, cried out and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!" ²⁹ But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous on my behalf? If only *ADONAI* would make all the people prophets! If only *ADONAI* would put the Spirit on all of them!"

³⁰ Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

Quails From the Sea

³¹ Now a wind went out from *ADONAI* and drove quails from the sea. He brought them into the camp to about a day's journey in any direction, about two cubits above the ground all around the camp. ³² The people went out all that night and all the following day and collected quail. No one gathered less than ten omers. They spread them out all around the camp.

³³ Yet while the meat was between their teeth, before it was swallowed, *ADONAI*'s anger burned against the people. So *ADONAI* struck the people with a severe plague. ³⁴ For that reason the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah ††, because they buried the people who were craving.

³⁵ From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazereth and stayed in Hazereth.

Miriam and Aaron Speak Against Moses

12 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses on account of the Cushite woman he married, because he had married a Cushite woman. ² They asked, "Has *ADONAI* spoken only through Moses? Hasn't He also spoken through us?"

ADONAI heard it.

³ Now the man Moses was very humble, more so than anyone on the face of the earth.

⁴ Immediately, *ADONAI* said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "The three of you, come out to the Tent of Meeting." So the three came out. ⁵ *ADONAI* descended in a column of cloud, stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and called to Aaron and Miriam. The two of them stepped forward.

⁶ "Hear now My words!" He said. "When there is a prophet of *ADONAI*, I reveal Myself in a vision, I speak to him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with My servant Moses. In

†† Meaning the graves of greediness

all My house, he is faithful. ¹⁸ I speak with him face to face, plainly and not in riddles. He even looks at the form of *ADONAI*! Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"

⁹ *ADONAI*'s anger burned against them, and He left them. ¹⁰ When the cloud lifted up from above the Tent, behold, Miriam had *tzara'at*, like snow! As Aaron turned toward her, behold, she had *tzara'at*! ¹¹ He said to Moses, "Please, my lord, don't hold against us the sin we have committed so foolishly! ¹² Don't let her be like a stillborn baby, who comes from his mother's womb with his flesh half-eaten away!"

¹³ So Moses cried to *ADONAI* saying, "O God, heal her now!"

¹⁴ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be in shame for seven days? Let her be confined outside the camp for seven days. After that she may be brought back."

¹⁵ So Miriam was restricted to outside the camp for seven days. The people did not move on until Miriam was brought back. ¹⁶ Afterward, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the wilderness of Paran.

Parashat Shlach

Twelve Scouts and the Bad Report

13 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Send some men on your behalf to investigate the land of Canaan, which I am giving to *Bnei-Yisrael*. Each man you are to send will be a prince of the tribe of his fathers, a man from each tribe."

³ So according to the word of *ADONAI*, Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran. All the men were princes of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁴ These are their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur. ⁵ From the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori. ⁶ From the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh. ⁷ From the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph. ⁸ From the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun. ⁹ From the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu. ¹⁰ From the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi. ¹¹ From the tribe of Manasseh, part of the tribe of Joseph, Gaddi son of Susi. ¹² From the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli. ¹³ From the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael. ¹⁴ From the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi. ¹⁵ From the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Machi.

¹⁶ These are the names of the men Moses sent to investigate the land. (Now he gave Hoshea son of Nun, the name Joshua.) ¹⁷ As he sent them to explore the land of Canaan, he said to them, "Go up there through the Negev, then go up into the hill country. ¹⁸ See what the land is like and the people living there, whether they might be strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹ In what kind of land are they living? Is it good or bad? Also, what about the cities in which they are living? Are they unwallled or do they have fortifications? ²⁰ How is the

soil—fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land." (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.)

²¹ So they went up and explored the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob the entrance of Hamath. ²² They continued on up through the Negev and came to Hebron. There lived Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, descendants of Anak. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

²³ When they reached as far as the Valley of Eshcol, they cut a single branch with a cluster of grapes. It was carried on a pole between two of them. They also cut some pomegranates and some figs. ²⁴ That place was called the Valley of Eshcol because of the cluster cut by *Bnei-Yisrael*. ²⁵ They returned from investigating the land after 40 days.

²⁶ They traveled and returned to Moses, Aaron and the entire community of *Bnei-Yisrael* at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They gave their report to them and the entire assembly. They showed the land's fruit. ²⁷ They gave their account to him and said, "We went into the land where you sent us. Indeed it is flowing with milk and honey—this is some of its fruit. ²⁸ Except, the people living in the land are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw the sons of Anak there! ²⁹ Amalek is living in the land of the Negev, the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites are living in the mountains, and the Canaanites are living near the sea and along the bank of the Jordan."

³⁰ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "We should definitely go up and capture the land, for we can certainly do it!"

³¹ But the men who had gone up with him said, "We cannot attack these people, because they are stronger than we." ³² They spread among *Bnei-Yisrael* a bad report about the land they had explored, saying, "The land through which we passed to explore devours its residents. All the people we saw there are men of great size! ³³ We also saw there the *Nephilim*. (The sons of Anak are from the *Nephilim*.) We seemed like grasshoppers in our eyes as well as theirs!"

Grumblers Will Not Enter the Land

14 All through that night, the entire community raised up their voices. The people wept. ² All *Bnei-Yisrael* grumbled against Moses and Aaron and the whole community said, "If only we had died in Egypt! If only we had died in this wilderness! ³ Why is *ADONAI* bringing us to this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be like plunder! Wouldn't it be better for us to return to Egypt?"

⁴ They said to each other, "Let's choose a leader and let's go back to Egypt!"

⁵ Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire assembly of the community of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁶ Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes. ⁷ They said to the whole assembly of

† cf. Heb. 3:2,5.

Bnei-Yisrael, "The land through which we passed is an exceptionally good land! ⁸ If *ADONAI* is pleased with us, He will lead us into that land and will give it to us—a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁹ Only don't rebel against *ADONAI*, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They will be food for us. The protection over them is gone. *ADONAI* is with us! Do not fear them."

¹⁰ But the whole assembly talked about violently stoning them.

Then the glory of *ADONAI* appeared at the Tent of Meeting to all *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹¹ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "How long will these people treat Me contemptibly? How long will they neglect to trust in Me—in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? ¹² I will strike them with the plague. I will destroy them. But you I will make into a nation greater and stronger than they!"

¹³ Moses said to *ADONAI*, "The Egyptians will hear about it, because You brought up this people by Your power from among them. ¹⁴ They will tell the residents of this land about it. Already they have heard that You, *ADONAI*, are in the midst of this people, that You, *ADONAI*, have been seen eye to eye, that Your cloud remains over them, and that in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night You go before them. ¹⁵ If you kill these people all at once, the nations who have heard this report about You will say, ¹⁶ 'Because *ADONAI* was unable to bring this people to the land He had promised them, He has slaughtered them in the wilderness.'

¹⁷ "So please, let *ADONAI* show His strength, just as You have spoken saying, ¹⁸ ' *ADONAI* is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression. Still, He does not leave the guilty unpunished, bringing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations.' ¹⁹ Forgive now the guiltiness of this people in accordance with the greatness of Your lovingkindness, just as You have pardoned this people from Egypt until now!"

²⁰ *ADONAI* answered, "I have forgiven them just as you have spoken. ²¹ But as certainly as I live and as certainly as the glory of *ADONAI* fills the entire earth, ²² none of the people who saw My glory and My miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness—yet tested Me these ten times and did not obey My Voice— ²³ not one of them will see the land I promised to their forefathers. None of those who treated Me with contempt will see it! ²⁴ However, My servant Caleb, because a different spirit is with him and he is wholeheartedly behind Me, I will bring him into the land where he went—his offspring will inherit it. ²⁵ Now since the Amalekites and Canaanites are inhabiting the valley, turn back tomorrow and set out by the wilderness route toward the Sea of Reeds."

²⁶ *ADONAI* then said to Moses and Aaron saying, ²⁷ "How long will this wicked community be grumbling against Me? I have heard the complaints of *Bnei-Yisrael* grumbling against Me. ²⁸ So tell them, 'As surely as

I live,' says *ADONAI*, 'I will do to you just as I heard you say in My ears. ²⁹ In this very wilderness your bodies will drop—every one of you 20 years of age and older who was numbered in the census and grumbled against Me. ³⁰ Not one of you will enter the land about which I lifted My hand to make home for you—except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

³¹ "As for your children—whom you said would be like plunder—I will bring them in and they will experience the land that you spurned. ³² But your bodies will drop in this wilderness. ³³ Your children will be herdsmen in the wilderness for 40 years. They will suffer because of your unfaithfulness until your corpses are consumed in the wilderness. ³⁴ For 40 years, corresponding to the number of the 40 days you explored the land—one year for each day—you will suffer for your iniquities and know My hostility. ³⁵ I, *ADONAI*, have spoken and certainly will I do this to all this wicked community banding together against Me. In this wilderness they will meet their end and there they will die!"

³⁶ Then the men whom Moses had sent to explore the land, who had returned and caused the whole community to grumble against him by spreading a bad report about the land, ³⁷ these men, spreading the bad report about the land, died of the plague in *ADONAI*'s presence. ³⁸ Of those men who had gone to explore the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh survived.

³⁹ When Moses related these things to all of *Bnei-Yisrael*, the people mourned bitterly. ⁴⁰ They rose the next morning and went up to the high mountains, saying, "Look! Let's go up to the place which *ADONAI* promised. For we have sinned."

⁴¹ But Moses said, "Why are you disobeying the mouth of *ADONAI*? That will never succeed. ⁴² You should not go up, because *ADONAI* will not be among you and you will be defeated before your enemies! ⁴³ For the Amalekites and Canaanites are there in front of you, and you will fall by the sword. *ADONAI* will not be with you, because you turned away from following *ADONAI*."

⁴⁴ But presumptuously they went up to the high mountain country, though neither the Ark of *ADONAI*'s covenant nor Moses moved from within the camp. ⁴⁵ The Amalekites and Canaanites living in the mountain country came down, attacked them, and beat them down all the way to Hormah.

Fragrant Aromas to *ADONAI*

15 Again *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you where you will make your homes, ³ and you are presenting a fire offering to *ADONAI*—a burnt offering or a sacrifice to mark fulfilling a vow, a freewill offering, or during *moedim* [†]—to present a pleasing aroma to *ADONAI*, from the herd or

[†] *Moed appointed times*

from the flock, ⁴ the one bringing the offering is to present a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a fourth of a hin of oil.

⁵ “Now with each lamb for the burnt offering or sacrifice, you are to prepare a fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering. ⁶ With a ram, you are to prepare two tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a third of a hin of oil, ⁷ and a third of a hin of wine as a drink offering. You are to offer it as a pleasing aroma to ADONAI .

⁸ “Whenever you are to prepare a young bull for a burnt offering, a special vow offering, or a fellowship offering to ADONAI , ⁹ bring with the young bull a grain offering of three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil. ¹⁰ You are to also offer as the drink offering half a hin of wine as a fire offering, a pleasing aroma to ADONAI . ¹¹ This is to be done for each bull or ram, for each young goat or lamb. ¹² Do this for each one, for as many as you prepare.

¹³ “Everyone native-born is to do these things like so when bringing a fire offering as a pleasant aroma to ADONAI . ¹⁴ Whenever an outsider resides with you, or whoever is among you for your generations to come, and he is to present a fire offering as a fragrant aroma to ADONAI , as you do, he must do exactly the same as you are doing.

¹⁵ “The community will have the same rule for you as well as for the resident outsider. It will be a lasting statute throughout your generations. As for you, so for the outsider will it be before ADONAI . ¹⁶ The same *Torah* and the same regulations will apply to both you and the outsider residing among you.”

¹⁷ ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁸ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* . Say to them: When you enter the land to which I am taking you, ¹⁹ and you eat some of the food of the land, you are to offer a portion to ADONAI . ²⁰ You are to offer a cake from the first of your ground-up meal as an offering from your threshing floor—so you are to lift it up. ²¹ Throughout your generations to come, you are to give this offering from the first of your ground-up meal.

Unintentional Versus Defiant Sin

²² “If you unintentionally fail, not keeping any of these *mitzvot* that ADONAI related to Moses ²³—that is, anything that ADONAI commanded you through Moses’s hand, from the day ADONAI commanded and onward throughout your generations—²⁴ and it is done unintentionally out of sight of the community, then the entire community is to offer one young bull from the herd for a burnt offering as a pleasing aroma to ADONAI , along with its appropriate grain offering and drink offering, and one male goat as a sin offering. ²⁵ So the *kohen* will make atonement for the entire community of *Bnei-Yisrael* , and they will be forgiven, for it was unintentional and they brought a fire offering and their sin offering to ADONAI for their error.

²⁶ So the whole community of *Bnei-Yisrael* along with the outsider residing among them will be forgiven, for

all the people were involved in unintentional wrongdoing.

²⁷ “If but one person should sin unintentionally, he is to bring a year-old female goat for a sin offering.

²⁸ The *kohen* is to make atonement before ADONAI for that person who erred by sinning without intent, and he is to be forgiven when atonement has been made for him. ²⁹ Whether a native-born of *Bnei-Yisrael* or an outsider living among them, one *Torah* applies to you for the one sinning unintentionally.

³⁰ “But the person who sins defiantly, whether native or outsider, reviles ADONAI and that person is to be cut off from his people. ³¹ Because he has despised the word of ADONAI and has broken His commandment, that person will certainly be cut off—his guilt will remain on him.”

³² While *Bnei-Yisrael* were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering wood on the *Shabbat* .

³³ Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses, Aaron and the entire assembly. ³⁴ They kept him under arrest, not being clear what was to be done to him.

³⁵ ADONAI said to Moses, “The man has to die. The whole assembly is to stone him with stones outside the camp.” ³⁶ So the whole assembly took him outside the camp. They stoned him with stones. He died just as ADONAI commanded Moses.

Tzitzit for Holiness

³⁷ ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁸ “Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* . Say to them that they are to make for themselves *tzitzit* on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and they are to put a blue cord on each *tzitzit* . ³⁹ It will be your own *tzitzit*—so whenever you look at them, you will remember all the *mitzvot* of ADONAI and do them and not go spying out after your own hearts and your own eyes, prostituting yourselves. ⁴⁰ This way you will remember and obey all My *mitzvot* and you will be holy to your God. ⁴¹ I am ADONAI your God. I brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am ADONAI your God.”

Parashat Korach

Rebellion of Korah

16 Now Korah, son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, and sons of Reuben—Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—² rose up against Moses and took 250 men from *Bnei-Yisrael* , men of renown who had been appointed to the council. ³ They assembled against Moses and Aaron. They said to them, “You’ve gone too far! All the community is holy—all of them—and ADONAI is with them! Then why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of ADONAI ?”

⁴ When Moses heard this, he fell on his face.

† cf. Matt. 9:20.

⁵ Then he said to Korah and all his following saying, "In the morning *ADONAI* will reveal who is His and who is holy. The one whom He will let come near to Him will be the one He chooses to come near to Him. ⁶ Do this, Korah and your whole following! Take for yourselves censers. ⁷ Put fire and incense into them in the presence of *ADONAI*. Tomorrow the man that *ADONAI* chooses will be the holy one! You sons of Levi are the ones who have gone too far!"

⁸ Moses also said to Korah, "Listen now, sons of Levi! ⁹ Isn't it enough that the God of Israel has set you apart from the community of Israel to bring you near to Him to do the work of the Tabernacle of *ADONAI* and to stand before the community to minister to them? ¹⁰ So He brought you close, along with all your fellow sons of Levi. But you are seeking the priesthood, too! ¹¹ Therefore you and all your following are banding together against *ADONAI*! Who then is Aaron—that you are grumbling against him?"

¹² Then Moses sent word to call Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab. But they said, "We will not come! ¹³ Isn't it enough that you brought us from a land flowing with milk and honey, only to kill us in the wilderness? And now you would lord it over us? ¹⁴ What's more, you haven't brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Would you now gouge out the eyes of those men? We won't come!"

¹⁵ Then Moses became very angry and said to *ADONAI*, "Do not accept their offering. I haven't taken from them a single donkey, nor have I wronged one of them!"

¹⁶ So Moses said to Korah, "You and your whole following are to appear before *ADONAI*—you, they and Aaron—tomorrow! ¹⁷ Each man will take his censer and you are to put incense into them—250 censers total. You are to present it before *ADONAI*, you and Aaron each presenting his censer."

¹⁸ So each man took his censer, put fire and incense into it, and stood with Moses and Aaron at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁹ When Korah and all his following had assembled in opposition to them at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, then the glory of *ADONAI* appeared to the entire assembly.

²⁰ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ²¹ "Separate yourselves from among this assembly, so that I may consume them at once!"

²² But they fell on their faces and cried out, "O God, God of the spirits of all flesh, if one man sins, will you be angry with the entire community?"

²³ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁴ "Speak to the assembly saying, 'Move away from the dwelling of Korah, Dathan and Abiram!'"

²⁵ Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram. The elders of Israel followed after him. ²⁶ He warned the assembly saying, "Move away from the tents of these wicked men! Don't touch anything that is theirs, or you will be swept away because of all their sins!"

²⁷ So they moved away from near the dwelling of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram came outside and were standing at the entrance of their tents with their wives, their children, and their little ones.

²⁸ Moses said, "By this you will know that *ADONAI* has sent me to do all these works, that they are not from my own heart. ²⁹ If every one of these men die a common death and experience what happens to all people, then *ADONAI* has not sent me. ³⁰ But if *ADONAI* brings about a new thing, and the earth opens her mouth and swallows them and everything that is theirs, and they go down alive into *Sheol*, then you will know that these men have despised *ADONAI*."

³¹ As soon as he finished saying all these things, the ground split under them. ³² The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, along with all their households, all of Korah's people and all their possessions. ³³ They went down alive into *Sheol*, they and everything that was theirs. The earth closed over them and they were gone from among the community.

³⁴ All Israel around them fled at their outcry, for they shouted, "Perhaps the earth will swallow us!"

³⁵ Fire also came out from *ADONAI* and consumed the 250 men offering the incense.

17 (16:36) *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²

(16:37) "Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the *kohen*, to take the censers from the burning, because they are holy, and scatter the coals at a distance. ³ (16:38) As for the censers of these men who sinned at the cost of their lives, let them be taken and hammered into sheets as a covering for the altar. For they were presented before *ADONAI*, so they are holy. They are to be a sign to *Bnei-Yisrael*."

⁴ (16:39) So Eleazar the *kohen* collected the bronze censers brought by the ones who were burned and hammered them into an overlay for the altar, ⁵ (16:40) just as *ADONAI* had spoken to him by Moses' hand, so that it would be as a reminder to *Bnei-Yisrael* that no one who was not a descendant of Aaron should burn incense before *ADONAI*, and so no one would become like Korah and his following.

⁶ (16:41) The next day, the entire community of *Bnei-Yisrael* grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You killed *ADONAI*'s people!"

⁷ (16:42) But when they gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron and turned toward the Tent of Meeting, behold, the cloud covered it and the glory appeared! ⁸ (16:43) Moses and Aaron went to the front of the Tent of Meeting.

⁹ (16:44) *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ (16:45) "Get away from among this assembly so that I may immediately consume them!" So they fell on their faces.

¹¹ (16:46) Then Moses said to Aaron, "Take the censer, put into it fire from the altar and put in incense. Get going and hurry to the assembly and make atonement for them, because wrath has come out from *ADONAI* and the plague has started."

¹² (16:47) Aaron did just as Moses had said, and ran into the middle of the assembly. Behold, the plague had already started among the people. But he offered the incense and made atonement for the people. ¹³ (16:48) He stood between the dead and the living and the plague stopped. ¹⁴ (16:49) However, there were 14,700 dead from the plague, besides those who died because of Korah.

¹⁵ (16:50) Then Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, when the plague had been halted.

Sprouting of Aaron's Rod

¹⁶ (1) ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷ (2) "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and get a rod from each ancestral house, twelve staffs in all, from each prince according to his ancestral household. Write each man's name on his staff. ¹⁸ (3) Write Aaron's name on Levi's staff, for there is to be one staff for the prince of each tribe. ¹⁹ (4) Then you are to place them in the Tent of Meeting, before the Testimony, where I meet with you. ²⁰ (5) It will come about that the staff of the man I choose will sprout. I will then rid Myself of the grumblings of *Bnei-Yisrael*, who are grumbling against you."

²¹ (6) So Moses spoke to *Bnei-Yisrael*. Each of their princes gave him a staff, one staff for each prince according to their ancestral houses, twelve staffs in all, and Aaron's staff was among them. ²² (7) Moses placed the staffs before ADONAI in the Tent of Testimony.

²³ (8) The next day, Moses entered the Tent of Testimony and behold, Aaron's staff, from the house of Levi, had sprouted, blossomed, and produced almonds! ²⁴ (9) Moses then brought all the staffs from ADONAI's Presence to all *Bnei-Yisrael*. They looked and each man took his staff.

²⁵ (10) ADONAI said to Moses, "Put Aaron's staff back in front of the Testimony to keep as a sign to the sons of rebellion, so that it may put an end to their grumblings against Me, and so they will not die." ²⁶ (11) Moses did just as ADONAI had commanded him.

²⁷ (12) But *Bnei-Yisrael* said to Moses saying, "Look! We will die! We are all lost! We are lost!" ²⁸ (13) Anyone approaching the Tabernacle of ADONAI will die! Must all of us die?"

Kohen Duties and Portions

18 ADONAI said to Aaron, "You, your sons, and the house of your father with you will bear the guilt for the Sanctuary, and you and your sons will bear the guilt for your priesthood. ² Bring with you your brothers, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, so that they may join you and assist you, both you and your sons with you, before the Tent of the Testimony. ³ They are to perform their duties for you and for all matters related to the Tent. They must not approach the implements of the Sanctuary or the altar—otherwise, both

you and they will die. ⁴ They are to team with you and attend to the Tent of Meeting, for all the service of the Tent. But no unauthorized person may intrude upon you. ⁵ So you are to attend to the Sanctuary and the care of the altar, so no further wrath will fall on *Bnei-Yisrael*.

⁶ "See, I have personally taken your kinsmen, the Levites, from among *Bnei-Yisrael* as a gift for you and your sons with you, dedicated to ADONAI to serve in the work of the Tent of Meeting. ⁷ But you and your sons with you are to maintain your priesthood for everything pertaining to the altar and inside the *parokhet*. I am giving you the ministry of the priesthood as a gift. Anyone unauthorized who approaches will die."

⁸ ADONAI then said to Aaron, "See, I have given you charge over all My offerings. All the sacred things from *Bnei-Yisrael* I have given to you as set aside for you and your sons as a permanent share. ⁹ You are to have the part of the most holy things that is kept from the fire. Whether grain, sin or guilt offerings that they bring to Me as most holy—they are for you and your sons. ¹⁰ You are to eat it as most holy. Every male may eat it—it is set apart for you. ¹¹ This also is yours: the gift of the wave offerings of *Bnei-Yisrael*. I have given all the wave offerings as a permanent share to you, your sons and your daughters. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. ¹² All the finest olive oil, the finest new wine and grain they give to ADONAI from their firstfruits, I have given them to you. ¹³ All the firstfruits of the land that they bring to ADONAI will be for yours. Anyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

¹⁴ "Every devoted thing in Israel is yours. ¹⁵ The first offspring of the womb from all flesh, whether human or animal, offered to ADONAI, is yours. However, you are to redeem the firstborn of man and the firstborn of unclean animals. ¹⁶ When they are a month old, you are to redeem them at the redemption price of five shekels of silver by the Sanctuary shekel, or 20 gerahs. ¹⁷ But the firstborn of the ox, sheep or goat you are not to redeem. They are holy. You are to sprinkle their blood on the altar, and their fat you are to burn as a fire offering, a pleasing aroma to ADONAI. ¹⁸ Their meat—the breast of the wave offering and the right thigh—is yours. ¹⁹ Whatever is set aside from the holy offerings which *Bnei-Yisrael* present to ADONAI, I have given to you, your sons and your daughters with you as a permanent share. It is an everlasting covenant of salt before ADONAI for you and your offspring."

²⁰ ADONAI said to Aaron, "You will have no inheritance in their land nor share among them. I am your portion and your share among *Bnei-Yisrael*. ²¹ See, I have given all the tithes in Israel to the sons of Levi as an inheritance in return for all the work of the service they are doing in the Tent of Meeting. ²² From now on, *Bnei-Yisrael* must never trespass the Tent of Meeting, or they will bear the consequences of their sin and die.

²³ The Levites will perform the service of the Tent of Meeting. They will bear the responsibility for their iniquity. It is a permanent ordinance throughout your generations. So among *Bnei-Yisrael* they are to receive no inheritance.

²⁴ "For I have given the tithes that *Bnei-Yisrael* present to *ADONAI* as an offering to the Levites as an inheritance. That is why I said they would receive no inheritance among *Bnei-Yisrael*."

²⁵ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ²⁶ "Speak now to the Levites and say to them: When you receive from *Bnei-Yisrael* the tithe which I have given to you as your inheritance, you are then to offer to *ADONAI* a tithe of that tithe. ²⁷ Your offering will be reckoned as grain from the threshing floor or the fullness of the winepress. ²⁸ Thus you will also present an offering to *ADONAI* from all your tithes that you receive from *Bnei-Yisrael*, and from that you are to give *ADONAI*'s portion to Aaron the *kohen*. ²⁹ From all your gifts that you receive, you are to present the best and holiest from them as *ADONAI*'s portion.

³⁰ "Say to them: When you present the best part, it will be reckoned to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and of the winepress. ³¹ You and your household may eat it in any place. It is your wage for your service in the Tent of Meeting.

³² "In presenting the best part in this manner, you will bear no guilt in these matters. You will not defile the holy things of *Bnei-Yisrael*, so you will not die."

Parashat Chukat

Red Heifer and Cleansing Water

19 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, ² "This is the statute of the *Torah* which *ADONAI* commanded saying: Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* that they bring to you a flawless red heifer on which there is no blemish and on which has never been a yoke. ³ Give her to Eleazar the *kohen*. He will take her outside the camp and slaughter her in his presence. ⁴ Then Eleazar the *kohen* is to take some of the blood on his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the Tent of Meeting.

⁵ "While watching, he is to burn the heifer, her hide, flesh, blood and refuse. ⁶ The *kohen* is to take some cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool, and cast them into the midst of the burning heifer.

⁷ "Afterward, the *kohen* is to wash his clothes and bathe his flesh with the water, and afterward he may come back into the camp. Still the *kohen* will be unclean until evening. ⁸ Also the one burning it is to wash his clothes and bathe his flesh with the water, and he will be unclean until evening.

⁹ "A clean man is to gather up the ashes of the heifer and put them in a clean place outside the camp. They are to be for the community of *Bnei-Yisrael* to use as water of purification from sin.

¹⁰ "The one who gathers the heifer's ashes is also to wash his clothes as well as be unclean until evening. It will be a permanent statute for *Bnei-Yisrael* and for the outsider living among them.

¹¹ "Whoever touches any dead body will be unclean for seven days. ¹² He is to purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day. Then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third and seventh days, he will not be clean. ¹³ Anyone touching the dead body of any man, who does not purify himself, defiles *ADONAI*'s Tabernacle, and that person will be cut off from Israel. Because the cleansing water was not sprinkled on him, he is unclean and his uncleanness will remain on him.

¹⁴ "This is the *Torah* for whenever a person dies in a tent. Anyone entering the tent or anyone inside the tent will be unclean seven days. ¹⁵ Any open container not having a lid fastened on it will also be unclean.

¹⁶ Anyone out in the open field who touches a dead body, whether killed by a sword or was killed by a natural cause, or touches a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

¹⁷ "For the unclean one, they are to take some of the ash of the burnt purification offering, and pour some fresh water into a jar. ¹⁸ Then a clean person will take some hyssop, dip it into the water, and, sprinkle it on the tent, all of the furnishings, and the people who were there, as well as the one touching the bone, the one killed, the corpse or the grave.

¹⁹ The clean person will sprinkle the unclean one on the third and seventh days. He is to purify himself on the seventh day, and on the seventh day he is to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and at evening he will be clean.

²⁰ However, that man who is unclean but does not purify himself will be cut off from the community. He has defiled the Sanctuary of *ADONAI*, since the cleansing water was not sprinkled on him. He is unclean.

²¹ This will be a permanent ordinance for them. The one sprinkling the cleansing water is also to wash his clothes, and anyone touching the cleansing water will be unclean until evening. ²² Anything touched by an unclean person becomes unclean, and anyone touching it will be unclean until evening."

Water from the Rock

20 In the first month, the entire community of *Bnei-Yisrael* arrived at the wilderness of Zin. The people stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

² Now there was no water for the community, so they assembled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The people quarreled with Moses saying, "If only we had died when our brothers died before *ADONAI*! ⁴ Now why have you brought the community of *ADONAI* into this wilderness, for us and our livestock to die here? ⁵ Why have you brought us from Egypt to bring us to this evil

place—a place without grain, fig, grapevine or pomegranate—and there's no water to drink!"

⁶ So Moses and Aaron went from before the assembly to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and fell on their faces.

Then the glory of *ADONAI* appeared to them. ⁷ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸ "Take the staff and gather the assembly, you and your brother Aaron. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will give out its water. † You will bring out water from the rock, and you will give the community something to drink, along with their livestock."

⁹ So Moses took the staff from before the presence of *ADONAI*, just as He had commanded him.

¹⁰ Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly in front of the rock. He said, "Listen now, you rebels! Must we bring you water from this rock?"

¹¹ Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with the staff. Water gushed out and the community and its livestock drank.

¹² But *ADONAI* said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in Me so as to esteem Me as holy in the eyes of *Bnei-Yisrael*, therefore you will not bring this assembly into the land that I have given to them."

¹³ These are the waters of Meribah, where *Bnei-Yisrael* contended with *ADONAI* and where *ADONAI* showed Himself holy among them.

Edom Denies Passage

¹⁴ Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom. "Thus says your brother, Israel:

"You know all the hardship that came on us. ¹⁵ Our forefathers went down to Egypt, so we lived there for a very long time. The Egyptians mistreated us, and our fathers. ¹⁶ But we cried out to *ADONAI*, He heard our cry, sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. See now, we are at Kadesh, a town on the frontier of your territory. ¹⁷ Permit us to pass through your territory. We will not cross through any field or vineyard or drink water of any well. But we will travel on the king's highway. We will not deviate to the right or left until we will have passed through your territory."

¹⁸ But Edom said to him, "You may not pass through me—or I will march out against you with the sword."

¹⁹ *Bnei-Yisrael* then said to him, "We will travel on the main road, and if we or our livestock even drink any of your water, we will pay its price. It's nothing, just to pass through on foot!"

²⁰ He answered, "You may not pass through!" Yet Edom came out to oppose them with a large and well-armed people. ²¹ Since Edom refused to permit Israel to cross through her territory, Israel turned away from them.

† cf. 1 Cor. 10:4.

Aaron Gathered To His People

²² The entirety of the community of *Bnei-Yisrael* set out from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor.

²³ Now at Mount Hor, near the Edomite border, *ADONAI* said to Moses and Aaron, ²⁴ "Aaron will be gathered to his people. He will not enter the land, which I have given to *Bnei-Yisrael*, because you rebelled against My command at the waters of Meribah. ²⁵ Take Aaron and his son Eleazar, and take them up Mount Hor. ²⁶ Remove Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar, and Aaron will be gathered up and will die there."

²⁷ Moses did as *ADONAI* commanded. They ascended Mount Hor before the eyes of the whole community. ²⁸ Moses removed Aaron's garments and placed them on Eleazar his son. Aaron died there at the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar descended the mountain.

²⁹ When they saw that Aaron had died, the entire community mourned Aaron 30 days.

Nehushtan : Snake on a Pole

²¹ When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he attacked Israel and captured some of them. ² Then Israel vowed to *ADONAI* and stated, "If you deliver this people into our hand, we will put their cities under the ban of destruction!" ³ *ADONAI* listened to Israel's plea and delivered up the Canaanites. They put them and their cities under the ban of destruction. So the name of the place was called Hormah.

⁴ They travelled from Mount Hor along the route to the Sea of Reeds in order to go around the land of Edom. The spirit of the people became impatient along the way.

⁵ The people spoke against God and Moses: "Why have you brought us from Egypt to die in the wilderness, because there is no bread, no water, and our very spirits detest the despicable food?" ⁶ So *ADONAI* sent poisonous serpents among the people, †† and they bit the people and many of the people of Israel died.

⁷ The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against *ADONAI* and you! Pray to *ADONAI* for us, that He may take away the snakes!" So Moses prayed for the people.

⁸ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Make yourself a fiery snake and put it on a pole. Whenever anyone who has been bitten will look at it, he will live." ‡

⁹ So Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole, and it happened that whenever a snake bit anyone and he looked at the bronze snake, he lived.

†† cf. 1 Cor. 10:9. ‡ cf. John 3:14-15.

Journey to Moab

¹⁰ *Bnei-Yisrael* moved on and encamped at Oboth.
¹¹ Then they set out from Oboth and camped in Ijebarim, in the wilderness facing Moab toward the sunrise. ¹² From there they set out and camped in the Wadi Zered. ¹³ They set out from there and camped along the Arnon, which is in the wilderness extending into Amorite territory. The Arnon is also the border between Moab and the Amorites. ¹⁴ Therefore, it is said in the Book of the Wars of *ADONAI*, "...Vaheb in Suphah and the wadis of the Arnon, ¹⁵ and the slope of the wadis that leads to the site of Ar and lie along the border of Moab—" ¹⁶ And from there—on to Beer.

This is the well where *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Gather the people and I will give them water."

¹⁷ Then Israel sang this song,
 "Spring up, O well! Sing about it!

¹⁸ The well the princes dug,
 that the nobles of the people sank
 with their scepter and their staffs."

From the wilderness they went on to Mattanah.

¹⁹ From Mattanah they went on to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth, ²⁰ and from Bamoth to the valley in the field of Moab where the peak of Pisgah overlooks the wasteland.

Defeat of Sihon and Og

²¹ Israel sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites saying, ²² "Permit us to pass through your land. We will not turn aside into field or vineyard nor drink water from the wells. We will travel on the king's highway until we will have passed through your territory."

²³ But Sihon would not let Israel pass through his territory. Instead, Sihon called out his entire army and marched out into the desert to oppose Israel. When he came to Jahaz, he fought against Israel. ²⁴ But Israel struck him by the sword's edge and conquered his land from Arnon to Jabbok as far as the Ammonites, because the border of the sons of Ammon was fortified.

²⁵ Israel conquered all these cities and occupied all the Amorite cities, Heshbon and all its towns. ²⁶ Heshbon was the city of King Sihon of the Amorites, who had fought with the former king of Moab and had taken from his control all the land as far as the Arnon.

²⁷ Therefore the poets say,

"Come to Heshbon! Let her be rebuilt!
 Let the city of Sihon be restored!

²⁸ For fire went out from Heshbon,
 a blaze from the city of Sihon!

It consumed Ar of Moab,
 the masters of Arnon's heights!

²⁹ Woe to you, O Moab!

You have been destroyed, people of Chemosh!
 He has given up his sons as refugees
 and his daughters as captives

to Sihon, king of the Amorites.

³⁰ But we overthrew them!

Heshbon as far as Dibon is destroyed!

We have demolished them

as far as Nophah up to Medeba."

³¹ So Israel was living in the land of the Amorites.

³² After Moses sent spies to Jazer, they captured her towns and drove out the Amorites who were there.

³³ Then they turned and went up the road to the Bashan. Og, king of the Bashan, went out to confront them, he and all his people, in battle at Edrei.

³⁴ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Do not fear him. I have given him with all his people and his land into your hand. You are to do to him just as you did to Sihon, the Amorite king who was living in Heshbon."

³⁵ So they struck him and his sons and his entire army until no survivor was left to him, and they possessed his land.

A Donkey Rebukes Balaam

22 Then *Bnei-Yisrael* set out and camped in the plains of Moab alongside the Jordan across from Jericho.

Parashat Balak

² When Balak son of Zippor, realized all that *Bnei-Yisrael* had done to the Amorites, ³ Moab became terrified because there were so many people. Moab was filled with dread because of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁴ Moab said to the elders of Midian, "The multitude will lick up everything around us like the ox licks up the grass of the field."

Now Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time. ⁵ He sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, at Pethor near the River † in his native land, saying to him, "Look now, a people has come out of Egypt. See now, they cover the surface of the earth and are settling beside me. ⁶ Come now, curse this people for me, because they are too strong for me! Perhaps I may be able to defeat them and drive them away from the country. I know that whoever you bless will be blessed and whoever you curse will be accursed!"

⁷ The elders of Moab and Midian left with divination fees in their hand. When they came to Balaam, they told him Balak's words.

⁸ He said to them, "Spend the night here. I will give you an answer just as *ADONAI* speaks to me." So the officials of Moab stayed with Balaam.

⁹ God came to Balaam and asked, "Who are these men with you?"

¹⁰ Balaam said to God, "Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, sent word to me: ¹¹ See, the people coming out of Egypt cover the surface of the land. Come now, curse them for me. Perhaps I will be able to fight against them and drive them away!"

† i.e., the Euphrates

¹² God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them! Do not curse them, for they are blessed!"

¹³ So Balaam got up in the morning and said to the officials of Balak, "Go back to your country, for *ADONAI* has refused to let me go with you."

¹⁴ So the Moabite officials got up, went back to Balak, and said, "Balaam refused to come with us." ¹⁵ Balak again sent other dignitaries, more numerous and honored than these previous ones.

¹⁶ They also came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak son of Zippor: Please let nothing keep you from coming to me! ¹⁷ I will richly reward you, and everything you tell me I will do! Just come now and curse this people for me!"

¹⁸ But Balaam answered Balak's servants, "Even if Balak gave me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot cross beyond the mouth of *ADONAI* my God, to do anything small or great! ¹⁹ But now, you may spend the night here, too. Then I may find out anything else *ADONAI* may say to me."

²⁰ God came to Balaam by night and said to him, "Since the men came to you to summon you, arise and go with them. However, only the word I tell you are you to do!"

²¹ So Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the Moabite princes. ²² But the anger of God burned because he was going. The angel of *ADONAI* stood in the road to oppose him—he was riding on his donkey and two of his servants were with him— ²³ when the donkey saw the angel of *ADONAI* standing in the road with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned off the road and went into the field. So Balaam beat the donkey to get her back onto the road.

²⁴ Then the angel of *ADONAI* stood in a narrow path between two vineyards, with a wall on this side and a wall on that side. ²⁵ When the donkey saw the angel of *ADONAI*, she pressed against the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against the wall. So Balaam continued beating her.

²⁶ The angel again moved. He stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, right or left. ²⁷ When the donkey saw the angel of *ADONAI*, she lay down under Balaam. Balaam was very angry and beat the donkey with his staff.

²⁸ Then *ADONAI* opened the donkey's mouth and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?" †

²⁹ Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you've made a fool of me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you now!"

³⁰ The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey which you have ridden as always to this day? Have I ever been in the habit of doing this to you?"

"No," he said.

³¹ Then *ADONAI* opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of *ADONAI* standing in the road with his drawn sword in his hand. So he fell on his face.

³² The angel of *ADONAI* said to him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? Behold, I came as an adversary because your way before Me is a reckless one! ³³ The donkey saw Me and turned away from Me these three times. If she had not turned away from Me, by now I would have killed you indeed, but let her live!"

³⁴ Balaam said to the angel of *ADONAI*, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now, if this is displeasing in your eyes, I will go back home."

³⁵ The angel of *ADONAI* said to Balaam, "Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you." So Balaam went with Balak's princes.

³⁶ When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to greet him at the Moabite city on the border of the Arnon, the frontier of the territory. ³⁷ Balak said to Balaam, "Didn't I send you an urgent summons? Why didn't you come to me? Am I really unable to reward you?"

³⁸ "Look, I have come to you now!" Balaam said to Balak. "Can I just say anything? I must speak only the message which God puts into my mouth." ³⁹ Then Balaam went with Balak to Kiriath-huzoth. ⁴⁰ Balak sacrificed cattle and sheep and sent some to Balaam and the princes who were with him.

⁴¹ In the morning, Balak took Balaam with him to Bamoth-baal, and from there he saw part of the people.

A Curse Turns to Blessings

23 Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here and prepare for me here seven bulls and seven rams." ² So Balak did just as Balaam had said. Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar. ³ Balaam said to Balak, "Stay here beside your offering. I will go and perhaps *ADONAI* will meet me. Whatever message He shows me, I will tell you." Then he went to a barren height.

⁴ God met with Balaam and he said to Him, "I have prepared seven altars, and on each altar I offered a bull and a ram."

⁵ *ADONAI* put a message into Balaam's mouth and said, "Return to Balak and speak this."

⁶ Balaam went back to him. Behold, he was standing beside his offering with all the princes of Moab. ⁷ Then he uttered his oracle and said,

"From Aram, Balak brought me,

Moab's king from the mountains of the east:

'Come! Curse Jacob for me!

Come! Denounce Israel!

⁸ How can I curse one
whom God has not cursed?

How can I denounce one

whom *ADONAI* has not denounced?"

† cf. 2 Pet. 2:16.

⁹ From the rocky peaks I see him.
 From the heights I behold him.
 Look, he lives as a nation apart,
 and does not consider himself
 as being like the other nations.
¹⁰ Who can count Jacob's dust?
 Who can number a fourth of Israel?
 Let my soul die the death of the upright,
 and let my end be like his!"

¹¹ Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me?
 I brought you to curse my enemies, but look, you've
 actually blessed them!"

¹² But in response he said, "Mustn't I speak whatever
ADONAI puts into my mouth?"

¹³ Then Balak said to him, "Come now with me to an-
 other place where you can see a part of them only, not
 all of them. Curse them for me from there."

¹⁴ He took him to Lookout Field on top of Pisgah. He
 built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each
 altar.

¹⁵ "Stay here beside your offering," he said to Balak,
 "while I am meeting over there."

¹⁶ *ADONAI* met Balaam there and put a message into
 his mouth, and said, "Return to Balak and speak thus."

¹⁷ So he went to him, and behold, he and the princes
 of Moab were standing beside his offering.
 Balak asked him, "What did *ADONAI* say?"

¹⁸ So he uttered his oracle and said:
 "Rise, Balak! Hear me, son of Zippor!
¹⁹ God is not a man who lies, †
 or a son of man who changes his mind!
 Does He speak and then not do it,
 or promise and not fulfill it?"

²⁰ Look, I received a command to bless.
 He has blessed—I cannot change it!

²¹ No misfortune is to be seen in Jacob,
 and no misery in Israel!
ADONAI their God is with them
 —the King's shout is among them!

²² God is bringing them from Egypt
 with the strong horns of the wild ox!

²³ There is no sorcery effective
 against Jacob,
 nor any divination against Israel!
 Now it will be said of Jacob and Israel,
 "See what God has done!"

²⁴ The people rise like a lioness,
 like a lion who does not rest
 until he eats his prey
 and drinks his victim's blood!"

²⁵ Then Balak said to Balaam, "Do not curse them or
 bless them at all!"

²⁶ Balaam answered and said to Balak, "Haven't I told
 you, 'All that *ADONAI* says, I must do'?"

²⁷ Balak said to Balaam, "Come with me to another
 place. Perhaps it will be pleasing to God and you may

curse them for me from there." ²⁸ So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, overlooking the wasteland.

²⁹ Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here,
 and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me."

³⁰ Balak did just as Balaam said, and offered a bull
 and a ram on each altar.

How Lovely the Tents of Jacob

24 When Balaam realized that it was pleasing in
 the eyes of *ADONAI* to bless Israel, he did not re-
 sort to sorceries as at the other times, but turned his
 face toward the wilderness. ² Lifting up his eyes, Balaam saw Israel dwelling by tribes. The *Ruach Elohim*
 came over him. ³ He uttered his oracle and said:

"This is the oracle of Balaam son of Beor,
 and the oracle of a strong man whose eye has been
 opened,

⁴ the oracle of one hearing God's speech,
 one seeing *Shaddai*'s vision,
 one fallen down, yet with open eyes:

⁵ How lovely are your tents, O Jacob,
 and your dwellings, O Israel!

⁶ Like valleys they are spread out,
 like gardens beside a river,
 like aloes planted by *ADONAI*,
 like cedars beside the waters.

⁷ Water will flow from his buckets,
 his seed by abundant water.
 His king will be greater than Agag,
 his kingdom will be exalted.

⁸ God is bringing him out of Egypt.
 like the strong horns of a wild ox.
 He devours nations hostile to him.
 He will crush their bones.

His arrows will pierce them.
⁹ He crouches like a lion or a lioness—
 who would rouse him?

He who blesses you will be blessed,
 and he who curses you will be cursed."

¹⁰ Then Balak became furious at Balaam, and struck
 his hands together. Balak said to Balaam, "I sum-
 moned you to curse my enemies, but look, you have
 blessed them these three times! ¹¹ Now, go home! I
 said I would reward you, but see, *ADONAI* has kept you
 from reward!"

¹² Balaam answered Balak, "Didn't I indeed tell your
 messengers whom you sent to me saying: ¹³ 'If Balak
 were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I
 could not go beyond the mouth of *ADONAI*, to do good
 or bad from my own heart? Whatever *ADONAI* may
 speak, I will speak!' ¹⁴ Now, behold, I am going back to
 my people. Come, let me counsel you what these peo-
 ple will do to your people in the latter days." ¹⁵ Then he
 uttered his oracle:

"The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,
 the strong man whose eye is opened,
¹⁶ the oracle of one hearing God's speech,
 one experiencing *Elyon*'s knowledge,

† cf. *Titus* 1:2; *Heb.* 6:18.

one seeing *Shaddai's* vision,
one fallen down,
yet with open eyes:

¹⁷ I see him, yet not at this moment.
I behold him, yet not in this location.
For a star will come from Jacob,
a scepter will arise from Israel. †
He will crush the foreheads of Moab
and the skulls of all the sons of Seth.
¹⁸ Edom will be conquered—
his enemies will conquer Seir,
but Israel will triumph.

¹⁹ One from Jacob will rule
and destroy the city's survivors."

²⁰ Then he saw Amalek,
so he uttered his oracle and said:
"Amalek was the first of nations,
but will come to ruin at last."

²¹ Then he saw the Kenite,
so he uttered his oracle and said,
"Your dwelling is secure.
Your nest is set in the rock.

²² Yet Kain will be destroyed,
when Asshur captures you."

²³ Again he uttered his oracle and said,
"O, who can live when God does this?"

²⁴ Ships will come from Kittim's shore.
They will afflict Asshur and Eber,
but they too will come to destruction."

²⁵ Then Balaam got up and went and returned to his
own place, and Balak went on his way.

Moabite Seduction and Phinehas Arises

25 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the people
began to have immoral sexual relations with
women from Moab. ² Then they invited the people to
the sacrifices of their gods, so the people were eating,
and bowing down before their gods. ³ When Israel be-
came bound to Baal of Peor, the anger of *ADONAI* grew
hot against Israel.

⁴ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Seize all the ringleaders
and hang them before *ADONAI* facing the sun, so that
ADONAI's fierce anger may be turned away from Is-
rael."

⁵ So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you,
kill your men who have been joining themselves to
Baal of Peor." ⁶ Then behold, a man from *Bnei-Yisrael*
came and brought a Midianite woman to his brothers
before the eyes of Moses and of the whole assembly
of *Bnei-Yisrael*, while they were weeping at the en-
trance to the Tent of Meeting!

⁷ When Phinehas son of Eleazar son of Aaron the *ko-
hen* saw it, he arose from the midst of the assembly,
took a spear in his hand, ⁸ and went after the man of
Israel into the tent and pierced them through—both
the Israelite man and the woman's belly. Then the

plague among *Bnei-Yisrael* was stopped. ⁹ However,
24,000 were dead because of the plague!

Parashat Pinchas

¹⁰ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ¹¹ "Phinehas
son of Eleazar son of Aaron the *kohen* has turned
away My anger from *Bnei-Yisrael* because he was very
zealous for Me among them, so that I did not put an
end to *Bnei-Yisrael* in My zeal. ¹² So now say: See, I am
making with him a covenant of *shalom*! ¹³ It will be for
him and his descendants after him a covenant of an
everlasting priesthood—because he was zealous for
his God and atoned for *Bnei-Yisrael*."

¹⁴ The name of the Israelite man killed with the Midi-
anite woman was Zimri son of Salu, a prince of a Sime-
onite ancestral household. ¹⁵ The name of the execut-
ed Midianite woman was Cozbi, daughter of Zur—he
was a tribal head of an ancestral house in Midian.

¹⁶ *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷ "Deal with the
Midianites as enemies and strike them. ¹⁸ For they
have been enemies to you in their deceptions of you
in the matter of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi, the
daughter of a Midianite prince, their sister who was
slain on the day of the plague on account of the Peor
incident." ¹⁹ (26:1) After the plague,

Numbering the Second Generation

26 *ADONAI* said to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron
the *kohen* saying, ² "Take a headcount of the en-
tire community of *Bnei-Yisrael*, sons twenty years old
and upward, by their ancestral houses, all who can
serve in Israel's army."

³ So Moses and Eleazar the *kohen* spoke with them
on the Moabite plains by the Jordan across from Jeri-
cho saying, ⁴ "Just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses, a
census will be taken of all men of *Bnei-Yisrael* who
came out of Egypt, from 20 years old and upward."

⁵ The descendants of the sons of Reuben, Israel's
firstborn: by Hanoth the Hanochite family, by Pallu the
Palluite family, ⁶ by Hezron the Hezronite family, and
by Carmi the Carmite family, ⁷ these Reubenite fami-
lies numbered 43,730. ⁸ The son of Pallu was Eliab.
⁹ The sons of Eliab were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram.
These were the Dathan and Abiram who were commu-
nity leaders who rebelled against Moses and Aaron
and were among the following of Korah in their rebel-
lion against *ADONAI*. ¹⁰ Then the earth opened its
mouth and swallowed them with Korah, whose follow-
ers died when the fire consumed the 250 men, these
men serving as a warning. ¹¹ Korah's sons, however,
did not die.

¹² The sons of Simeon by their families were: by Ne-
muel the family of the Nemuelites, by Jamin the family
of the Jaminites, by Jachin the family of the Jachinites,
¹³ by Zerach the family of the Zerachites, and by Shaul
the family of the Shaulites. ¹⁴ These families of the
Simeonites numbered 22,200.

† cf. Matt. 2:2; Rev. 22:16.

¹⁵ The sons of Gad by their families were: by Zephon the family of the Zephonites, by Haggi the family of the Haggites, by Shuni the family of the Shunites, ¹⁶ by Ozni the family of the Oznites, by Eri the family of the Erites, ¹⁷ by Arod the family of the Arodites, by Areli the family of the Arelites. ¹⁸ The sons of Gad numbered 40,500.

¹⁹ Er and Onan were sons of Judah but had died in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ The sons of Judah by their families were: by Shelah the Shelanite family, by Perez the Perezite family, by Zerach the Zerachite family. ²¹ The sons of Perez: by Hezron the Hezronite family, by Hamul the Hamulite family. ²² These were the sons of Judah. They numbered 76,500.

²³ The sons of Issachar by their families were: Tola and the family of the Tolaites, by Puvah the Punite family, ²⁴ by Jashub the Jashubite family, by Shimron the Shimronite family. ²⁵ These were the families of Issachar. They numbered 64,300.

²⁶ The sons of Zebulun by their families were: by Sered the family of the Seredites, by Elon the family of the Elonites, by Jahleel the family of the Jahleelites. ²⁷ These were the Zebulunite families. They numbered 60,500.

²⁸ The sons of Joseph by their families were Manasseh and Ephraim. ²⁹ The sons of Manasseh were: by Machir the family of the Machirites (Machir fathered Gilead.), by Gilead the family of the Gileadites. ³⁰ The sons of Gilead were: by Iezer the family of the Iezerites, by Helek the Helekite family, ³¹ by Asriel the Asrielite family, by Shechem the Shechemite family, ³² by Shemida the Shemidaite family, by Hephher the Hephherite family. ³³ Hephher's son Zelophehad had no sons, only daughters. The names of Zelophehad's daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ³⁴ These were the families of Manasseh. They numbered 52,700.

³⁵ These were the sons of Ephraim by their families: of Shuthelah the Shuthelahite family, of Becher the Bechrite family, of Tahan the Tahanite family. ³⁶ These were the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran the Eranite family. ³⁷ These were the families of the sons of Ephraim. These numbered 32,500. These were the sons of Joseph by their families.

³⁸ The sons of Benjamin by their families were: by Bela the Belaite family, by Ashbel the Ashbelite family, by Ahiram the Ahiramite family, ³⁹ by Shephupham the Shuphamite family, by Hupham the Huphamite family. ⁴⁰ The sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman. By Ard was the family of the Ardites, by Naaman the family of the Naamanites. ⁴¹ These were the sons of Benjamin. They numbered 45,600.

⁴² These were the sons of Dan by their families: by Shuham the Shuhamite family. These were the families of Dan by family. ⁴³ They were all Shuhamite families, and, they numbered 64,400.

⁴⁴ The sons of Asher by their families were: by Imnah the Imnite family, by Ishvi the Ishvite family, by Beriah

the Beriite family. ⁴⁵ Through the sons of Beriah: by Heber the Heberite family, by Malchiel the Malchielite family. ⁴⁶ The name of Asher's daughter was Serah. ⁴⁷ These were the families of Asher's sons. They numbered 53,400.

⁴⁸ The sons of Naphtali by their families were: by Jahzeel the Jahzeelite family, by Guni the Gunite family, ⁴⁹ by Jezer the Jezrite family, by Shillem the Shillemite family. ⁵⁰ These were the families of Naphtali by their families. They numbered 45,400.

⁵¹ These sons of Israel totaled 601,730.

⁵² *ADONAI* then spoke to Moses, saying, ⁵³ "The land is to be divided to these as an inheritance according to the number of names. ⁵⁴ For the larger, you are to make his inheritance larger, and to the smaller you are to make his inheritance smaller. Each is to receive his inheritance in proportion to his population. ⁵⁵ Certainly the land is to be divided by lot. They will inherit it according to the names of their ancestral tribes. ⁵⁶ The division of the inheritance of larger and smaller tribes is to be decided by the lot."

⁵⁷ These were the numbers of the Levites by their families: by Gershon the Gershonite family, by Kohath the Kohathite family, by Merari the Merarite family. ⁵⁸ These were the families of Levi: the Libnite family, the Hebronite family, the Machlite family, the Mushite family and the Korahite family. Kohath fathered Amram. ⁵⁹ Amram's wife's name was Jochebed daughter of Levi, who was born to the Levites in Egypt. She gave birth for Amram, Aaron and Moses, as well as Miriam their sister. ⁶⁰ Aaron was the father of Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ⁶¹ However, Nadab and Abihu died when they offered sacrifices with unauthorized fire before *ADONAI*. ⁶² The male Levites a month old and upward totaled 23,000, though they were not included among *Bnei-Yisrael*, since He did not give them an inheritance among *Bnei-Yisrael*.

⁶³ These were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the *kohen* when they counted *Bnei-Yisrael* on the plains of Moab across from Jericho. ⁶⁴ Not one of them was among those counted by Moses and Aaron the *kohen* when they counted *Bnei-Yisrael* in the Sinai wilderness, ⁶⁵ because *ADONAI* had said they would surely die in the wilderness. Not one of them was left, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

Inheritance of Daughters

27 The daughters of Zelophehad son of Hephher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh son of Joseph (the names of his daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah) ² stood before Moses, Eleazar the *kohen* and the princes of the entire assembly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting and said, ³ "Our father died in the wilderness. But he was not one of the followers banding together against *ADONAI* with Korah, though he died for his own sin. Yet he had no sons. ⁴ Why should our father's name diminish from his family just

because he had no son? Give to us property among our father's brothers."

⁵ So Moses brought their issue before *ADONAI*, ⁶ and *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ⁷ "The daughters of Zelophehad are right in saying you should give them property by inheritance among their father's relatives. You are to turn over the inheritance of their father to them.

⁸ "Furthermore, you are to speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying: If a man dies without a son, you are to transfer his inheritance to his daughter. ⁹ If he has no daughter, you are to give his inheritance to his brothers. ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, you are to give it to his father's brothers. ¹¹ If his father had no brothers, you are to give it to the nearest relative in his family that he might possess it. This is to be a legal statute for *Bnei-Yisrael*, just as *ADONAI* commanded to Moses."

Commissioning of Joshua

¹² Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Go up this mountain of the Abarim range and look at the land that I have given to *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹³ When you have seen it, you will be gathered to your people, just as Aaron your brother was gathered. ¹⁴ For in the wilderness of Zin during the strife of the community, you both rebelled against My Word instead of honoring Me as holy at the waters before their eyes." (These were the waters of Meribah at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)

¹⁵ Moses spoke to *ADONAI* saying, ¹⁶ "May *ADONAI*, God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the community ¹⁷ to go out and come in before them, who will lead them out and bring them out so that the people of *ADONAI* will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

¹⁸ *ADONAI* said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the *Ruach*, and lay your hand on him. ¹⁹ You will have him stand before Eleazar the *kohen* and the entire assembly and commission him before their eyes. ²⁰ Give to him some of your authority so that the whole community of *Bnei-Yisrael* will obey him. ²¹ He will stand before Eleazar the *kohen*, who will pray and obtain judgments for him by *Urim* and before *ADONAI*. At his mouth, they will go out and at his mouth they will come in, he and all the community of *Bnei-Yisrael* with him."

²² Moses did as *ADONAI* commanded him. He took Joshua, stood him before Eleazar the *kohen* and all the entire assembly. ²³ Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him just as *ADONAI* had spoken, by Moses's hand.

Moadim : Appointed Times

28 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Command *Bnei-Yisrael* and tell them to be careful to present to Me at the *moadim* My food offerings by fire as a pleasing aroma. ³ Tell them: This is the fire offering which you are to present to *ADONAI*: two male lambs a

year old, without flaw, as a daily regular burnt offering. ⁴ Prepare one lamb in the morning and the other lamb you are to prepare at twilight, ⁵ along with a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with a fourth of a hin [†] of oil from pressed olives. ⁶ This is the regular burnt offering initiated at Mount Sinai, as a pleasing aroma, a fire offering to *ADONAI*. ⁷ With each lamb pour out a fourth of a hin of fermented drink at the Sanctuary as a drink offering to *ADONAI*. ⁸ Prepare the second lamb at twilight with the same type of grain and drink offerings you prepared in the morning, a fire offering as a pleasing aroma to *ADONAI*.

Shabbat : Weekly Rest

⁹ "On the *Shabbat*, you are to present two flawless male lambs a year old, along with two tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil and its drink offering. ¹⁰ This is the burnt offering for every *Shabbat*, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

Rosh Chodesh : New Moon

¹¹ "On the first of the month you are to present to *ADONAI* a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven flawless male lambs a year old, ¹² with three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering with each bull, and two tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering with the ram, ¹³ and with each lamb a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, a burnt offering as a pleasing aroma, an offering by fire to *ADONAI*. ¹⁴ Their drink offerings shall be: per bull, half a hin of wine, a third of a hin of wine per ram, and, a fourth of a hin per lamb. This will be the monthly burnt offering at each new moon throughout the year. ¹⁵ Also, one male goat as a sin offering to *ADONAI* beside the regular burnt offering is to be offered with its drink offering.

Pesach : Passover

¹⁶ "On the fourteenth day of the first month is *ADONAI*'s Passover. ¹⁷ On the fifteenth day, there is to be a feast. For seven days, *matzot* will be eaten. ¹⁸ You are to hold a sacred assembly on the first day. You are not to do any laborious work. ¹⁹ You are to offer to *ADONAI* burnt offering by fire, two young bulls, one ram and seven male lambs a year old. They are to be flawless. ²⁰ You are to offer their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an ephah per bull, two tenths per ram, ²¹ and one tenth per each of the seven lambs, ²² plus one goat for a sin offering to atone for yourselves. ^{†23} In addition to the morning burnt offering and regular burnt offering, you are to offer these. ²⁴ Just like this you are to offer each day, for seven days, the food to be offered by fire for each day as a

[†] Hebrew *hin* ^{††} cf. 1 John 2:2.

pleasing aroma to *ADONAI*, beside the regular burnt offering with its drink offering. ²⁵ On the seventh day, you are to have a sacred assembly, and you are to do no laborious work.

Shavuot : Feast of Weeks

²⁶ "On the Day of Firstfruits, when you offer to *ADONAI* a new grain offering during the Feast of Weeks, you are to have a sacred assembly. You are to do no laborious work. ²⁷ You are to offer as a pleasing aroma a burnt offering to *ADONAI*, two young bulls from the herd, one ram and seven male lambs a year old. ²⁸ With each bull there is to be a grain offering of three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, with the ram two tenths, ²⁹ and with each lamb, one tenth, ³⁰ plus one male goat to make atonement for you. ³¹ In addition, you are to prepare the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and its drink offering. They are to be without defect.

Yom Teruah : Day of Shofar Shouts

²⁹ "On the first day of the seventh month you are to have a sacred assembly. You are to do no laborious work. It is for you a day for sounding the *shofar*. ² You are to prepare a burnt offering as a pleasing aroma to *ADONAI*: one young bull from the herd, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, without flaw, ³ with their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an ephah with the bull, two tenths with the ram, ⁴ and one tenth with each of the seven lambs, ⁵ as well as one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for yourselves. ⁶ Also offer the burnt offering for the month with its grain offering, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their appropriate drink offerings as a pleasing aroma to *ADONAI*, as an offering by fire.

Yom Kippur : Day of Atonement

⁷ "On the tenth day of this seventh month, you are to have a sacred assembly. You are to deny yourselves and do no work. ⁸ You are to present to *ADONAI* a burnt offering as a pleasing aroma, one young bull from the herd, one ram, and seven year-old male lambs without defect, ⁹ along with their grain offerings of fine flour mixed with oil: three tenths of an ephah with the bull, two tenths with the ram, ¹⁰ and one tenth with each of the seven lambs. ¹¹ Also offer one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the sin offering for atonement, as well as the regular burnt offering with its grain offering and their drink offerings.

Sukkot : Feast of Tabernacles

¹² "On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you are to have a sacred assembly. You are not to do any of your work, and you are to celebrate the Feast to *ADONAI* for seven days. ¹³ You are to offer a burnt offering by fire to *ADONAI* as a pleasing aroma: thirteen young

bulls from the herd, two rams, and fourteen year-old male lambs without defect, ¹⁴ their grain offerings of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an ephah with each of the thirteen bulls, two tenths with each of the two rams, ¹⁵ and one tenth with each of the fourteen lambs, ¹⁶ plus one male goat as a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offering.

¹⁷ "On the second day, you are to offer twelve young bulls from the herd, two rams, and fourteen year-old male lambs without flaw, ¹⁸ with their grain and drink offerings, with the bulls, rams, and lambs as appropriate by their number according to the regulations, ¹⁹ plus one male goat as a sin offering, as well as the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offerings.

²⁰ "On the third day, offer eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen year-old male lambs without defect, ²¹ with their grain and drink offerings, with the bulls, rams, and lambs the number specified, ²² and a male goat as a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offerings.

²³ "On the fourth day, ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen year-old male lambs without flaw, ²⁴ their grain offerings and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and lambs by their number according to the regulations, ²⁵ and one male goat as a sin offering and the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offerings.

²⁶ "On the fifth day, nine bulls, two rams, and fourteen male one year old lambs without defect, ²⁷ with their grain and drink offerings by their number as specified, ²⁸ and one goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offerings.

²⁹ "On the sixth day, eight bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old without defect, ³⁰ with the bulls, rams, and lambs, their grain and drink offerings according to those numbers specified, ³¹ and one goat for a sin offering with the regular burnt offering and its grain and drink offerings.

³² "On the seventh day, seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs without defect a year old, ³³ plus their grain and drink offerings, for the bulls, rams, and lambs according to the numbers specified, ³⁴ in addition to one male goat for a sin offering and the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offerings.

³⁵ "On the eighth day there shall be for you an assembly. You are to do no regular work. ³⁶ You are to offer to *ADONAI* a burnt offering, a fire offering, a pleasing aroma, one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old without defect, ³⁷ and their grain and drink offerings, with the bull, ram, and lamb corresponding to their number according to the regulations, ³⁸ and a goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering with its grain and drink offerings.

³⁹ "You are to prepare these for *ADONAI* at your *moadim* in addition to your vow and freewill offerings,

along with your burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offering, and fellowship offerings.”

30 (29:40) So Moses told *Bnei-Yisrael* all that *ADONAI* commanded Moses.

Parashat Matot

Keeping or Nullifying Vows

² (1) Moses spoke to the princes of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael* saying, “This is what *ADONAI* has commanded:

³ (2) Whenever a man makes a vow to *ADONAI* or swears an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he is not to violate his word but do everything coming out of his mouth. †

⁴ (3) “Suppose a woman in her youth vows to *ADONAI* or obligates herself by a pledge in her father’s house. ⁵ (4) If her father should hear her vow or her pledge with which she obligated herself and her father says nothing to her, all her vows and every pledge by which she has obligated herself will stand. ⁶ (5) But if her father should forbid it on the day of his hearing it, none of her vows or pledges by which she has obligated herself will stand. *ADONAI* will forgive her because her father has forbidden her.

⁷ (6) “Suppose she should marry, after her vow or a rash promise of her lips by which she obligated herself. ⁸ (7) Now if her husband hears about it but says nothing to her on the day he hears about it, her vows will stand and her pledges by which she has obligated herself will stand. ⁹ (8) But if her husband should hear about it and on the day he hears it he forbids it, he thereby nullifies her vow and her rash promise by which her lips have obligated her, and *ADONAI* will forgive her.

¹⁰ (9) “Any vow or obligation of a widow or a divorced woman will be binding on her. ¹¹ (10) If in her husband’s house she vowed or obligated herself by pledge under oath, ¹² (11) and her husband should hear it and say nothing to her, not forbidding her, all her vows and every pledge by which she has obligated herself will stand. ¹³ (12) But if her husband should nullify them on the day when he hears of them, nothing from her lips, whether vow or pledge, will stand. Her husband has nullified them and *ADONAI* will forgive her. ¹⁴ (13) Her husband may ratify or veto any vow or sworn oath to deny herself.

¹⁵ (14) “But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he is confirming all her vows and all her oaths that are on her. He confirms them by saying nothing to her on the day of his hearing about it. ¹⁶ (15) But if he nullifies them after hearing about it, he will bear her guilt.”

¹⁷ (16) These are the statutes that *ADONAI* gave to Moses relevant to relationships between a man and

his wife, as well as between a father and his young daughter still living in his house.

Vengeance on Midian and Balaam

31 *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Take vengeance on the Midianites for *Bnei-Yisrael*. Afterward you will be gathered to your people.”

³ So Moses spoke to the people saying, “Mobilize some of your men for battle. They will go out against Midian to carry out *ADONAI*’s vengeance on Midian. ⁴ Send into the battle 1,000 men from each of the tribes of Israel.”

⁵ So from the thousands of Israel 1,000 from each tribe were assigned, 12,000 in all. ⁶ Moses sent them into battle, 1,000 from each tribe, and with them Phinehas son of Eleazar the *kohen*, who took with him articles from the Sanctuary and trumpets for signaling. ⁷ They fought Midian just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses, and killed every male. ⁸ Among the slain they also killed the Midianite kings: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba, the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword.

⁹ *Bnei-Yisrael* also captured women and sons of Midian, along with all their herds and flocks, and plundered all their goods. ¹⁰ They burned with fire all the Midianite cities, settlements, as well as all their camps. ¹¹ They seized all the plunder and all the spoil, both people and animals. ¹² They brought the captives, plunder and spoils to Moses, Eleazar the *kohen* and to the assembly of *Bnei-Yisrael* at their camp on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan at Jericho.

¹³ Moses, Eleazar the *kohen*, and all the princes of the community went to meet them outside the camp. ¹⁴ But Moses was angry with the officers of the army—the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds, those returning from the campaign of the war. ¹⁵ Moses said to them, “You let all the women live? ¹⁶ Why, they are the ones—because of Balaam’s advice—who caused *Bnei-Yisrael* to be unfaithful to *ADONAI* in the matter of Peor, so that the plague was on the community of *ADONAI*! ¹⁷ So now, kill all the boys and kill every woman who has been intimate with a man. ¹⁸ But save for yourselves every girl who has not been intimate with a man.

¹⁹ “Any of you who has killed anyone or touched the body of anyone who has been killed must stay outside the camp for seven days. You must purify yourselves, on the third and seventh days—you and your captives. ²⁰ Also purify every item of clothing as well as every item made of leather or wood.”

²¹ Eleazar said to the men of the army who had gone to war, “This is the regulation of the *Torah ADONAI* gave to Moses: ²² The gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, lead, ²³ and anything able to pass through fire is to be put through the fire and will then be clean. It is also to be purified with the water of cleansing. Anything that cannot stand the fire is to be put through the water.

²⁴ You are to wash your clothes also on the seventh

† cf. Matt. 5:33.

day. You will then be clean and may then come into the camp."

²⁵ ADONAI said to Moses saying, ²⁶ "Count the total spoil from the captive people and animals—you, Eleazar the *kohen* and the princes of the fathers of the community. ²⁷ You are to divide the spoil between those fighting in the war, taking part in the battle, and the rest of the community. ²⁸ You are also to set apart from the men of war going into battle tribute to ADONAI, one item from every 500, whether persons, cattle, donkeys or flock. ²⁹ From their half share, take and give it to Eleazar the *kohen* as ADONAI 's part. ³⁰ From the half of *Bnei-Yisrael*, you are to take one in 50, whether persons, cattle, donkeys, flock, or any other animals, and give them to the Levites, those charged with the care of ADONAI 's Tabernacle."

³¹ So Moses and Eleazar the *kohen* did just as ADONAI commanded Moses. ³² The remaining plunder taken by the people of the army was 675,000 sheep, ³³ 72,000 cattle, ³⁴ 61,000 donkeys, ³⁵ and from the human spoil were 32,000 women who had never been intimate with a man.

³⁶ The half share of those going into battle was 337,500 sheep, ³⁷ of which ADONAI 's tribute was 675, ³⁸ 36,000 cattle, of which ADONAI 's tribute was 72, ³⁹ 30,500 donkeys, of which ADONAI 's tribute was 61, ⁴⁰ 16,000 persons, of which the tribute to ADONAI was 32.

⁴¹ Moses gave the tribute, ADONAI 's part, to Eleazar the *kohen* just as ADONAI had commanded Moses. ⁴² From the half belonging to *Bnei-Yisrael*, which Moses had set apart from that of the fighting men, ⁴³ half belonging to the community was: 337,500 of the sheep, ⁴⁴ 36,000 cattle, ⁴⁵ 30,500 donkeys, ⁴⁶ 16,000 persons. ⁴⁷ From this half, Moses took one out of every 50 persons and animals, as ADONAI had commanded him, and gave them to the Levites, those charged with the care of the Tabernacle of ADONAI, just as ADONAI had commanded Moses.

⁴⁸ Then the officers over the units of the army, the commanders over thousands and hundreds, came to Moses. ⁴⁹ They said to him, "Your servants have counted the heads of the men of war under our command, and not one is missing. ⁵⁰ So we have brought as an offering to ADONAI the gold items each of us acquired—armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings and necklaces to atone for ourselves before ADONAI."

⁵¹ Moses and Eleazar the *kohen* received the gold from them, all the crafted items. ⁵² All of the gold presented as a gift to ADONAI came to 16,750 shekels from the commanders of thousands and hundreds. ⁵³ Each of the men of the army had taken plunder for himself. ⁵⁴ Moses and Eleazar the *kohen* received the gold from the commanders of thousands and of hundreds and brought it into the Tent of Meeting as a memorial for *Bnei-Yisrael* before ADONAI.

Settling the East Side

32 The sons of Reuben and Gad had very large herds and flocks, and, they saw that the territory of Jazer and Gilead were ideal for livestock. ² So the sons of Reuben and Gad came and said to Moses, Eleazar the *kohen*, and the princes of the community saying, ³ "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon— ⁴ the territory ADONAI conquered before the community of Israel—are suitable for livestock, and your servants have livestock."

⁵ Then they said, "If we have found favor in your eyes, let this territory be given to your servants as a possession. Don't make us cross the Jordan."

⁶ Moses replied to the sons of Gad and Reuben, "Should your countrymen go to war while you dwell here? ⁷ Why do you dishearten *Bnei-Yisrael* from going across to the land that ADONAI has given to them? ⁸ Your fathers did this when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to look over the land. ⁹ They went up to the Valley of Eshcol and viewed the land, but they discouraged the hearts of *Bnei-Yisrael* not to enter the land which ADONAI had given them. ¹⁰ The anger of ADONAI was aroused that day, and He swore an oath saying: ¹¹ 'The men who came out of Egypt, from 20 years old and upward, will not see the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for they have not followed after Me with a whole heart— ¹² except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they were wholehearted after ADONAI.' ¹³ The anger of ADONAI burned against Israel and He caused them to wander in the wilderness 40 years until all the generation doing that evil in ADONAI 's sight was gone.

¹⁴ "Now look, here you stand in the place of your fathers as a brood of sinful men to add more to ADONAI 's great wrath against Israel! ¹⁵ If you turn away from Him, He will repeat again leaving this people in the wilderness, you being the cause of this people's destruction."

¹⁶ Then they came up to him and said, "We will build sheepfolds for our livestock and cities for our children. ¹⁷ But we are prepared to arm ourselves and go ahead of *Bnei-Yisrael* until we have brought them to their place. Our children will live in the cities fortified against the inhabitants of the land. ¹⁸ We will not return to our homes until each one of *Bnei-Yisrael* has received his inheritance. ¹⁹ Yet we will not inherit with them on the side beyond the Jordan, since our inheritance has come on the east side of the Jordan."

²⁰ Moses said to them, "If you will do this—if you will arm yourselves for battle for ADONAI, ²¹ and if all of you cross the Jordan until ADONAI has driven His enemies from before Him ²² and the land is subdued before ADONAI —then afterward you may return and be free before ADONAI and Israel. Then this territory will be your possession before ADONAI.

²³ “But if you don’t do this, behold, you sin against *ADONAI*! Be assured! Your sin will find you out! ²⁴ Build for yourselves cities for your children and pens for your flocks. Then do what has come out of your mouth.”

²⁵ The sons of Gad and Reuben said to Moses saying, “Your servants will do just as my lord is commanding. ²⁶ Our children, our wives, our flocks, and all of our herds will remain here in the cities of Gilead. ²⁷ But your servants, every one armed for battle, will cross over for the war before *ADONAI*, just as my lord says.”

²⁸ Moses then gave orders about them to Eleazar the *kohen*, Joshua son of Nun, and to the chiefs of the fathers of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ²⁹ Moses said to them, “If the sons of Gad and Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, everyone armed for battle before *ADONAI*, when the land is subdued before you, then give them the territory of Gilead as a possession.

³⁰ However, if they do not cross over fully armed, they are to possess the land of Canaan with you.”

³¹ The sons of Gad and Reuben answered saying, “What *ADONAI* has said to your servants, so we will do. ³² We will cross fully armed before *ADONAI* into Canaan, but our inheritance will be on this side of the Jordan.”

³³ Moses then gave to them—the sons of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, son of Joseph—the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan—the land with its cities and the territory around the cities. ³⁴ The sons of Gad built up Dibon, Ataroth and Aroer, ³⁵ as well as Atroh-shophan, Jazer and Jogbehah, ³⁶ Beth-nimrah and Beth-haran as fortified cities, as well as sheep pens.

³⁷ The sons of Reuben built Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, ³⁸ Nebo, Baal Meon, (cities whose names were changed) and Sibmah. They gave other names to the rebuilt cities.

³⁹ The sons of Machir son of Manasseh went up to Gilead, captured it, and drove out the Amorites who were there. ⁴⁰ So Moses gave Gilead to Machir son of Manasseh, and he lived there. ⁴¹ Jair, a son of Manasseh, went and captured their settlements and named them Jair’s Villages.

⁴² Nobah went and conquered Kenath and its settlements and named them Nobah after his own name.

Parashat Masei

Israel’s Journeys Reviewed

33 These are the journeys of *Bnei-Yisrael* when they came out of Egypt by their divisions under the hand of Moses and Aaron. ² Moses recorded the stages of their journeys at *ADONAI*’s command. These then are their journeys by stages.

³ *Bnei-Yisrael* set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the first day after Passover. They went out with a high hand in the sight of all

Egypt. ¹⁴ Now the Egyptians were burying those whom *ADONAI* had struck down among them. *ADONAI* had brought judgments on all their firstborn and their gods.

⁵ *Bnei-Yisrael* left Rameses and encamped at Succoth. ⁶ They departed from Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. ⁷ They left from Etham and turned back toward Pi-Hahiroth, east of Baal-Zephon, and camped before Migdol. ⁸ They left from before Pi-Hahiroth and passed through the sea into the wilderness. They traveled three days journey into the wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah. ⁹ They departed from Marah and went to Elim. There were twelve water springs and 70 palm trees in Elim, so they camped there. ¹⁰ They left Elim and camped by the Sea of Reeds.

¹¹ They set out from the Sea of Reeds and camped in the wilderness of Sin. ¹² They left from the wilderness of Sin and camped in Dophkah. ¹³ They then left Dophkah and camped at Alush. ¹⁴ They left from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

¹⁵ They set out from Rephidim and encamped in the Sinai wilderness. ¹⁶ They departed from the Sinai wilderness and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah. ¹⁷ They left from Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth. ¹⁸ Departing Hazeroth, they camped at Rithmah.

¹⁹ Leaving Rithmah, they camped at Rimmon-perez. ²⁰ They left from Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah. ²¹ They departed Libnah and camped at Rissah. ²² They left Rissah and camped at Kehelah. ²³ They left Kehelah and camped at Mount Shepher. ²⁴ They departed Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. ²⁵ They departed from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. ²⁶ They left Makheloth and camped in Tahath.

²⁷ They left from Tahath and camped in Terah. ²⁸ They left Terah and camped in Mithkah. ²⁹ They departed Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. ³⁰ They left Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.

³¹ They left Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan. ³² Departing Bene-jaakan, they camped at Hor-haggidgad. ³³ Leaving Hor-haggidgad, they camped at Jotbah. ³⁴ They left Jotbah and camped at Abronah. ³⁵ They departed from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber. ³⁶ They left Ezion-geber and encamped at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

³⁷ Leaving Kadesh, they camped at Mount Hor on the border of the land of Edom. ³⁸ Aaron the *kohen* went up Mount Hor at *ADONAI*’s command and died there, in the fortieth year since the departure of *Bnei-Yisrael* from the land of Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month. ³⁹ Aaron was 123 years old when he died on Mount Hor.

⁴⁰ The Canaanite king of Arad, who was living in the Negev in the territory of Canaan, heard of the coming of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁴¹ They departed from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. ⁴² They left Zalmonah and en-

† cf. Acts. 13:17.

camped at Punon. ⁴³ Departing Punon, they camped at Oboth. ⁴⁴ Leaving Oboth, they camped at Ije-abarim on the border of Moab. ⁴⁵ They moved on from Ijim and camped at Dibon-gad. ⁴⁶ They moved on from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim. ⁴⁷ They departed from Almon-diblathaim and camped at the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo.

⁴⁸ They moved on from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab, by the Jordan, across from Jericho. ⁴⁹ They camped along the Jordan, from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim.

⁵⁰ ADONAI spoke to Moses along the Jordan in the plains of Moab across from Jericho saying, ⁵¹ "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵² you must drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. You must destroy all their idols and cast images, and demolish their high places. ⁵³ You will take possession of the land, so you will settle in it, because I have given it to you to possess.

⁵⁴ "You are to divide the land by lot according to your families. To the large, make their inheritance larger, and to the small, make their inheritance smaller. Whatever comes out of the lot will be theirs. You are to distribute the inheritance according to your ancestral tribes.

⁵⁵ "But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, whoever you allow to remain will become to you barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides. They will give you trouble in the land in which you will be living. ⁵⁶ Then what I had intended to do to them, I will do to you."

Borders of Israel

34 ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Command *Bnei-Yisrael* and say to them: When you enter the land of Canaan, these are the boundaries of the land being allotted to you as an inheritance. ³ Your southern side will run from the wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom to the southern end of the Dead Sea on the east. ⁴ Your border will cross south of the Scorpion Pass and continue to Zin and south of Kadesh-barnea, then go on to Hazar-addar and on to Azmon. ⁵ Then the border will turn from Azmon to the Wadi of Egypt and end at the sea.

⁶ "Your western boundary will be the coast of the Great Sea. This will be your western border.

⁷ "Your northern boundary will be by running a line from the Great Sea to Mount Hor, ⁸ then from Mount Hor to Levo-Hamath †, then the boundary will go to Zedad. ⁹ The border will continue on to Ziphron, ending at Hazar-Enan. This will be your northern border.

¹⁰ "For your eastern border, run a line from Hazar-Enan to Shepham. ¹¹ From Shepham, the boundary will descend to Riblah on the east side of Ain, continuing along the eastern slopes of *Kinneret* ††. ¹² From there the border will go down along the Jordan, ending at

† Or, entrance of Hamat †† *Kinneret*

the Dead Sea. This will be your territory with its surrounding borders."

¹³ Moses commanded *Bnei-Yisrael*, saying, "This is the land which ADONAI has commanded that you are to assign by lot to the nine and a half tribes. ¹⁴ For the tribe of the sons of Reuben by their ancestral houses, the tribe of the sons of Gad by their ancestral houses, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance. ¹⁵ These two and a half tribes have received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan at Jericho, toward the sunrise."

¹⁶ ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁷ "These are the names of the men who will allot the land to you: Eleazar the *kohen* and Joshua son of Nun. ¹⁸ Also you are to select one prince from each tribe to allot the land. ¹⁹ These are their names: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh. ²⁰ From the tribe of the sons of Simeon, Shemuel son of Ammihud. ²¹ From the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad son of Chislon. ²² From the tribe of the sons of Dan, the prince is Bukki son of Jogli.

²³ From the sons of Joseph, from the tribe of the sons of Manasseh, the prince is to be Hanniel son of Ephod.

²⁴ The prince from the tribe of the sons of Ephraim is to be Kemuel son of Shiphtan.

²⁵ "The prince from the tribe of the sons of Zebulun is Elizaphan son of Parnach. ²⁶ The prince from the tribe of the sons of Issachar is Paltiel son of Azzan. ²⁷ The prince from the tribe of the sons of Asher is Ahihud son of Shelomi. ²⁸ The prince from the tribe of the sons of Naphtali is Pedahel son of Ammihud." ²⁹ These were those ADONAI commanded to apportion to *Bnei-Yisrael* the land of Canaan.

Cities for the Levites

35 ADONAI spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho saying, ² "Command *Bnei-Yisrael* to give to the Levites from the inheritance of their possessions cities in which to live. They are also to give the Levites pasturelands around the cities. ³ Thus they will have cities to live in and pastures for their cattle, flocks and all their livestock. ⁴ The pastures you give the Levites will extend out from the walls around the cities for 1,000 cubits. ⁵ You are to measure outside the cities 2,000 cubits on the east side, 2,000 cubits on the south side, on the west side 2,000 cubits, and on the north side 2,000 cubits. These are to be pasturelands for the cities.

⁶ "Six of the cities you give the Levites are to be cities of refuge, to which anyone who kills anyone may flee. Besides these, you are to give the Levites 42 more cities. ⁷ In all, you are to give the Levites 48 cities with their pastures. ⁸ The cities that you are to give to the Levites from the possession of *Bnei-Yisrael* should be proportionate to the inheritance of each tribe—give many from the one who has many and few from the one who has few."

⁹ ADONAI spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying: When you cross the Jordan into the land

of Canaan, ¹¹ you are to select cities which will be cities of refuge, to which one might flee if he has killed someone by accident. ¹² They are to be cities for refuge from the avenger, so the manslayer may not die before standing trial before the assembly. ¹³ The six cities you designate are to be your cities of refuge. ¹⁴ Designate three cities on this side of the Jordan and three in the land of Canaan as cities of refuge.

¹⁵ "These six cities of refuge are to be for *Bnei-Yisrael* as well as for the outsider and the visitor in their midst, for anyone killing a person by accident. ¹⁶ Now if the manslayer strikes someone with an iron object so that he dies, he is a murderer and the murderer must die. ¹⁷ If anyone has a stone in his hand that could be deadly and strikes anyone with it so that he dies, he is a murderer and the murderer must die. ¹⁸ Or if someone has a wooden object that could kill and strikes anyone so that he dies, he is a murderer and the murderer must be put to death. ¹⁹ The blood avenger himself may put the murderer to death. When he finds him, he is to kill him.

²⁰ "If anyone pushes someone maliciously, or throws anything at him with deadly intent, ²¹ or with hostility hits him with his fist so that he dies, the one hitting him is a murderer. The blood avenger may put the murderer to death when he finds him. ²² But if he pushes him suddenly or throws an object at him with no intent, ²³ or without seeing him should drop a stone on him resulting in his death, but he was not his enemy and intended him no harm, ²⁴ the assembly must judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood according to these regulations. ²⁵ The assembly must protect the manslayer from the avenger of blood. The assembly should send him back to the city of refuge to which he had fled and he is to remain there until the death of the *kohen gadol* who was anointed with the holy oil.

²⁶ "But if the manslayer should go outside the city limit of his city of refuge to which he had fled, ²⁷ and should the blood avenger find him outside the city limits of the refuge city, the blood avenger may put him to death without being guilty of his blood. ²⁸ The manslayer must stay within the limits of his city of refuge until the *kohen gadol* dies, and after the death of the *kohen gadol*, the manslayer may return to his property.

²⁹ "These are to be statutes of justice for your generations in all your dwelling places. ³⁰ Everyone killing anyone shall be put to death as a murderer only on the testimony of more than one witness. No one is to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.

³¹ "You are not to accept ransom for the life of a murderer. He deserves to die and he is to die. ³² Do not re-

ceive a ransom for one who has fled to his city of refuge, allowing him to return to his land before the *kohen gadol's* death. ³³ You are not to pollute the land in which you are. Blood pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for land polluted by bloodshed except by the blood of the one who sheds it. ³⁴ You are not to defile the land where you live, where I dwell, for I dwell among *Bnei-Yisrael*."

Further Ruling About Daughters' Inheritance

36 The heads of the ancestral family of the children of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh, from the sons of Joseph, came and spoke before Moses and before the princes of the chiefs of the fathers of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ² They said, "My lord, *ADONAI* commanded to give the land by lot as an inheritance to *Bnei-Yisrael*. My lord was also commanded by *ADONAI* to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters.

³ "If they become wives of men from other tribes of Israel, their inheritance will be taken from our ancestral inheritance and added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry. So it will be deducted from the allotment of our inheritance. ⁴ When the Jubilee year comes, their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry and deducted from the inheritance of our ancestral tribe."

⁵ Then Moses commanded *Bnei-Yisrael* at the mouth of *ADONAI*, "What the tribe of the descendants of Joseph is saying is correct. ⁶ This is the word that *ADONAI* commands for the daughters of Zelophehad saying: They may become wives to whomever they please, as long as they marry within the family of the tribe of their father. ⁷ So no inheritance may be passed from tribe to tribe among *Bnei-Yisrael*— each one of *Bnei-Yisrael* will each keep the inheritance of the tribe of his ancestors. ⁸ Every daughter receiving an inheritance in one of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael* should marry within the family of her father's tribe, so that *Bnei-Yisrael* will each possess the inheritance of his fathers. ⁹ No inheritance may pass from tribe to another tribe, for each tribe of *Bnei-Yisrael* is to keep its inheritance."

¹⁰ So Zelophehad's daughters did just as *ADONAI* commanded Moses. ¹¹ Zelophehad's daughters—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah—married sons of their uncles. ¹² They married within the families of the sons of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained within the tribe of their ancestral family.

¹³ These are the *mitzvot* and judgments that *ADONAI* gave by Moses's hand to *Bnei-Yisrael*, on the plains of Moab at Jericho along the Jordan.

Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy Introduction

“Deuteronomy” is known from its Greek name in the Septuagint meaning “second law.” There is, however, no second Torah. Deuteronomy is a re-cap, a second telling and expansion of the first telling to a new generation of Israelites poised to enter Canaan. The book is known as to Hebrew speakers, meaning “words” of Moses. Oratory in nature, the book can be summarized as containing three speeches of Moses, followed by a song and a prophetic blessing. Spoken at the steppes of Moab, this book concludes with the death of Moses at exactly 120 years of age (a full life in the Hebrew lore).

The first speech summarizes the thirty-eight-year wanderings of the people, led personally by God’s cloud by day and God’s fire by night. The second speech exhorts all Israel to remain faithful to the covenant, so that they might live long on the Land and live well off of it. The third speech speaks prophetically to the blessings of the covenant faithfulness for the life in the Land, as well as the curses for failure to keep the covenant, with consequences including loss of resources, property, inheritance, and even community life in the Land itself.

Nowhere does speak of God divorcing His people on the grounds of infidelity—a notion concocted by anti-Semites. Failure to keep the covenant can lead to being small in numbers, scattered and exiled among the nations, and even forced to serve foreign “gods” in idolatrous lands (Deut. 28:68). This happened personally to Jeremiah (Jer. 43:5-7), the prophet who wrote of the New Covenant to come (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12). Stern discipline, however, is not tantamount to perpetual abandonment.

God, we are told, will remain Israel’s God. The (Deut. 6:4, 5-9), Israel’s call to monotheism, is a call to worship God and God alone, to insure that Israel remains with Him—that the world might eventually know Him. In this light, is predicted to come as the greatest Prophet, Moses’ superior (John 7:14-17, 40-46; Acts 3:21-26; cf. Deut. 18:15, 18-19). will remind Israel that wholehearted love for God alone, along with love of one’s neighbor as oneself, fulfills the whole of the that undergirds Israel’s covenant charter with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28). Moreover, in the person of Messiah, the world that resides beyond Israel’s borders can come to know the God who manifests Himself in those borders.

Moses speaks his last words on his 120th birthday, and he teaches a Song in Deuteronomy 32 for each succeeding generation to internalize. Moses begs, cajoles, implores, exhorts, and sternly warns the next generation never to forget God’s promises and God’s Word: “For it is not an empty thing for you, because it is your life! By this word you will prolong your days on the land, which you are crossing over the Jordan to possess” (Deut. 32:47). Today, for those in Messiah’s community, appropriating our inheritance—and life in the world-to-come—depends on trusting in God and believing in the One sent by Him as the deliverer and the redeemer (Deut. 18:18, cf. Exod. 14:31; John 6:39-40).

Deuteronomy Headings

- : The Words that Moses Spoke
- Bad Report and Poor Response
- Moses Recalls Wilderness Journey
- Defeat of Sihon and Og
- Possession East of Jordan
- Moses Pleads to Enter
- Must Listen and Obey
- Words from the Fiery Mountain
- The Ten Words
- Live and Prolong Your Days

- ’
- ’
- When You Prosper, Do Not Forget
- When Your Son Asks
- No Mixing With Idolaters

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 You Are Standing Before the Lord
 ! Be Courageous!
 Public Torah Readings
 Moses Introduces His Song
 The Song of Moses
 The Blessing of Moses

Parashat D'varim

D'varim : The Words that Moses Spoke

1 These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel across the Jordan—in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Di-Zahab. ²It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea.

³ Now Moses spoke to *Bnei-Yisrael*, according to all *ADONAI* had commanded him for them—in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, ⁴ after he had struck down Sihon king of the Amorites who lived in Heshbon, and Og king of the Bashan who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei.

⁵ Across the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses began to explain this *Torah* saying, ⁶“ *ADONAI* our God spoke to us at Horeb saying: ‘You have stayed long enough at this mountain. ⁷ Turn, journey on, and enter the hill country of the Amorites and all their neigh-

bors, in the Arabah, the hill country, the lowland, the Negev, and by the seashore—the land of the Canaanites and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the Euphrates. ⁸ See, I have set the land before you. Enter and possess the land that *ADONAI* swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give to them and to their descendants after them.†

Bad Report and Poor Response

⁹ “I spoke to you at that time saying: ‘I am not able to bear the burden of you by myself. ¹⁰ *ADONAI* your God has multiplied you—and here you are today, like the stars of the heavens in number.

¹¹ “May *ADONAI*, God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times as many as you are, and may He bless you just as He has promised you! ¹² How can I bear your load and burden and bickering by myself?

¹³ Choose for yourselves wise and discerning men, well known to your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.’

¹⁴ “You answered me and said: ‘The thing you have said to do is good.’ ¹⁵ So I took the heads of your tribes, men who were wise and well known, and appointed them as heads over you—leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and officials for your tribes.

¹⁶ “I commanded your judges at that time saying: ‘Hear cases between your brothers, and judge fairly † between a man and his brother or the outsider with him. ¹⁷ You must not show partiality in judgment ‡ —you must hear the small and the great alike. Fear no man, for the judgment is God’s. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me and I will hear it.’

¹⁸ “I commanded you at that time everything you should do.

¹⁹ “Then we journeyed from Horeb and went through all that great and terrible wilderness that you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, as *ADONAI* our God commanded us. Then we came to Kadesh-barnea. ²⁰ I said to you: ‘You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which *ADONAI* our God is giving to us. ²¹ See, *ADONAI* your God has set the land before you—go up, take possession, as *ADONAI* God of your fathers has promised you. Do not be afraid or discouraged.’

²² “Then all of you came near to me and said: ‘Let’s send men ahead of us to explore the land for us and bring us back word about the way we should go up and the cities we will enter.’

²³ “The idea seemed good to me, so I took twelve men from among you—one man for each tribe. ²⁴ They turned and went up into the hill country, and they came to the Wadi Eshcol and spied it out. ²⁵ They took in their hands some of the fruit of the land and brought it down to us. They also brought back word to

us and said, ‘Good is the land that *ADONAI* our God is giving to us.’

²⁶ “Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of *ADONAI* your God. ²⁷ In your tents you grumbled and said: ‘Because *ADONAI* hates us, He has brought us out from the land of Egypt to hand us over to the Amorites, to destroy us! ²⁸ Where are we going? Our brothers have discouraged our hearts saying, “The people are greater and taller than we are! The cities are great and fortified up to the heavens! Besides, we have even seen the children of Anakim there!”

²⁹ “Then I said to you, ‘Don’t tremble or be afraid of them. ³⁰ *ADONAI* your God, who goes before you, He Himself will fight for you—just as He did for you in Egypt before your own eyes, ³¹ and in the wilderness, where you saw how *ADONAI* your God carried you as a man carries his son, everywhere you went until you came to this place.’ ³² Yet for all this you did not trust in *ADONAI* your God— ³³ the One who goes before you on the way to scout out a place for you to camp and to show you the way you should go, in fire by night and in the cloud by day.

³⁴ “When *ADONAI* heard the tone † of your words, He was angry and swore an oath saying, ³⁵ ‘Not one of these men of this evil generation will see the good land that I swore to give your fathers— ³⁶ except Caleb the son of Jephunneh. He will see it—yet to him and his children I will give the land that he has walked on, because he has followed *ADONAI* wholeheartedly.’

³⁷ “*ADONAI* was even angry with me on your account, saying, ‘You will not enter there, either. ³⁸ Joshua son of Nun, who stands before you, will enter there—encourage him, for he will enable Israel to inherit it.

³⁹ “Moreover, your little ones—whom you said would become plunder, and your children who today have no knowledge of good or evil—they will enter there. To them I will give it and they will possess it. ⁴⁰ But as for you, turn around and journey into the wilderness by way of the Sea of Reeds ‡.’

⁴¹ “Then you answered and said to me, ‘We have sinned against *ADONAI*. We will go up and fight, just as *ADONAI* our God commanded us.’ So each of you strapped on his weapons of war, figuring it was easy to go up to the hill country.

⁴² “But *ADONAI* said to me, ‘Tell them, “Do not go up and fight—for I am not with you, and you will be defeated by your enemies.”’

⁴³ “So I told you, but you would not listen—you rebelled against the command of *ADONAI* and presumptuously went up into the hill country. ⁴⁴ The Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you, and they chased you as bees do and scattered you from Seir to Hormah. ⁴⁵ Then you returned and wept before *ADONAI*, but *ADONAI* did not listen to your voice or pay attention to you.

† cf. Heb. 6:13-14. †† Hebrew *tzedek* with righteousness
‡ cf. Jacob 2:1, 9.

†† Hebrew *kol* voice of †† Hebrew *Yam Suph*

⁴⁶ “So you stayed in Kadesh many days—like the days you had spent before.

Moses Recalls Wilderness Journey

2 “Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness by the way to the Sea of Reeds, just as *ADONAI* told me. We went around the hill country of Seir for many days.

² “*ADONAI* spoke to me saying, ³ “You have gone around this hill country long enough—turn to the north. ⁴ Command the people saying, “You are about to cross into the territory of your relatives, the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir. They will be afraid of you, so be very careful. ⁵ Do not provoke them, for I will not give you any of their land—not even a footprint—because I have given the hill country of Seir to Esau as a possession. ⁶ You are to buy food from them for money so that you may eat, and you are also to buy water from them for money so that you may drink. ⁷ For *ADONAI* your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand—He has known your wanderings through this great wilderness. These 40 years *ADONAI* your God has been with you—you have lacked nothing.”

⁸ “So we went on past our relatives the sons of Esau who dwell in Seir, away from the way of the Arabah from Elath and Ezion-geber. We turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

⁹ “*ADONAI* said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab or engage them in battle. For I will not give you any of his land for a possession, because I have given Ar to the children of Lot for a possession. ¹⁰ (The Emim used to live there—a great and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim. ¹¹ These people also are considered Rephaim, like the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim. ¹² Now the Horites used to live in Seir, but the sons of Esau drove them out and destroyed them from before themselves and settled in their place—just as Israel did to the land of its possession that *ADONAI* gave to them.) ¹³ Now rise up, and cross over the Wadi Zered.’ So we went over the Wadi Zered.

¹⁴ “The time that we traveled from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed over the Wadi Zered was 38 years—until all the generation of the men of war from within the camp came to an end, as *ADONAI* had sworn to them. ¹⁵ Indeed, the hand of *ADONAI* was against them, to destroy them from within the camp until they came to their end. †

¹⁶ “Now when all the men of war had finished dying from among the people, ¹⁷ *ADONAI* spoke to me saying, ¹⁸ “Today you are about to cross the border of Moab at Ar. ¹⁹ When you come opposite the sons of Ammon, do not harass or provoke them—for I will not give you any of the land of the sons of Ammon for a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot for a possession. ²⁰ (That also is considered a land of Rephaim. Rephaim used to live there, but the Ammonites call them Zamzummim— ²¹ a great and nu-

merous people, as tall as the Anakim. But *ADONAI* destroyed them from before them, and the Ammonites dispossessed them and settled in their place. ²² It was just as *ADONAI* did for the sons of Esau, who dwell in Seir, when He destroyed the Horites before them. They drove them out and settled in their place even to this day. ²³ As for the Avvim who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim who came from Crete destroyed them and settled in their place.)

Defeat of Sihon and Og

²⁴ “Rise up, journey on, and cross over the Wadi Arnon. See, I have handed over Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land—begin to possess it! Engage him in battle! ²⁵ This very day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under heaven. When they hear the report about you, they will tremble and twist in anguish because of you.’

²⁶ “So I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon with words of *shalom* saying, ²⁷ ‘Let me pass through your land—I will go only by way of the road. I will not turn to the right or to the left. ²⁸ You will sell me food for money so that I may eat and give me water for money so that I may drink. Just let me pass through on foot— ²⁹ as the sons of Esau dwelling in Seir and the Moabites in Ar did for me—until I cross over the Jordan into the land that *ADONAI* our God is giving to us.’ ³⁰ But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, because *ADONAI* your God stiffened his spirit and hardened his heart, in order to hand him over to you this very day. ††

³¹ “*ADONAI* said to me, ‘See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you—begin to take possession in order to take hold of his land.’

³² “Then Sihon came out against us—he and all his people—to battle at Jahaz. ³³ *ADONAI* our God gave him over to us, and we struck him down along with his sons and all his people. ³⁴ We captured all his cities at that time, and utterly put under a ban of judgment every city—men, women and children. We left no survivor. ³⁵ We took only the livestock as plunder for ourselves, as the spoils of the cities we captured. ³⁶ From Aroer which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon and the city by the wadi, all the way up to the Gilead, there was not a town too high for us. *ADONAI* our God gave everything over to us. ³⁷ Only you did not come near the land of the sons of Ammon—all along the Wadi Jabbok and the cities of the hill country and wherever *ADONAI* our God had commanded.

3 “Next we turned and went up the way to the Bashan. King Og of the Bashan came out against us—he and all his people—for battle at Edrei. ² But *ADONAI* said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have handed him over and all his people and his land. You will do to

† cf. Judah 5.

†† cf. Rom. 9:18.

him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon.'

³“So *ADONAI* our God also handed over King Og of the Bashan and all his people, and we struck him down until no survivor was left. ⁴We captured all his cities at that time—there was not a town that we did not take from them—sixty cities, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in the Bashan. ⁵All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates and bars, in addition to a great many unwallled towns. ⁶We utterly destroyed them, just as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying every city—men, women and children. ⁷But all the livestock and the spoils of the cities we took as plunder for ourselves.

⁸“So at that time we took from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites the land across the Jordan, from the Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon. ⁹(Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir.) ¹⁰We took all the cities of the plain and all the Gilead and all the Bashan, as far as Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in the Bashan. ¹¹(For only King Og of the Bashan survived from the remnant of the Rephaim. In fact, his bed was made of iron—is it not in Rabbah of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length and four cubits its width, according to the cubit of a man.)

Possession East of Jordan

¹²“This land we took in possession at that time—from Aroer by the Wadi Arnon and half the hill country of the Gilead and its cities—I gave to the Reubenites and Gadites. ¹³The rest of the Gilead and all of the Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh—all the region of the Argob. (All the Bashan is called the land of Rephaim. ¹⁴Jair son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites. He called them—the Bashan—after his own name, Havvoth-jair’s Villages, as it is the case to this day.)

¹⁵“To Machir I gave the Gilead. ¹⁶To the Reubenite and Gadites I gave from the Gilead as far as the Wadi Arnon—the middle of the wadi as the border—and as far as Jabbok, the wadi that is the border of the sons of Ammon, ¹⁷and the Arabah, with the Jordan as the border from *Kinneret* as far as the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah eastward.

¹⁸“I commanded you at that time, saying, ‘*ADONAI* your God has given you this land to possess it. Ready for battle, you will cross over ahead of your brothers *Bnei-Yisrael*—all the men of valor. ¹⁹Only your wives and your little ones and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) may stay in your cities that I have given you, ²⁰until *ADONAI* gives rest to your brothers as He has for you, and they also possess the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving them across the Jordan. Then you may return, each man to his possession that I have given you.’

²¹“I commanded Joshua at that time saying, ‘Your eyes have seen all that *ADONAI* your God has done to these two kings. *ADONAI* will do the same to all the kingdoms you are about to cross into. ²²You must not fear them, for it is *ADONAI* your God who fights for you.’

Parashat Va'etchanan

Moses Pleads to Enter

²³“I pleaded with *ADONAI* at that time, saying, ²⁴‘O Lord *ADONAI*, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand—for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do deeds and mighty acts like Yours? ²⁵Please! Let me cross over and see the good land across the Jordan—that good hill country and the Lebanon.’

²⁶“But *ADONAI* was angry with me because of you, so He would not listen to me. ‘Enough!’ *ADONAI* said to me, ‘Do not speak to Me anymore about this matter. ²⁷Go up to the top of Pisgah, look around to the west and the north and the south and the east, and see with your eyes—for you will not cross over this Jordan. ²⁸But commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he will cross over before this people, and he will enable them to inherit the land that you will see.’ ²⁹So we stayed in the valley opposite Beth-peor.

Bnei-Yisrael Must Listen and Obey

4 “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to do, so that you may live and go in and possess the land that *ADONAI* the God of your fathers is giving you. ²You must not add to the word that I am commanding you or take away from it—in order to keep the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God that I am commanding you. ³Your eyes have seen what *ADONAI* did at Baal Peor, for *ADONAI* your God has destroyed from among you everyone who followed Baal Peor. ⁴But you who held tight to *ADONAI* your God are alive today—all of you.

⁵“See, just as *ADONAI* my God commanded me, I have taught you statutes and ordinances to do in the land that you are about to enter to possess. ⁶You must keep and do them, for it is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the peoples, who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ ⁷For what great nation is there that has gods so near to them, as *ADONAI* our God is whenever we call on Him? ⁸What great nation is there that has statutes and ordinances that are righteous—like all of this *Torah* that I am setting before you today?

⁹“Only be watchful and watch over your soul closely, so you do not forget the things your eyes have seen and they slip from your heart all the days of your life. You are to make them known to your children and

your children's children. ¹⁰ The day that you stood before *ADONAI* your God in Horeb, *ADONAI* said to me, 'Gather the people to Me and I will make them hear My words, so that they learn to fear Me all the days that they live on the earth, and so that they teach their children.'

Words from the Fiery Mountain

¹¹ "You came near and stood at the bottom of the mountain while the mountain was blazing with fire up to the heart of the heavens—darkness, cloud, and fog. ¹² *ADONAI* spoke to you from the midst of the fire. The sound of words you heard, but a form you did not see—only a voice. ¹³ He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to do—the Ten Words—and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. ¹⁴ *ADONAI* commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances, so that you might do them in the land you are crossing over to possess.

¹⁵ "So be very watchful over your souls since you saw no form on the day that *ADONAI* spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire, ¹⁶ so that you do not act corruptly and make for yourselves a graven image in the likeness of any figure—the form of a male or female, ¹⁷ the form of any animal that is on the earth, the form of any winged bird that flies in the sky, ¹⁸ the form of anything that creeps on the ground, the form of any fish that is in the water under the earth— ¹⁹ and so that you do not lift up your eyes toward the heavens and see the sun and the moon and the stars—all the heavenly host—and are drawn away and bow down and worship them. *ADONAI* your God has allotted them to all the peoples under all the heavens. ²⁰ But you, *ADONAI* has taken, and He brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt to be a people for His own inheritance, as you are this day.

²¹ "Furthermore *ADONAI* was angry with me because of your words, and He swore that I would not cross over the Jordan or enter the good land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you for an inheritance. ²² For I must die in this land; I am not crossing over the Jordan. But you will cross over and take possession of that good land. ²³ Watch yourselves, so that you do not forget the covenant of *ADONAI* your God, which He cut with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything that *ADONAI* your God has forbidden you. ²⁴ For *ADONAI* your God is a consuming fire †—a jealous God.

²⁵ "When you father children and children's children and have been in the land a long time, and you act corruptly and make a graven image in the form of anything and do evil in the sight of *ADONAI* your God, provoking Him to anger, ²⁶ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that you will certainly be carried off quickly from the land you are crossing over the Jordan to possess. You will not prolong your days on it, for you will certainly be destroyed. ²⁷ *ADONAI* will

scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where *ADONAI* will drive you. ²⁸ There you will serve man-made gods of wood and stone, which do not see or hear or eat or smell. ²⁹ But from there you will seek *ADONAI* your God and you will find Him, when you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

³⁰ "When you are in distress and all these things have come on you, in the latter days you will return to *ADONAI* your God and listen to His voice. ³¹ For *ADONAI* your God is a merciful God. He will not abandon you or destroy you, or forget the covenant with your fathers that He swore to them.

³² "Indeed, ask now about the former days that were before you, from the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of the sky to the other. Has there ever been such a great thing as this, or has anything like it been heard? ³³ Has a people ever heard the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, as you have heard—and lived? ³⁴ Or has any god ever tried to come to take for himself a nation from within a nation—by trials, by signs and wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors—like all that *ADONAI* your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? ³⁵ You were shown, so that you might know that *ADONAI* is God—there is no other besides Him. ³⁶ From the heavens He made you hear His voice to instruct you, † and on earth He caused you to see His great fire—you heard His words from the midst of the fire. ³⁷ Because He loved your fathers, He chose their descendants after them. Then He brought you out from Egypt with His presence, by His great power— ³⁸ to drive out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

³⁹ "So you will know today and take to heart that *ADONAI*, He is God, in the heavens above and on the earth below—there is no other. ⁴⁰ You must keep His statutes and His *mitzvot*, which I am commanding you today, so that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and so that you may prolong your days in the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you for all time."

⁴¹ Then Moses set apart three cities beyond the Jordan, toward the east. ⁴² There the manslayer might flee, who kills his neighbor unintentionally and did not hate him previously. He may flee to one of these cities and live: ⁴³ Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau for the Reubenites, Ramot in the Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in the Bashan for the Manassites.

⁴⁴ This is the *Torah*, which Moses set before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁴⁵ These are the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances, which Moses spoke to *Bnei-Yisrael* when they came out from Egypt— ⁴⁶ beyond the Jordan, in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon, whom Moses and *Bnei-Yisrael* struck down when they came

† cf. John 5:37. †† cf. Rom. 9:4. ‡ cf. Heb. 12:29.

‡† cf. Mark 12:32. †† cf. Heb. 12:25.

out from Egypt. ⁴⁷ They took possession of his land and the land of Og king of the Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan toward the east— ⁴⁸ from Aroer, which is on the edge of the wadi Arnon, as far as Mount Sion (that is, Hermon), ⁴⁹ and all the Arabah beyond the Jordan eastward, as far as the sea of the Arabah [†], under the slopes of Pisgah.

The Ten Words

5 Moses called to all Israel and said to them, “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances that I am speaking in your hearing today, learn them and make sure to do them. ² *ADONAI* our God cut a covenant with us in Horeb. ³ Not with our fathers has *ADONAI* cut this covenant but with us—all of us alive here today. ⁴ *ADONAI* spoke with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. ⁵ (I was standing between *ADONAI* and you at that time, to tell you the word of *ADONAI*, because you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain.)

“He said:

⁶ “I am *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

⁷ “You shall not have other gods beside Me.

⁸ “Do not make for yourself a graven image—no image of what is in the heavens above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁹ Do not bow down to them or worship them. For I, *ADONAI* your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and on the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, ¹⁰ but showing lovingkindness to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My *mitzvot*.

¹¹ “You must not take the Name of *ADONAI* your God in vain, for *ADONAI* will not leave unpunished anyone who takes His Name in vain.

¹² “Observe *Yom Shabbat* to keep it holy, as *ADONAI* your God commanded you. ¹³ Six days you are to labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a *Shabbat* to *ADONAI* your God. In it you are not to do any work—not you or your son or your daughter, or your slave or your maid, or your ox, your donkey or any of your livestock or the outsider within your gates, so that your slave and your maid may rest as you do. ¹⁵ You must remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and *ADONAI* your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore *ADONAI* your God commanded you to keep *Yom Shabbat*.

¹⁶ “Honor your father and your mother just as *ADONAI* your God commanded you, so that your days may be long and it may go well with you in the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you. ^{††}

¹⁷ “Do not murder.

¹⁸ “Do not commit adultery.

¹⁹ “Do not steal.

²⁰ “Do not bear false witness against your neighbor. [‡]

²¹ “Do not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor desire your neighbor’s house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.’

²² “These words *ADONAI* spoke to all your assembly on the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud and the fog, with a great voice. He added no more. He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

Live and Prolong Your Days

²³ “As soon as you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was blazing with fire, you came near to me—all the heads of your tribes and your elders. ²⁴ Then you said, ‘*ADONAI* our God has just shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. This day we have seen that God speaks with man, and yet he keeps on living. ²⁵ Now then, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us! If we hear the voice of *ADONAI* our God any more, then we will die. ²⁶ For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? ²⁷ You go near and hear all that *ADONAI* our God says. Then you tell us all what *ADONAI* our God tells you, and we will hear it and do it.’

²⁸ “*ADONAI* heard the tone of your words when you spoke to me, and *ADONAI* said to me, ‘I have heard the tone of the words that this people has spoken to you—they have done well in all they have spoken. ²⁹ If only there were such a heart in them to fear Me and keep all My *mitzvot* always, so that it might go well with them and with their children forever! ³⁰ Go say to them, “Return to your tents.”’ ³¹ But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will tell you the whole commandment—both the statutes and the ordinances that you are to teach them. And they will do them in the land I am giving them to possess.’

³² So you must take care to do as *ADONAI* your God has commanded you—do not turn aside to the right or to the left. ³³ You are to walk in all the way that *ADONAI* your God has commanded you, so that you may live and it may be well with you and you may prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

6 “Now this is the commandment, the statutes and ordinances that *ADONAI* your God commanded to teach you to do in the land you are crossing over to possess— ² so that you might fear *ADONAI* your God, to keep all His statutes and *mitzvot* that I am commanding you and your son and your son’s son all the days of your life, and so that you may prolong your days. ³ Hear, therefore, O Israel, and take care to do this, so that it may go well with you and you may increase

[†] Or Dead Sea. ^{††} cf. Eph. 6:3.

[‡] Verse 17 is numbered as 17-20 in Christian translations. ^{‡†} cf. Matt. 5:21, 27.

mightily, as *ADONAI* the God of your fathers has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

SHEMA YISRAEL, ADONAI ELOHEINU, ADONAI ECHAD

⁴“Hear O Israel, the *LORD* our God, the *LORD* is one †. ⁵ Love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. †† These words, which I am commanding you today, are to be on your heart. ⁷ You are to teach them diligently to your children, and speak of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand, they are to be as frontlets ‡ between your eyes, ⁹ and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

When You Prosper, Do Not Forget

¹⁰“Now when *ADONAI* your God brings you into the land that He swore to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—to give you great and good cities that you did not build, ¹¹ and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns dug that you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant, and you eat and are full, ¹² then watch yourself so that you do not forget *ADONAI*, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery. ¹³ You must fear *ADONAI* your God and serve Him, †† and swear by His Name. ¹⁴ You must not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; ¹⁵ for *ADONAI* your God in the midst of you is a jealous God. Otherwise the anger of *ADONAI* your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you from the face of the earth.

¹⁶“You are not to test *ADONAI* your God, as you tested Him at Massah. ††† Diligently keep the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God, and His testimonies and His statutes that He has commanded you. ¹⁸ You are to do what is right and good in the sight of *ADONAI*, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and possess the good land that *ADONAI* swore to your fathers— ¹⁹ to drive out all your enemies from before you, as *ADONAI* has spoken.

When Your Son Asks

²⁰“When your son asks you in time to come, saying ‘What are the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances that *ADONAI* our God commanded you?’

²¹ then you are to tell your son, ‘We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and *ADONAI* brought us out from Egypt with a mighty hand. ²² Before our eyes *ADONAI* showed signs and wonders, great and terrible—on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his house. ²³ Then He brought us out from there so that He might bring us

† Hebrew *SHEMA YISRAEL, ADONAI ELOHEINU, ADONAI ECHAD*
Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord alone

†† Or might ‡ Hebrew *totafot tefillin phylacteries* †† cf. Deut. 13:4; Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8. ††† cf. Exod. 17:7; Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12.

in, to give us the land that He swore to our fathers. ²⁴ *ADONAI* commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear *ADONAI* our God—for our good always, to keep us alive, as is the case this day. ²⁵ It will be righteousness ††† to us, if we take care to do all this commandment before *ADONAI* our God, just as He has commanded us.’

No Mixing With Idolaters

⁷ “When *ADONAI* your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out many nations before you—the Hittite and the Girgashite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you— ² and *ADONAI* your God gives them over to you and you strike them down, then you are to utterly destroy them. You are to make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. ³ You are not to intermarry with them—you are not to give your daughter to his son, or take his daughter for your son. ⁴ For he will turn your son away from following Me to serve other gods. Then the anger of *ADONAI* will be kindled against you, and He will swiftly destroy you. ⁵ Instead, you are to deal with them like this: tear down their altars, smash their pillars, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn their carved images with fire. ⁶ For you are a holy people to *ADONAI* your God—from all the peoples on the face of the earth, *ADONAI* your God has chosen you to be His treasured people. †††

⁷ “It is not because you are more numerous than all the peoples that *ADONAI* set His love on you and chose you—for you are the least of all peoples. ⁸ Rather, because of His love for you and His keeping the oath He swore to your fathers, *ADONAI* brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

⁹ “Know therefore that *ADONAI* your God, He is God—the faithful God who keeps covenant kindness for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His *mitzvot*, §¹⁰ but repays those who hate Him to their face, to annihilate them. He will not hesitate with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. ¹¹ Therefore you are to keep the commandment—both the statutes and the ordinances—that I am commanding you today, to do them.

Parashat Ekev

***ADONAI* Desires to Bless**

¹² “Then it will happen, as a result of your listening to these ordinances, when you keep and do them, that *ADONAI* your God will keep with you the covenant kindness that He swore to your fathers. ¹³ He will love you, bless you and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the produce of your soil, your grain

††† Hebrew *tzedakah*
segullah § cf. 1 Cor. 1:9.

††† Hebrew *am*

and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock, in the land that He swore to your fathers to give you. ¹⁴ From all peoples, you will be blessed—there will not be male or female barren among you or your livestock. ¹⁵ *ADONAI* will remove all sickness from you, and He will not inflict on you any of the terrible diseases of Egypt that you knew, but will inflict them on all who hate you.

¹⁶ “You will devour all the peoples *ADONAI* your God gives over to you. Your eye is not to pity them. You are not to serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you. ¹⁷ Suppose you say in your heart, ‘These nations are more numerous than I—how can I drive them out?’ ¹⁸ You are not to be afraid of them. You are to be sure to remember what *ADONAI* your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: ¹⁹ the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs and wonders, and the mighty hand and outstretched arm [†] by which *ADONAI* your God brought you out. So will *ADONAI* your God do to all the peoples you fear.

²⁰ “Moreover, *ADONAI* your God will send the hornet against them, until the survivors and those in hiding perish before you. ²¹ You should not be terrified of them, since *ADONAI* your God is in your midst—a great and awesome God. ²² *ADONAI* your God will drive away those nations before you little by little—you will not be able to put an end to them all at once, or else the beasts of the field will multiply on you. ²³ But *ADONAI* your God will give them over to you, and He will throw them into great confusion until they are destroyed. ²⁴ He will hand over their kings to you, and you will blot out their name from under the heavens. No man will stand up to you, until you have destroyed them all.

²⁵ “The carved images of their gods you are to burn with fire. You are not to covet the silver or gold on them or take it for yourself—or you could be snared by it, for it is an abomination to *ADONAI* your God.

²⁶ You are not to bring an abomination into your house—for you, like it, will be a banned thing. You must utterly detest and utterly abhor it, for it is set apart for destruction.

Not by Bread Alone

8 “You are to take care to do the whole *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today, so that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land that *ADONAI* swore to your fathers. ² You are to remember all the way that *ADONAI* your God has led you these 40 years in the wilderness—in order to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His *mitzvot* or not. ³ He afflicted you and let you hunger, then He fed you *manna*—which neither you nor your fathers had known—in order to make you understand that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of *ADONAI*. ⁴ Neither did your clothing wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these 40 years. ⁵ Now you

[†] cf. Matt. 4:4; Luke 1:51.

know in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so *ADONAI* your God disciplines you. ⁶ So you are to keep the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God—to walk in His ways and to fear Him. ⁷ For *ADONAI* your God is bringing you into a good land—a land of wadis with water, of springs and fountains flowing out in the valleys and hills, ⁸ a land of wheat and barley, vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey, ⁹ a land where you will eat bread with no poverty, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰ So you will eat and be full, and you will bless *ADONAI* your God for the good land He has given you.

¹¹ “Take care that you do not forget *ADONAI* your God by not keeping His *mitzvot*, ordinances and statutes that I am commanding you today. ¹² Otherwise, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and lived in them, ¹³ and when your herds and flocks multiply, and silver and gold multiplies for you and all that is yours multiplies, ¹⁴ then your heart will be haughty and you will forget *ADONAI* your God. He brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery. ¹⁵ He led you through the great and terrible wilderness—fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where there was no water. He brought forth water for you from the flinty rock. ¹⁶ He fed you in the wilderness with *manna* that your fathers did not know, in order to afflict you and test you, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷ You may say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand has made me this wealth.’ ¹⁸ Rather you are to remember *ADONAI* your God, for it is He who gives you power to make wealth, in order to establish His covenant that He swore to your fathers—as it is this day.

¹⁹ “Now if you do forget *ADONAI* your God, and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you will certainly perish. ²⁰ Like the nations *ADONAI* makes perish before you, so you will perish, since you would not listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God.

Who Brings Down Giants?

9 “Hear, O Israel! You are about to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself—cities great and fortified up to the heavens. ² The people are great and tall, sons of the Anakim. You know them, and you yourselves have heard, “Who can stand before the sons of Anak?” ³ But you will know today that *ADONAI* your God is the One who is crossing over before you as a devouring fire. He will destroy them, and He will bring them down before you, so that you may drive them out and make them perish quickly, as *ADONAI* has promised you.

⁴ “After *ADONAI* your God has driven them out from before you, do not say in your heart, ‘It is because of my righteousness that *ADONAI* has brought me in to possess this land.’ It is because of the wickedness of

these nations that *ADONAI* is driving them out from before you. ⁵ It is not by your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you are going in to possess their land. Rather, because of the wickedness of these nations, *ADONAI* your God is driving them out from before you, and in order to keep the word *ADONAI* swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. ⁶ So you should understand that it is not because of your righteousness that *ADONAI* your God is giving you this good land to possess—for you are a stiff-necked people.

What Happened to the Tablets?

⁷ “Remember, never forget, how you provoked *ADONAI* your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you left the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against *ADONAI*. ⁸ At Horeb you provoked *ADONAI* to wrath, and *ADONAI* was angry with you—enough to destroy you. ⁹ When I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that *ADONAI* cut with you, I stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights; I did not eat bread or drink water. ¹⁰ *ADONAI* gave me the two tablets of stone written by the finger of God. Moreover, on them were all the words that *ADONAI* had spoken with you on the mountain from the midst of the fire, on the day of the assembly.

¹¹ “Now at the end of 40 days and 40 nights, *ADONAI* gave me the two tablets of stone—the tablets of the covenant. ¹² *ADONAI* said to me, ‘Get up! Go quickly down from here, for your people whom you brought out from Egypt have acted corruptly. They have quickly turned from the way I commanded them; they have made a molten image for themselves.’ ¹³ Furthermore *ADONAI* spoke to me saying, ‘I have seen this people, and it is indeed a stiff-necked people. ¹⁴ Leave Me alone, so that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under the heavens. Then I will make you into a nation mightier and greater than they.’

¹⁵ “So I turned and came down from the mountain while the mountain was burning with fire. Now the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. ¹⁶ When I looked, you had indeed sinned against *ADONAI* your God—you had made yourselves a metal calf. So quickly you had turned aside from the way *ADONAI* had commanded you! ¹⁷ So I took hold of the two tablets, threw them out of my two hands, and smashed them before your eyes.

¹⁸ “Then I fell down before *ADONAI* like the first time, for 40 days and 40 nights. I did not eat bread or drink water—because of all your sin that you committed, doing evil in *ADONAI*’s sight, provoking Him to anger. ¹⁹ For I was afraid of the fierce wrath and fury which *ADONAI* bore toward you—to destroy you. [†] But *ADONAI* listened to me that time also. ²⁰ *ADONAI* was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him, so I prayed for Aaron also at the same time. ²¹ I took your sin—the

calf you had made—and burned it in the fire. I crushed it, grinding it up so well that it was as fine as dust, and I threw its dust into the wadi flowing down from the mountain.

²² “Again at Taberah and Massah and Kibroth-hattaavah, you provoked *ADONAI* to wrath. ²³ When *ADONAI* sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, ‘Go up and possess the land I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of *ADONAI* your God and didn’t believe Him or listen to His voice. ²⁴ You have been rebellious against *ADONAI* from the day that I knew you.

²⁵ “So I threw myself down before *ADONAI* those 40 days and 40 nights, because *ADONAI* had said He would destroy you. ²⁶ I prayed to *ADONAI* and said, ‘O Lord, *ADONAI*, do not destroy Your people—Your inheritance that You have redeemed through Your greatness and brought out from Egypt with a mighty hand. ²⁷ Remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Pay no attention to the stubbornness of this people or to their wickedness or their sin. ²⁸ Otherwise the land from which You brought us out may say, ‘Because *ADONAI* was not able to bring them into the land that He spoke of to them, and because He hated them, He has brought them out to kill them in the wilderness.’ ²⁹ Yet they are Your people—Your inheritance that You brought out by Your great power and Your outstretched arm.’

Two New Tablets

¹⁰ “At that time *ADONAI* said to me, ‘Carve for yourself two tablets of stone like the first ones and come up to Me on the mountain. Make yourself an ark of wood. ² I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets that you smashed, and you are to put them in the ark.’

³ “So I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. ⁴ Like the first inscription, *ADONAI* wrote on the tablets the Ten Words He had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly, then gave them to me. ⁵ Then I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made—and there they are, just as *ADONAI* commanded me.

⁶ “(*Bnei-Yisrael* traveled from the wells of the sons of Jaakan to Moserah—there Aaron died and was buried, and his son Eleazar served as *kohen* in his place.

⁷ From there they journeyed to Gudgod, and from Gudgod to Jotbah—a land of wadis flowing with water.

⁸ At that time *ADONAI* set the tribe of Levi apart to carry the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI*, to stand before *ADONAI* to serve Him and to pronounce blessings in His Name—as is the case to this day. ⁹ Therefore Levi has no portion or inheritance with his brothers—*ADONAI* is his inheritance, just as *ADONAI* your God had promised about him.)

† cf. Heb. 12:21.

¹⁰“I stayed on the mountain like the first time—40 days and 40 nights. *ADONAI* listened to me that time also and was not willing to destroy you. ¹¹ *ADONAI* said to me, ‘Rise up, go, journey ahead of the people so that they may go in and possess the land that I swore to their fathers to give to them.’

¹²“So now, O Israel, what does *ADONAI* your God require of you, but to fear *ADONAI* your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve *ADONAI* your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³ to keep the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* and His statutes that I am commanding you today, for your own good? ¹⁴ Behold, to *ADONAI* your God belong the heavens and the highest of heavens, the earth and all that is in it. ¹⁵ Only on your fathers did *ADONAI* set His affection to love them, and He chose their descendants after them—you—from all the peoples, as is the case this day.

Circumcise Your Hearts

¹⁶“Circumcise the foreskin of your heart therefore, and do not be stiff-necked anymore. ¹⁷ For *ADONAI* your God is God of gods and Lord of lords †—the great, mighty and awesome God, who does not show partiality or take a bribe. ¹⁸ He enacts justice for the orphan and widow, and loves the outsider, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹ Therefore love the outsider, for you were outsiders in the land of Egypt. ²⁰ *ADONAI* your God you will fear—Him will you serve. To Him will you cling, and by His Name will you swear. ²¹ He is your praise and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your eyes have seen. ²² Your fathers went down to Egypt with 70 persons, and now *ADONAI* your God has made you like the stars of the heavens in number.

Love and Obey with All Your Heart

11 “Therefore you are to love *ADONAI* your God and keep His charge, His statutes, His ordinances and His *mitzvot* at all times. ² And you should know this day that it was not your children who knew or saw the discipline of *ADONAI* your God—His greatness, His mighty hand and His outstretched arm; ³ His signs and the deeds He did in the midst of Egypt to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to all his land; ⁴ and what He did to the army of Egypt, to its horses and chariots when He made the waters of the Sea of Reeds flow over them as they chased after you, and how *ADONAI* has destroyed them to this day; ⁵ what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place; ⁶ and what He did to Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab son of Reuben—how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households and tents and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel— ⁷ rather, it is your own eyes that have seen every mighty deed that *ADONAI* has done.

† cf. 1 Tim. 6:15.

⁸“Therefore you are to keep the whole *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong and go in and possess the land that you are crossing over to possess, ⁹ and so that you may prolong your days on the land that *ADONAI* swore to give to your fathers and to their descendants—a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁰“For the land you are going in to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you came. There you planted your seed and watered it by foot, like a vegetable garden. ¹¹ But the land you are crossing over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, drinking from the rain of the heavens it drinks in water. ¹² It is a land that *ADONAI* your God cares for—the eyes of *ADONAI* your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year up to the end of the year.

¹³“Now if you listen obediently to My *mitzvot* that I am commanding you today—to love *ADONAI* your God and to serve Him with all your heart and soul— ¹⁴ then I will give rain for your land in its season—the early rain and the late rain ††—so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil. ¹⁵ I will give grass in your field for your livestock, and you will eat and be satisfied. ¹⁶ Watch yourselves, so your heart is not deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them. ¹⁷ Then the anger of *ADONAI* will be kindled against you, so He will shut up the sky so that there will be no rain and the soil will not yield its produce. Then you will perish quickly from the good land *ADONAI* is giving you.

¹⁸“Therefore you are to set these words of Mine in your heart and in your soul. You are to bind them as a sign on your hand, and as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹ You are to teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. ²⁰ You are to write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, ²¹ so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied on the land *ADONAI* swore to give to your fathers, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

²²“For if you will diligently keep all this *mitzvah* that I am commanding you to do—to love *ADONAI* your God, to walk in all His ways and to cling to Him— ²³ then *ADONAI* will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves. ²⁴ Every place where the sole of your foot treads will be yours—from the wilderness to the Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the western sea will be your border. ²⁵ No one will be able to stand against you— *ADONAI* your God will put the fear and dread of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has promised you.

†† cf. Acts 14:17.

Parashat Re'eh

Blessing or Curse Set Before You

²⁶ “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse—²⁷ the blessing, if you listen to the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God that I am commanding you today,²⁸ but the curse, if you do not listen to the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God, but turn from the way I am commanding you today, to go after other gods you have not known.²⁹ Now when *ADONAI* your God brings you into the land you are going in to possess, you are to set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.³⁰ Are they not across the Jordan toward the west, in the land of the Canaanites who dwell in the Arabah—opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh?³¹ For you are about to cross over the Jordan to go in to possess the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you—you will possess it and dwell in it,³² and you will take care to do all the statutes and ordinances that I am setting before you today.

The Place He Chooses

12 “These are the statutes and ordinances that you are to make sure to do in the land that *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess—all the days that you live on the earth.² You must utterly destroy all the places where the nations that you will dispossess served their gods—on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.³ You are to tear down their altars, smash their pillars, burn their Asherah poles in the fire and cut down the carved images of their gods, and you are to obliterate their name from that place.

⁴ “You are not to act like this toward *ADONAI* your God.⁵ Rather you are to seek only the place *ADONAI* your God chooses from all your tribes to put His Name to dwell—there you will come.⁶ There you are to bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes, the offering of your hand, your vow and freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock.⁷ There you and your households will eat before *ADONAI* your God and rejoice in every undertaking of your hand, as *ADONAI* your God has blessed you.⁸ You will not do all the things as we are doing here today—everyone doing what is right in his own eyes.⁹ For you have not yet come to the resting place and the inheritance that *ADONAI* your God is giving you.¹⁰ But when you cross over the Jordan and settle in the land that *ADONAI* your God enables you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you, you will dwell in safety.

¹¹ “Then the place *ADONAI* your God chooses to make His Name dwell, there you are to bring all that I command you—your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes, the offering of your hand, and all your finest vow offerings that you vow to *ADONAI*.¹² Then

you will rejoice before *ADONAI* your God—you and your sons and daughters, your slaves and maids, and the Levite in your towns, for he has no portion or inheritance among you.¹³ Be careful that you do not offer your burnt offerings in any place you see.¹⁴ Rather do so only in the place *ADONAI* chooses in one of your tribes—there you are to offer your burnt offerings, and there you are to do all I am commanding you.

¹⁵ “However, you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates—whatever your soul’s desire, according to the blessing *ADONAI* your God has given you. Either the unclean or clean may eat of it, as they would a gazelle and or deer.¹⁶ But you are not to eat the blood—you are to pour it out on the ground like water.¹⁷ You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or new wine or oil, or the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vow offerings that you vow, or your freewill offerings, or the offering of your hand.¹⁸ Rather you are to eat them before *ADONAI* your God in the place *ADONAI* your God chooses—you, your son and daughter, your slave and maid, and the Levite within your gates—and you will rejoice before *ADONAI* your God in every undertaking of your hand.¹⁹ Be careful that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live on the earth.

²⁰ “When *ADONAI* your God enlarges your territory as He has promised you, and you say, ‘I want to eat meat,’ because your soul craves meat, then you may eat meat—all your soul’s desire.²¹ If the place *ADONAI* your God chooses to put His Name is too far from you, then you may slaughter any of your herd and flock that *ADONAI* has given you—as I have commanded you—and you may eat within your gates, all your soul’s desire.²² Just as the gazelle or hart is eaten, so you may eat it—the unclean and clean alike may eat it.²³ Only be sure that you do not eat the blood—for the blood is the life,[†] and you are not to eat the life with the meat.²⁴ You are not to eat it—you are to pour it out on the ground like water.²⁵ You are not to eat it, so that it may go well with you and your children after you, when you do what is right in *ADONAI*’s eyes.

²⁶ “Only the holy things and vow offerings that are yours are you to take and go to the place that *ADONAI* chooses.²⁷ You are to offer your burnt offerings—the flesh and the blood—on the altar of *ADONAI* your God. The blood of your sacrifices is to be poured out on the altar of *ADONAI* your God, but the meat you are to eat.²⁸ Take care and listen to all these words that I am commanding you, so that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the eyes of *ADONAI* your God.

²⁹ “When *ADONAI* your God cuts off before you the nations that you are going in to dispossess, when you have dispossessed them and settled in their land,³⁰ be careful not to be trapped into imitating them after they have been destroyed before you. Do not inquire about their gods, saying, ‘How do these nations serve

† cf. Acts 15:20.

their gods? I will do the same.’³¹ You are not to act like this toward *ADONAI* your God! For every abomination of *ADONAI*, which He hates, they have done to their gods—they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

Beware of False Prophets

13 (12:32) “Whatever I command you, you must take care to do—you are not to add to it or take away from it. †

² (1) “Suppose a prophet or a dreamer of dreams rises up among you and gives you a sign or wonder, ³ (2) and the sign or wonder he spoke to you comes true, while saying, ‘Let’s follow other gods’—that you have not known, and—‘Let’s serve them!’ ††⁴ (3) You must not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams—for *ADONAI* your God is testing you, to find out whether you love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁵ (4) *ADONAI* your God you will follow and Him you will fear. His *mitzvot* you will keep, to His voice you will listen, Him you will serve and to Him you will cling. ⁶ (5) That prophet or dreamer of dreams must be put to death! For he has spoken falsehood against *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to entice you from the way *ADONAI* your God commanded you to walk. So you will purge the evil from your midst. ‡

⁷ (6) “Suppose your brother—your mother’s son—or your son or daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your best friend of your own soul misleads you secretly, saying, ‘Let’s go and serve other gods’—that you and your fathers have not known, ⁸ (7) from among the gods of the peoples around you, near you or far off from you, from one end of the earth to the other. ⁹ (8) You are not to give in or listen to him, your eye is not to pity him, and you are not to spare or conceal him. ¹⁰ (9) Instead, you will surely put him to death. Your hand should be the first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. ¹¹ (10) You are to stone him with stones to death because he tried to entice you away from *ADONAI* your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery. ¹² (11) Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and never again will they do such an evil thing as this in your midst.

¹³ (12) “Suppose you hear it said in one of your cities, which *ADONAI* your God is giving you to dwell in, ¹⁴ (13) that worthless fellows †† have gone out from among you and enticed the inhabitants of their city, saying, ‘Let’s go and serve other gods’—that you have not known. ¹⁵ (14) Then you are to investigate, search out and inquire thoroughly. If indeed it is true and the matter certain that this abomination has been done in

your midst, ¹⁶ (15) you will surely strike down the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying it and all that is in it and its livestock with the sword. ¹⁷ (16) You are to gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and you are to burn with fire the city and all its plunder—all of it to *ADONAI* your God. It will be a ruin forever—it shall never be built again. ¹⁸ (17) Nothing from the ban should cling to your hand, so that *ADONAI* may turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, and have compassion on you and multiply you, just as He swore to your fathers— ¹⁹ (18) when you listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, keeping all His *mitzvot* that I am commanding you today, doing what is right in the eyes of *ADONAI* your God.

Clean Foods for a Holy People

14 “You are the children of *ADONAI* your God. You are not to cut yourselves or shave your forehead for the dead. ² For you are a holy people to *ADONAI* your God—from all the peoples on the face of the earth, *ADONAI* has chosen you to be His treasured people. ³ You are not to eat any detestable thing. ⁴ These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, ⁵ the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain sheep. ⁶ Among the animals, you may eat any animal that splits the hoof—the hoof completely split in two—and chews the cud. ⁷ Yet of those that chew the cud or have a split hoof, you are not to eat the camel, the hare, and the rabbit—because they chew the cud but do not split the hoof, they are unclean to you. ⁸ The pig, because it splits the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you—you are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses. ⁹ Of all that are in the waters, these you may eat: whatever has fins and scales you may eat, ¹⁰ but whatever does not have fins and scales you are not to eat—it is unclean to you. ¹¹ You may eat all clean birds, ¹² but these are the ones you are not to eat: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, ¹³ the red kite, the black kite, and any bird of prey of that kind, ¹⁴ every raven of any kind, ¹⁵ the ostrich, the owl, the seagull, a hawk of any kind, ¹⁶ the little owl, the great owl, the white owl, ¹⁷ the pelican, the Egyptian vulture, the cormorant, ¹⁸ the stork, a heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat. ¹⁹ All winged insects are unclean to you—they are not to be eaten. ²⁰ You may eat any clean bird. ²¹ You are not to eat anything that dies of itself. You may give it to the outsider within your gates so that he may eat it or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a holy people to *ADONAI* your God. You are not to boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

Tithe and Remember the Levite

²² “You will surely set aside a tenth of all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. ²³ You are to eat the tithe of your grain, your new wine,

† Verse 1 is 12:31 in Christian translations; cf. Rev. 22:18-19.
 †† cf. 2 Pet. 2:1-2. ‡ cf. 1 Cor. 5:13. †† Lit. sons of Belial
 bnei-bliya'al bli-ya'al, without value honor

your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, before *ADONAI* your God in the place He chooses to make His Name dwell, so that you may learn to fear *ADONAI* your God always. ²⁴ Now suppose the way is too long for you, for you cannot carry the tithe because the place *ADONAI* your God chooses to set His Name is too far from you. When *ADONAI* your God blesses you, ²⁵ then you are to exchange the tithe for silver, bind up the silver in your hand, and go to the place that *ADONAI* your God chooses. ²⁶ You may spend the money for whatever your soul desires—cattle, sheep, wine, strong drink, or whatever your soul asks of you. Then you will eat there before *ADONAI* your God and rejoice—you and your household. ²⁷ But you are not to neglect the Levite within your gates, for he has no portion or inheritance with you. ²⁸ At the end of every three years, you are to bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year and store it within your gates. ²⁹ Then the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, along with the outsider, the orphan and the widow within your gates, will come and eat and be satisfied, so that *ADONAI* your God may bless you in all the work of your hand that you do.

Shmittah : Cancellation of Debts

15 “At the end of every seven years you are to cancel debts. ² This is how you are to cancel debts: every creditor is to release what he has loaned to his neighbor. He must not force his neighbor or his brother to repay, for *ADONAI*’s debt cancellation has been proclaimed. ³ A foreigner you may force, but your hand is to release whatever your brother owes you. ⁴ “However, there should be no poor among you, for *ADONAI* will surely bless you in the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess. ⁵ If only you would carefully listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, being careful to do all these *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today! ⁶ For *ADONAI* your God will bless you as He promised you. So you will lend to many nations, but not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

⁷ “If there is a poor man among you—any of your brothers within any of your gates in your land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you—you are not to harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother. ⁸ Rather, you must surely open your hand to him and you must surely lend him enough for his need—whatever he is lacking. ⁹ Watch yourself, so there is no unworthy thing in your heart saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of cancelling debts, is near,’ and your eye is evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing. Then he may call out to *ADONAI* against you, and it will be a sin upon you. ¹⁰ You must surely give to him, and your heart is not to be grieved when you give to him—for because of this thing *ADONAI* your God will bless you in all your work and in every undertaking of your hand.

¹¹ “For there will never cease to be poor people in the land. Therefore I am commanding you, saying, ‘You must surely open your hand to your brother—to your needy and poor in your land.’

¹² “If your fellow Hebrew—a man or woman—is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you are to set him free. ¹³ When you set him free, you are not to send him away empty-handed. ¹⁴ You are to surely provide for him from your flock and threshing floor and winepress. As *ADONAI* your God has blessed you, you are to give to him. ¹⁵ You will remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and *ADONAI* your God redeemed you; therefore I am commanding you this thing today.

¹⁶ “Now if he tells you, ‘I will not go away from you’—because he loves you and your household since he is well off with you— ¹⁷ then you are to take an awl and put it through his ear to the door, and he will be your servant forever. And to your female slave you are to do the same. ¹⁸ It should not seem hard to you when you set him free from you, for he has served you six years—double the value of a hired worker. So *ADONAI* your God will bless you in all that you do.

¹⁹ “All the firstborn males that are born in your herd and your flock you are to consecrate to *ADONAI* your God. You are to do no work with the firstborn of your herd or shear the firstborn of your flock. ²⁰ You are to eat it before *ADONAI* your God year after year in the place *ADONAI* chooses—you and your household. ²¹ But if it has any blemish—if it is lame or blind or has any serious blemish—you are not to sacrifice it to *ADONAI* your God. ²² You are to eat it within your gates, the unclean and the clean together, just as they eat the gazelle or deer. ²³ Only its blood you are not to eat—you must pour it out on the ground like water.

Three Harvest Festivals

16 “Observe the month of Aviv and keep the Passover to *ADONAI* your God, for in the month of Aviv [†] *ADONAI* your God brought you out from Egypt by night. ² You are to sacrifice the Passover offering to *ADONAI* your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place *ADONAI* chooses to make His Name dwell. ³ You are not to eat *hametz* with it. For seven days you are to eat *matzot* with it, the bread of affliction—for you came out from the land of Egypt in haste. Do this so that all the days of your life you will remember the day when you came out from the land of Egypt. ⁴ No *hametz* should be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, and none of the meat you sacrifice on the evening of the first day may be left overnight until the morning. ⁵ You may not sacrifice the Passover offering within any of your gates that *ADONAI* your God is giving you. ⁶ Rather, at the place *ADONAI* your God chooses to make His Name dwell, there you will sacrifice the Passover offering in the evening at sunset—the time of your coming out from Egypt. ⁷ You are

† Verse 7 is 15:8 in Christian translations; cf. Rev. 24:17.

†† cf. Matt. 26:17.

to cook and eat it at the place *ADONAI* your God chooses, then you will turn around in the morning and journey home. ⁸ For six days you are to eat *matzot*. On the seventh day there is to be a solemn gathering for *ADONAI* your God—on it you are to do no work.

⁹ “Seven weeks you are to count for yourself—from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain you will begin to count seven weeks. ¹⁰ Then you will keep the Feast of *Shavuot* [†] to *ADONAI* your God with a measure of a freewill offering from your hand, which you are to give according to how *ADONAI* your God blesses you. ¹¹ So you will rejoice before *ADONAI* your God in the place *ADONAI* your God chooses to make His Name dwell—you, your son and daughter, slave and maid, Levite and outsider, orphan and widow in your midst. ¹² You will remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you are to take care and do these statutes.

¹³ “You are to keep the Feast of *Sukkot* for seven days, ^{††} after gathering in the produce from your threshing floor and winepress. ¹⁴ So you will rejoice in your feast—you, your son and daughter, slave and maid, Levite and outsider, orphan and widow within your gates. ¹⁵ Seven days you will feast to *ADONAI* your God in the place He chooses, because *ADONAI* your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hand, and you will be completely filled with joy. ¹⁶ Three times a year all your males are to appear before *ADONAI* your God in the place He chooses—at the Feast of *Matzot*, the Feast of *Shavuot*, and the Feast of *Sukkot*. No one should appear before *ADONAI* empty-handed— ¹⁷ the gift of each man’s hand according to the blessing *ADONAI* your God has given you.

Parashat Shoftim

Judges Appointed

¹⁸ “Judges and officers you are to appoint within all your gates that *ADONAI* your God is giving you, according to your tribes; and they are to judge the people with righteous judgment. ¹⁹ You are not to twist justice—you must not show partiality or take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and distorts the words of the righteous. ²⁰ Justice, justice you must pursue, so that you may live and possess the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you. ²¹ You are not to plant for yourself an *Asherah* pole of any kind of wood beside the altar of *ADONAI* your God that you make for yourself. ²² Nor are you to set up a pillar for yourself—*ADONAI* your God hates this.

Investigations and Witnesses

17 “You are not to sacrifice to *ADONAI* your God a bull or a sheep that has a defect or anything bad—for that would be an abomination to *ADONAI*

your God. ² Suppose there is found in your midst—within one of your gates that *ADONAI* your God is giving you—a man or woman who does what is evil in the eyes of *ADONAI* your God by transgressing His covenant. ³ This person goes and serves other gods and worships them—the sun or moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded. ⁴ It is told to you and you have heard about it, and you investigate thoroughly and indeed it is true and the thing certain—this abomination has been done in Israel. ⁵ Then you are to bring out to your gates that man or woman who has done this evil thing, and stone that man or woman with stones to death. ⁶ By the word of two or three witnesses, [‡] the one who is to die is to be put to death. No one is to be put to death by the word of one witness. ⁷ The hand of the witness is to be first to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you are to purge the evil from your midst.

⁸ “Suppose a matter arises that is too hard for you to judge—over bloodshed, legal claims or assault—matters of controversy within your gates. Then you should go up to the place *ADONAI* your God chooses, ⁹ and come to the Levitical *kohanim* and the judge in charge at that time. And you will inquire, and they will tell you the sentence of judgment. ¹⁰ You are to act according to the sentence they tell you from that place *ADONAI* chooses, and take care to do all that they instruct you. ¹¹ You are to act according to the instruction they teach you and the judgment they tell you—you must not turn aside from the sentence they tell you, to the right or to the left. ¹² The man who acts presumptuously by not listening to the *kohen* who stands to serve there before *ADONAI* your God, or to the judge, that man must die. So you are to purge the evil from Israel. ¹³ Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and not act presumptuously again.

Torah for Kings

¹⁴ “When you come to the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you, possess it and dwell in it, and you say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations around me,’ ¹⁵ you will indeed set over yourselves a king, whom *ADONAI* your God chooses. One from among your brothers will be appointed as king over you—you may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. ¹⁶ Only he should not multiply horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to multiply horses, because *ADONAI* has said to you, “You must never go back that way again.” ¹⁷ Nor should he multiply wives for himself, so that his heart does not turn aside, nor multiply much silver and gold for himself.

¹⁸ “Now when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself a copy of this *Torah* on a scroll, from what is before the Levitical *kohanim*. ¹⁹ It will remain with him, and he will read in it all the days of his life, in order to learn to fear *ADONAI* his God and

[†] cf. Acts 2:1. ^{††} cf. John 7:2.

[‡] cf. 2 Cor. 13:1; Heb. 10:28.

keep all the words of this *Torah* and these statutes.
²⁰ Then his heart will not be exalted above his brothers, and he will not turn from the commandment to the right or to the left—so that he may prolong his days in his kingship, he and his sons, in the midst of Israel.

18 “The Levitical *kohanim*, all the tribe of Levi, are to have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They are to eat the offerings made to *ADONAI* by fire as His inheritance. ¹² They will have no inheritance among their brothers—*ADONAI* is their inheritance, just as He promised them. ³ So this will be the share due to the *kohanim* from the people—from those who offer a sacrifice, whether a bull or sheep, they are to give the *kohen* the shoulder, two cheeks, and the stomach. ⁴ The firstfruits of your grain, of your new wine, of your oil, and the first fleece of your sheep, you are to give him. ⁵ For *ADONAI* your God has chosen him from all your tribes to stand and serve in the Name of *ADONAI*—him and his sons forever.

⁶ “Suppose a Levite comes from one of your towns, wherever he is living in all of Israel, and he comes whenever his soul desires to the place *ADONAI* chooses, ⁷ and serves in the Name of *ADONAI* his God like all his fellow Levites who stand there before *ADONAI*. ⁸ They are to eat equal portions, regardless of their fathers’ goods.

Occultism Loathsome to *ADONAI*

⁹ “When you enter the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you, you are not to learn to do the abominations of those nations. ¹⁰ There must not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire, or a fortune-teller, soothsayer, omen reader, or sorcerer, ¹¹ or one who casts spells, or a medium, a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. ¹² For whoever does these things is an abomination to *ADONAI*, and because of these abominations *ADONAI* your God is driving them out from before you. ¹³ You are to be blameless before *ADONAI* your God.

¹⁴ “For these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to soothsayers and fortune-tellers, but as for you, *ADONAI* your God will not allow you to do so.

A Prophet is Promised

¹⁵ “*ADONAI* your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst—from your brothers. To him you must listen. ¹⁶ This is just what you asked of *ADONAI* your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly when saying, ‘I cannot continue to hear the voice of *ADONAI* my God or see this great fire any more, or I will die.’

¹⁷ “*ADONAI* said to me, ‘They have done well in what they have spoken. ¹⁸ I will raise up a prophet like you for them from among their brothers. I will put My words in his mouth, and he will speak to them all that I

command him. ¹⁹ Now whoever does not listen to My words that this prophet speaks in My Name, I Myself will call him to account. ²⁰ But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My Name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods—that prophet will die.’

²¹ “Now should you say in your heart, ‘How would we recognize the word that *ADONAI* has not spoken?’

²² When a prophet speaks in *ADONAI*’s Name and the word does not happen or come true, that is a word that *ADONAI* has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously—do not be afraid of him.

Cities of Refuge

19 “When *ADONAI* your God cuts off the nations whose land *ADONAI* your God is giving you, and you dispossess them and dwell in their cities and houses, ² you are to set apart three cities for yourself within the land He is giving you to possess. ³ You are to prepare the way for yourself and divide into three parts the borders of your land that *ADONAI* your God enables you to inherit, so that anyone who kills may flee there. ⁴ Now this is the case of the one who kills, who may flee there and live—whoever kills his neighbor unintentionally and did not hate him in the past—⁵ as when someone goes into the forest with his neighbor to chop wood, and his hand takes a swing with the axe to cut down the tree, and the iron flies off the wood and hits his neighbor so that he dies. He may flee to one of these cities and live. ⁶ Otherwise if the way is long, the avenger of the blood, while his heart is hot, may chase the manslayer, catch up to him and strike him dead. Yet no death sentence is on him, since he did not hate him in the past. ⁷ Therefore I am commanding you—set apart three cities for yourself.

⁸ “Suppose *ADONAI* your God enlarges your territory, as He has sworn to your fathers, and He gives you all the land that He promised to give to your fathers—⁹ when you take care to do all this *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today, to love *ADONAI* your God and to always walk in His ways. Then you are to add three more cities for yourself, besides these three. ¹⁰ Then innocent blood will not be shed within your land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance, and there would be blood upon you.

¹¹ “But suppose someone hates his neighbor, waits in hiding for him, rises up against him, strikes him dead, then flees to one of these cities. ¹² Then the elders of his hometown should send and take him from there and hand him over to the avenger of blood, to die. ¹³ Your eye should not pity him, but you must purge the innocent blood from Israel, so that it may go well with you.

¹⁴ “You must not move your neighbor’s boundary marker that the first generations marked out, in the inheritance you will receive in the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you to possess.

† cf. 1 Cor. 9:13. †† cf. John 1:45; Acts 7:37.

‡ cf. John 8:28; 12:49-50; 17:8. †† cf. Acts 3:23; Heb. 12:25.

¹⁵ “A single witness shall not rise up against a person for any offense or sin that he commits. By the word of two or three witnesses is a case to be established. ¹⁶ Suppose a hostile witness rises up against someone to accuse him of wrongdoing. ¹⁷ Then both people who have the dispute will stand before *ADONAI*, before the *kohanim* and judges in charge at that time. ¹⁸ The judges are to investigate thoroughly, and if indeed the witness is a false witness and has testified falsely against his brother, ¹⁹ then you are to do to him just as he had plotted to do to his brother. So you will purge the evil from your midst. ²⁰ Those who remain will hear and be afraid, and they will no longer do such an evil thing as this in your midst. ²¹ Your eye must not show pity—life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Confidence in Battle

20 “When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horse and chariot—a people more numerous than you—do not be afraid of them. For *ADONAI* your God, the One who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you. ² When you draw near to the battle, the *kohen* will come forward and speak to the people. ³ He will say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel, you are drawing near today to the battle against your enemies. Don’t be fainthearted! Don’t fear or panic or tremble because of them. ⁴ For *ADONAI* your God is the One who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies to save you.’

⁵ “The officers are to speak to the troops saying, ‘What man has built a new house but has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house—otherwise he might die in the battle and another man would dedicate it. ⁶ What man has planted a vineyard but has not put it to use? Let him go back to his house—otherwise he might die in the battle and another man would begin to use it. ⁷ What man has become engaged to a woman but has not married her? Let him go back to his house—otherwise he might die in the battle and another man would marry her.’ ⁸ The officers will speak further to the troops and say, ‘What man is afraid and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house—so he does not weaken his brothers’ heart like his own.’ ⁹ Then when the officers have finished speaking to the troops, they should appoint army commanders at the head of the troops.

¹⁰ “When you go near a city to fight against it, call out *shalom* to it. ¹¹ Now if it answers you *shalom* and opens up to you, then all the people found in it will serve you as forced laborers. ¹² If it does not make peace with you but makes war against you, then lay siege against that city. ¹³ When *ADONAI* your God hands it over to you, you are to strike all its males with the sword. ¹⁴ Only the women, children, livestock and all that is in the city—all its spoil—may you take as plunder for yourself. So you may consume your ene-

mies’ spoil, which *ADONAI* your God has given you.

¹⁵ Thus you will do to all the cities that are very distant from you, which are not among the towns of these nations nearby. ¹⁶ However, only from the cities of these peoples, which *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance, you must not let anything that breathes live. ¹⁷ You must utterly destroy them—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—just as *ADONAI* your God has commanded you. ¹⁸ You are to do this so they will not teach you to do all the abominations as they have done for their gods, and so you would sin against *ADONAI* your God.

¹⁹ “When you lay siege to a city for a long time, making war against it to capture it, you are not to destroy its trees by swinging an axe at them. For from them you may eat, so you shall not chop them down. For is the tree of the field human, that it should enter the siege before you? ²⁰ You may destroy and chop down only the trees that you know are not trees for food, so that you may build siege equipment against the city that is making war with you until its downfall.

Purging Innocent Blood

21 “Suppose a slain person is found fallen in a field, on the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you to possess—who struck him is unknown. ² Then your elders and judges must come out and measure the distance to the towns that are around the slain one. ³ Now the town nearest to the slain one—the elders of that city are to take from the herd a heifer that has not been used for work or pulled a yoke. ⁴ Then the elders of that city are to bring the heifer down to a flowing wadi that has not been plowed or sown, and break the heifer’s neck there in the wadi. ⁵ The *kohanim*, the sons of Levi, will come forward—for *ADONAI* your God has chosen them to serve Him and pronounce blessings in His Name, and by their mouth every dispute and assault is to be settled. ⁶ All the elders of that city nearest to the slain one will wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the wadi. ⁷ Then they will answer and say, ‘Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see. ⁸ Grant atonement for Your people Israel whom You have redeemed, *ADONAI*, and do not put innocent blood on Your people Israel.’ Then atonement will be granted to them for the blood. ⁹ So you will purge the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, when you do what is right in *ADONAI*’s sight.

Parashat Ki Tetzei

When You Go Out

¹⁰ “When you go out to war against your enemies, and *ADONAI* your God hands them over to you and you take them captive, ¹¹ suppose you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and you desire her and

† cf. Matt. 18:16; John 8:17.

would take her as a wife for yourself. ¹² Then you are to bring her into your house, and she must shave her head, trim her nails, ¹³ and remove her captive's clothing, then sit in your house and weep for her father and mother a full month. After that, you may go to her and become her husband and she will be your wife. ¹⁴ Now if you are not pleased with her, then you may send her off wherever she wishes. But you must certainly not sell her for silver—you may not treat her as merchandise, since you have humiliated her.

¹⁵ "Suppose a man has two wives—the one loved and the other unloved—and both the loved and the unloved bear him sons. But it happens that the first-born son belongs to the unloved wife. ¹⁶ Now on the day he lets his sons inherit what he has, he must not treat the loved one's son as firstborn, in place of the unloved one's son, who is the firstborn. ¹⁷ Rather, he must acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the hated one, by giving him a double portion of all that he has. For he is the first of his vigor—the right of the first-born is his.

¹⁸ "Suppose a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not listen to the voice of his father or mother. They discipline him, but he does not listen to them. ¹⁹ Then his father and mother are to grab hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city—to the gate of his place. ²⁰ They will say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious—he does not listen to our voice. He is a glutton and a drunkard.' ²¹ Then all the men of his city are to stone him with stones to death. So you will purge the evil from your midst—and all Israel will hear and be afraid.

Hung on a Tree

²² "Suppose a man is guilty of a sin with a death sentence and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree. ²³ His body is not to remain all night on the tree—instead you must certainly bury him the same day, for anyone hanged is a curse of God. [†] You must not defile your land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Love in Practice

22 "You are not to watch your brother's ox or sheep going astray and ignore them ^{††}—you must certainly bring them back to your brother. ² If your brother is not near you or if you do not know him, then you should bring it into your house and it will remain with you until your brother comes searching for it and you return it to him. ³ You are to do the same with his donkey or his coat or anything lost by your brother, that may be lost by him and you find—you may not ignore them. ⁴ You must not watch your brother's donkey or ox fall down on the road and ignore it—you must certainly help him lift it up again.

⁵ "A man's apparel is not to be on a woman, nor is a man to wear woman's clothing—for whoever does these things is detestable to *ADONAI* your God.

⁶ "If there happens to be a bird's nest in front of you along the road, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the hen sitting on the young or on the eggs, you are not to take the hen with the young. ⁷ You must certainly let the hen go, but the young you may take for yourself so that it may go well with you and you may prolong your days.

⁸ "When you build a new house, you are to make a guardrail for your roof, so that you do not bring the guilt of blood on your house if anyone falls from it.

⁹ "You are not to plant your vineyard with two kinds of seed, or else the whole harvest will be forfeited [‡]—both the seed you plant and the produce of the vineyard. ¹⁰ You are not to plow with an ox and a donkey together. ¹¹ You are not to wear a woven mixture ^{††}, wool and linen together. ¹² You are to make for yourself twisted threads ^{‡‡} on the four corners of your garment in which you cover yourself.

¹³ "Suppose a man takes a wife and goes to her and then dislikes her, ¹⁴ accuses her of shameful things and gives her a bad reputation by saying, 'I took this woman, but when I came near her, I didn't find her virginity.' ¹⁵ Then the father of the young woman is to take her and her mother is to bring out the signs of the young woman's virginity to the city elders at the gate. ¹⁶ The young lady's father is to tell the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as a wife, but he hates her. ¹⁷ Indeed, he has accused her of shameful things, saying, "I didn't find your daughter's virginity." Yet these are the signs of my daughter's virginity.' They are to spread the wedding cloth before the elders of the city. ¹⁸ The elders of that city are to take the man and punish him. ¹⁹ Then they are to fine him 100 pieces of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought an evil name on a virgin of Israel. Then she is to be his wife—he may not send her away all his days.

²⁰ "But if this thing is true—that the signs of virginity were not found in the young lady— ²¹ then they are to bring the young woman out to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city are to stone her with stones to death, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel, to behave like a prostitute in her father's house. So you are to purge the evil from your midst.

²² "Suppose a man is found lying with a married woman. Then both of them are to die—the man who lay with the woman and the woman. So you are to purge the evil from Israel.

²³ "Suppose there is a young woman who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her. ²⁴ Then you are to bring them

[‡] *Lit. set apart*

off-limits ^{††} *Hebrew shaat-nez*

^{‡‡} *Hebrew g'dilim*

[†] *cf. John 19:31; Gal. 3:13.* ^{††} *Lit. hide yourself from them*

both out to the gate of that city and stone them with stones to death—the young woman because she did not cry out in the town, and the man because he humiliated his neighbor's wife. So you are to purge the evil from your midst.

²⁵ “But if the man finds the engaged woman in the field, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her is to die. ²⁶ But to the young woman you are to do nothing—there is no sin in the young woman deserving of death. For this matter is the same as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him— ²⁷ for he found her in the field, the engaged woman cried out, and there was no one to save her.

²⁸ “Suppose a man finds a young virgin who is not engaged, grabs her and lies with her, and they are discovered. ²⁹ Then the man who lay with her is to give to the young woman's father 50 pieces of silver, and she is to be his wife, since he has humiliated her—he may not send her away all his days.

Persons Excluded from the Community

23 (22:30) “A man is not to take his father's wife—he is not to expose his father's nakedness.

² (1) “No one with crushed or cut-off genitals is to enter the community of *ADONAI*. ³ (2) No one born of forbidden relations † is to enter the community of *ADONAI*—even to the tenth generation none of his descendants are to enter the community of *ADONAI*. ⁴ (3) No Ammonite or Moabite is to enter the community of *ADONAI*—even to the tenth generation none belonging to them is to enter the community of *ADONAI* forever— ⁵ (4) because they did not meet you with bread and water on the way when you came out from Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam son of Beor from Petor of Aram-naharaim to curse you. ⁶ (5) But *ADONAI* your God refused to listen to Balaam, and *ADONAI* your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because He loves you. ⁷ (6) You are never to seek their *shalom* or welfare all your days.

⁸ (7) “You are not to detest an Edomite, for he is your brother. You are not to detest an Egyptian, for you were an outsider in his land. ⁹ (8) The children born to them—the third generation—may enter the community of *ADONAI*.

¹⁰ (9) “When you go out as an army camp against your enemies, you are to guard yourself from every evil thing. ¹¹ (10) If there is among you a man who is not clean from a nighttime emission, he is to go outside the camp—he may not reenter the camp. ¹² (11) Now toward evening he is to bathe in water, and when the sun sets, he may reenter the camp. ¹³ (12) There is to be a place at hand for you outside the camp, and you are to go there outside. ¹⁴ (13) You are to have a shovel for yourself among your weapons. Now when you sit down outside, you are to dig with it and turn

and cover up what comes out of you. ¹⁵ (14) For *ADONAI* your God walks in the midst of your camp, to rescue you and to give your enemies over to you. Therefore your camp must be holy, so that He does not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you.

Slavery, Cult Prostitutes

¹⁶ (15) “You are not to hand over to his master a slave who seeks refuge with you from his master. ¹⁷ (16) Let him dwell with you in your midst, in the place he chooses within one of your town gates—the one that is good for him. You are not to mistreat him.

¹⁸ (17) “None of the daughters of Israel is to be a cult prostitute, nor any of the sons of Israel a cult prostitute. ¹⁹ (18) You are not to bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a dog into the House of *ADONAI* your God for any vow, for both of these are detestable to *ADONAI* your God.

Usury, Vows

²⁰ (19) “You are not to charge excessive interest to your brother—on money, food or anything that may be loaned for interest. ²¹ (20) To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you are not to charge interest, so that *ADONAI* your God may bless you in every undertaking of your hand on the land you are going in to possess.

²² (21) “When you make a vow to *ADONAI* your God, you are not to delay to make good on it—for *ADONAI* your God will certainly require it of you, and you would have sin on you. ²³ (22) But if you refrain from making a vow, you would not have sin on you. ²⁴ (23) Whatever comes out of your lips you are to take care to do, since you have vowed to *ADONAI* your God a freewill offering that you have promised with your mouth.

²⁵ (24) “When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes; but you are not to put any in your basket. ²⁶ (25) When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand; but you are not to swing a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

Marriage and Divorce

24 “Suppose a man takes a wife and marries her. Now if she doesn't find favor in his eyes because he has found something indecent in her, he is to write her a certificate of divorce, hand it to her and send her out from his house. ² When she leaves his house, she may go and become another man's wife. ³ Now suppose the second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, and he hands it to her and she leaves his house—or suppose the second husband who took her to be his wife dies. ⁴ Then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled—for that would be detestable before *ADONAI*. You are not to

† Hebrew *mamzer*

bring guilt on the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance.

⁵“When a man takes a new wife, he is not to go out with the army or have any duty passed over to him. He is to be free at home for one year and make his wife happy.

Preserving Life and Property

⁶“No one is to take a pair of millstones or the upper one as collateral, for this would be taking a livelihood as collateral.

⁷“If a man is caught kidnapping any of his brothers from *Bnei-Yisrael*, whether he treats him like property or sells him, then that kidnapper must die. So you are to purge the evil from your midst.

⁸“Take care in the plague of *tzara’at*—be very careful to do all that the Levitical *kohanim* instruct you, just as I commanded them, so you are to take care to do.

⁹Remember what *ADONAI* your God did to Miriam, along the way when you were coming out from Egypt.

Relief for the Poor

¹⁰“When you make any kind of loan to your neighbor, you are not to go into his house to get his pledge.

¹¹You are to stand outside, and the man to whom you are making the loan is to bring the pledge outside to you. ¹²If he is a poor man, you are not to sleep with his pledge †. ¹³You must certainly restore the pledge to him when the sun sets, so that he may sleep in his coat and bless you—and it is to be righteousness for you before *ADONAI* your God.

¹⁴“You are not to oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is from your brothers or the outsiders in your land within your town gates.

¹⁵On that day you are to give him his wages—the sun is not to set on it—for he is poor and sets his heart on it. Otherwise he will cry out against you to *ADONAI*, and you will have sin on you.

¹⁶“Fathers are not to be put to death for children, and children are not to be put to death for fathers—each one is to be put to death for his own sin.

¹⁷You are not to twist justice for an outsider or orphan, and you are not to take as collateral a widow’s clothing. ¹⁸But you are to remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and *ADONAI* your God redeemed you from there. Therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

¹⁹“When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you are not to turn back to get it. It is for the outsider, for the orphan and for the widow—in order that *ADONAI* your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰When you beat your olive tree, you are not to search through the branches afterward. It is for the outsider, for the orphan and for the widow. ²¹When you harvest your vineyard, you are not to pick over it afterward. It is for

† cf. *Exod. 22:25-26(26-27)*.

the outsider, for the orphan and for the widow. ²²You are to remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt. Therefore I am commanding you to do this thing.

Justice from the Court

²⁵“Suppose there is a dispute between people and they approach the court, the judges hear their case, and declare one righteous and the other guilty. ²Now if the guilty one deserves to be flogged, the judge is to make him lie down and be flogged before him, with the number of lashes in proportion to his guilt. ³He may strike him 40 times but no more. Otherwise he would beat him with too many a wound beyond these, and your brother would be degraded in your eyes.

⁴“You are not to muzzle the ox while it is threshing.

⁵“If brothers dwell together and one of them dies and has no son, the dead man’s wife is not to be married outside to a stranger. Her husband’s brother is to go to her and take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law. ⁶Now the firstborn that she bears is to carry on the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷But if the man does not want to take his brother’s widow, his brother’s widow is to go to the elders at the gate and say, ‘My brother-in-law refuses to carry on his brother’s name in Israel—he is unwilling to perform a brother-in-law’s duty for me.’ ⁸Then the elders of his town are to summon him and speak to him. And if he stands firm and says, ‘I do not desire to take her,’ ⁹then his brother’s widow is to come to him in the sight of the elders, pull his sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and reply, ‘So will it be done to the man who does not build up his brother’s house.’ ¹⁰Then his name is to be called in Israel ‘the house of the pulled-off sandal.’

¹¹“Suppose people fight with one another, a man and his brother, and the wife of the one approaches to rescue her husband from the hand of the one hitting him; and she puts out her hand and grabs him by his genitals. ¹²Then you are to cut off her hand—your eye will show no pity.

¹³“You are not to have stones of different weights in your bag—large and small. ¹⁴You are not to have in your house ephahs of different measures—large and small. ¹⁵You must have a full and honest weight and a full and honest measure, so that your days may be long on the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you.

¹⁶For all who do these things, all who do injustice, are detestable to *ADONAI* your God.

Beware, Blot Out Amalek

¹⁷“Remember what Amalek did to you along the way as you came out from Egypt— ¹⁸how he happened upon you along the way and attacked those among you in the rear, all the stragglers behind you, when you

were tired and weary—he did not fear God. ¹⁹ Now when *ADONAI* your God grants you rest from all the enemies surrounding you in the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you are to blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens. Do not forget!

Parashat Ki Tavo

Firstfruits and Tithes

26 “Now when you enter the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, ² you are to take some of the first of all the produce of the soil, which you gather from your land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you, put it in a basket and go to the place *ADONAI* your God chooses to make His Name dwell. ³ You are to go to the *kohen* in charge in those days and say to him, ‘I declare today to *ADONAI* your God, that I have entered into the land *ADONAI* swore to our fathers to give us.’ ⁴ The *kohen* is to take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of *ADONAI* your God.

⁵ “Then you are to respond before *ADONAI* your God, ‘My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down to Egypt and lived there as an outsider, few in number. But there he became a great nation—mighty and numerous. ⁶ The Egyptians treated us badly, afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us. ⁷ Then we cried out to *ADONAI*, God of our fathers, and *ADONAI* listened to our voice and saw our affliction, our toil and our oppression. ⁸ Then *ADONAI* brought us out from Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. ⁹ He brought us to this place and gave us this land—a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰ So now, look! I have brought the first of the fruits of the soil that You have given me, *ADONAI*.’ Then you are to set it down before *ADONAI* your God and worship before *ADONAI* your God. ¹¹ You will rejoice in all the good that *ADONAI* your God has given to you and to your house—you, the Levite, and the outsider in your midst.

¹² “When you finish tithing the full tenth of your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you are to give it to the Levite, to the outsider, to the orphan and to the widow, so that they may eat within your town gates and be satisfied. ¹³ Then you are to say before *ADONAI* your God, ‘I have removed the holy tithe from my house and also have given it to the Levite and to the outsider, to the orphan and to the widow, according to all Your *mitzvah* that You have commanded me. I have not transgressed or forgotten any of Your *mitzvot*. ¹⁴ I have not eaten from the tithe in my mourning, or removed any of it while unclean, or given any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the voice of *ADONAI* my God; I have done all just as You commanded me. ¹⁵ Look down from Your holy dwelling place, from the heavens and bless Your people Israel and the

soil You have given us, as You swore to our fathers—a land flowing with milk and honey.’

Affirming the Covenant

¹⁶ “This day *ADONAI* your God is commanding you to do these statutes and ordinances—so you are to take care and do them with all your heart and with all your soul. ¹⁷ Today you have affirmed *ADONAI* as your God, that you will walk in His ways, keep His statutes, *mitzvot* and ordinances, and listen to His voice. ¹⁸ Now today *ADONAI* has affirmed you as His treasured people, as He promised you; that you are to keep all His *mitzvot*; ¹⁹ that He will set you high above all the nations He has made, for praise, fame and honor; and that you are to be a holy people to *ADONAI* your God, as He has promised.”

27 Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, “Keep the whole *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today. ² Now on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you, you are to set up large stones for yourself and coat them with plaster. ³ Then you are to write on them all the words of this *Torah* when you cross over—so that you may enter the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey just as *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers, promised you. ⁴ Now when you cross over the Jordan, you are to set up these stones about which I am commanding you today on Mount Ebal, and coat them with plaster. ⁵ There also you will build an altar to *ADONAI* your God, an altar of stones—you are not to use an iron tool on them. ⁶ You are to build the altar of *ADONAI* your God of whole stones, and you are to offer up burnt offerings on it to *ADONAI* your God. ⁷ You are to sacrifice fellowship offerings and eat there, and you will rejoice before *ADONAI* your God. ⁸ You are to write on the stones all the words of this *Torah* very clearly.”

⁹ Then Moses and the Levitical *kohanim* spoke to all Israel, saying, “Be silent and listen, O Israel—this day you have become a people for *ADONAI* your God.

¹⁰ Therefore listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, and do His *mitzvot* and statutes that I am commanding you today.”

¹¹ Moses commanded the people on that day saying, ¹² “When you have crossed over the Jordan, these are to stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³ For the curse these are to stand on Mount Ebal: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

¹⁴ “Then the Levites are to answer and say with a loud voice to every man of Israel: ¹⁵ ‘Cursed is the one who makes a carved or molten image—an abomination to *ADONAI*, the work of a craftsman’s hands—and sets it up in secret.’ Then all the people are to answer and say, ‘Amen.’

¹⁶ “‘Cursed is the one who dishonors his father or mother.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’”

¹⁷“Cursed is the one who removes his neighbor’s boundary marker.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

¹⁸“Cursed is the one who misleads a blind person on the road.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

¹⁹“Cursed is the one who twists justice for the outsider, orphan and widow.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²⁰“Cursed is the one who lies with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered his father’s nakedness.’ † Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²¹“Cursed is the one who lies with any kind of animal.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²²“Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²³“Cursed is the one who lies with his mother-in-law.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²⁴“Cursed is the one who strikes down his neighbor in secret.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²⁵“Cursed is the one who takes a bribe to strike down an innocent life.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’

²⁶“Cursed is the one who does not uphold the words of this *Torah* by doing them.’ Then all the people are to say, ‘Amen.’ ††

Blessings for Obedience

28 “Now if you listen obediently to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, taking care to do all His *mitzvot* that I am commanding you today, *ADONAI* your God will set you on high—above all the nations of the earth. ² Then all these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God:

³“Blessed will you be in the city, and blessed will you be in the field.

⁴“Blessed will be the fruit of your womb, the produce of your soil, and the offspring of your livestock—the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.

⁵“Blessed will be your basket and your kneading bowl.

⁶“Blessed will you be when you come in, and blessed will you be when you go out.

⁷“*ADONAI* will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be struck down before you. They will come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. ⁸ *ADONAI* will command the blessing on you in your barns and in every undertaking of your hand, and He will bless you in the land *ADONAI* your God is giving you. ⁹ *ADONAI* will establish you as a holy people for Himself, just as He swore to you—if you keep the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰ Then all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of *ADONAI* and they will stand in awe of you. ¹¹ *ADONAI* will make you overflow

† cf. 1 Cor. 5:1. †† cf. Gal. 3:10.

in prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the offspring of your livestock and the produce of your soil—on the land *ADONAI* swore to your fathers to give you. ¹²

ADONAI will open for you His good storehouse—the heavens—to give rain for your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. ¹³ *ADONAI* will make you the head and not the tail, and you will be only above and not below—if you listen to the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God that I am commanding you today, careful to do them, ¹⁴ and do not turn aside from any of the words I am commanding you today, to the right or the left, to go after other gods in order to serve them.

Curses for Disobedience

¹⁵“But if you will not listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, to take care to do all His *mitzvot* and statutes that I am commanding you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you:

¹⁶“Cursed will you be in the city, and cursed will you be in the field.

¹⁷“Cursed will be your basket and your kneading bowl.

¹⁸“Cursed will be the fruit of your womb, the produce of your soil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.

¹⁹“Cursed will you be when you come in, and cursed will you be when you go out.

²⁰“*ADONAI* will send on you cursing, confusion and frustration in every undertaking of your hand that you will do—until you are destroyed and perish quickly, because of the evil of your deeds by which you have abandoned Me. ²¹ *ADONAI* will make the plague cling to you, until He has put an end to you from the land that you are going in to possess. ²² *ADONAI* will strike you with weakness, fever, inflammation, fiery heat, the sword, blight and mildew—they will pursue you until you perish. ²³ Your sky above your head will be bronze, and the earth beneath you iron. ²⁴ *ADONAI* will make the rain of your land powder and dust—it will come down on you from the heavens, until you are destroyed.

²⁵“*ADONAI* will bring you to defeat before your enemies. You will go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them. You will become a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶ Your carcass will be food for every bird of the heavens and beast of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away.

²⁷“*ADONAI* will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with hemorrhoids, with scabs and with itching, from which you cannot be healed.

²⁸“*ADONAI* will strike you with madness, with blindness, and with confusion of heart. ²⁹ You will grope at noon as the blind person gropes in darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways. You will be only oppressed and robbed all the time, and there will be no one to save you.

³⁰ “You will become engaged to a woman, but another man will sleep with her. You will build a house, but you will not dwell in it. You will plant a vineyard, but you will not put it to use. ³¹ Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat of it. Your donkey will be stolen in front of you, and it will not be returned to you. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and you will have no one to save you.

³² “Your sons and daughters will be given to another people while your eyes look on, longing for them all day long—but your hand will be powerless. ³³ A people you do not know will eat up the produce of your soil and all your labor, and you will be only oppressed and crushed all the time. ³⁴ You will be driven mad by the sight that your eyes will see.

³⁵ “ *ADONAI* will strike you on the knees and thighs with severe boils, from which you cannot be healed—from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

³⁶ “ *ADONAI* will bring you and the king you set over you to a nation you and your fathers have not known—and there you will serve other gods, wood and stone. ³⁷ You will become a horror, a proverb, and a byword—among all the peoples where *ADONAI* will drive you.

³⁸ “Much seed you will take out to the field—but little will you bring in, for the locust will eat it up. ³⁹ Vineyards you will plant and tend—but wine you will not drink or bring in, for the worm will devour it. ⁴⁰ Olive trees you will have in all your territory—but oil you will not rub on yourself, for your olives will drop off. ⁴¹ Sons and daughters you will father—but they will not be yours, for they will go into captivity. ⁴² All your trees and the produce of your soil the whirring locust will possess.

⁴³ “The outsider who is in your midst will rise up higher and higher above you, and you will go down lower and lower. ⁴⁴ He will lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he will become the head and you will become the tail.

⁴⁵ “All these curses will come upon you and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed—because you did not listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, to keep His *mitzvot* and statutes that He commanded you. ⁴⁶ They will be a sign and a wonder on you and your descendants forever. ⁴⁷ Instead of serving *ADONAI* your God with joy and goodness of heart, out of the abundance of everything, ⁴⁸ you will serve your enemies, whom *ADONAI* will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and lacking everything; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

⁴⁹ “ *ADONAI* will raise up a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, just as the eagle swoops down—a nation whose language you will not understand, ⁵⁰ a brazen-faced nation that will not respect the old or be gracious to the young. ⁵¹ It will devour the offspring of your livestock and the produce of

your soil, until you are destroyed. It will not leave behind for you grain, new wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until it ruins you. ⁵² It will besiege you within all your town gates throughout your land, until your high and fortified walls—that you trusted in—come down. It will besiege you within all your gates throughout your land that *ADONAI* your God has given you.

⁵³ “You will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your sons and daughters *ADONAI* your God has given you, in the siege and stress with which your enemies will distress you. ⁵⁴ The most tender and delicate man among you—his eye will become evil against his brother and the wife of his bosom and the rest of his children that he has left. ⁵⁵ He will not give to a single one of them from his children’s flesh that he will eat, because nothing else is left for him in the siege and stress with which your enemy will distress you within all your town gates. ⁵⁶ The tender and delicate woman among you, who never ventured to set the sole of her foot on the ground out of delicateness and tenderness—her eye will become evil against the husband of her bosom and her son and daughter. ⁵⁷ For in secret she will eat her afterbirth that issues from between her legs and the children she bears, for lack of anything else in the siege and stress with which your enemy will distress you within all your gates.

⁵⁸ “If you do not take care to do all the words of this *Torah*, the things written in this scroll, to fear this glorious and awesome Name, *ADONAI* your God, ⁵⁹ then *ADONAI* will make your plagues and the plagues of your descendants extraordinary—terrible and prolonged plagues, severe and prolonged illnesses. ⁶⁰ He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt that you were afraid of, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹ Also every illness and plague that is not written in the scroll of this *Torah*, *ADONAI* will bring on you, until you are destroyed.

⁶² “You will be left few in number, instead of being like the stars of the sky in number—because you did not listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God. ⁶³ Now just as *ADONAI* rejoiced over you to do you good and to multiply you, so *ADONAI* will rejoice over you to ruin and destroy you; and you will be uprooted from the land that you are going in to possess.

⁶⁴ “ *ADONAI* will scatter you among all peoples from the one end of the earth to the other, and there you will serve other gods—wood and stone—that you and your fathers have not known. ⁶⁵ Among these nations you will find no rest, and there will be no rest for the sole of your foot. But there *ADONAI* will give you a trembling heart and failing eyes, and a despairing spirit.

⁶⁶ “Your life will hang in the balance before you; you will be afraid night and day, and you will have no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷ In the morning you will say, ‘If only it were evening!’ and at evening you will say, ‘If only it were morning!’—from the fear of your heart

that you will fear and the sight of your eyes that you will see. ⁶⁸ ADONAI will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way that I said to you, 'You will not see it again.' There you will sell yourselves to your enemies as slaves and maids, but there will be no buyer."

Renewing the Covenant

⁶⁹ (29:1) These are the words of the covenant that ADONAI commanded Moses to make with *Bnei-Yisrael* in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant He made with them at Horeb. †

29 (2) Moses called to all Israel and said to them, "You have seen all that ADONAI did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and all his servants and all his land— ² (3) the great trials that your eyes saw, those great signs and wonders. ³ (4) But to this day ADONAI has not given you a heart to know, or eyes to see, or ears to hear. ††⁴ (5) I led you 40 years in the wilderness—your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. ⁵ (6) Bread you have not eaten and wine and strong drink you have not drunk—in order that you may know that I am ADONAI your God.

⁶ (7) "When you came to this place, King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of the Bashan came out against us to battle, but we struck them down. ⁷ (8) We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh. ⁸ (9) So keep the words of this covenant and do them, so that you may prosper in all that you do.

Parashat Nitzavim

You Are Standing Before the Lord

⁹ (10) "You are standing today, all of you, before ADONAI your God—the heads of your tribes, your elders, your officials, all the men of Israel, ¹⁰ (11) your children, your wives, and the outsider within your camp (from your woodchopper to your water carrier). ¹¹ (12) Each of you is to cross over into the covenant of ADONAI your God that He is cutting with you today, and into His oath.

¹² (13) "This is in order to confirm you today as His people. So He will be your God, just as He promised you and just as He swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. ¹³ (14) Not with you alone am I cutting this covenant and this oath, ¹⁴ (15) but with whomever is standing here with us today before ADONAI our God and with whomever is not here with us today.

¹⁵ (16) "Indeed, you know how we dwelt in the land of Egypt and how we crossed through the nations that we passed through. ¹⁶ (17) You saw their detestable things and their idols ‡—wood and stone, silver and

gold—that were with them. ¹⁷ (18) Beware in case there is among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from ADONAI our God to go serve the gods of those nations. Beware in case there is among you a root producing poison and bitter fruit. ††

¹⁸ (19) "Now when someone hears the words of this oath and in his heart considers himself blessed, thinking, 'Shalom will be mine, even though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart'—thus sweeping away the moist with the dry— ††¹⁹ (20) ADONAI will be unwilling to forgive him. For then the anger of ADONAI and His jealousy will smoke against that person. So all the oath that is written in this scroll will settle on him, and ADONAI will blot out his name from under the heavens. ²⁰ (21) ADONAI will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, according to all the oaths of the covenant written in this scroll of the *Torah* .

²¹ (22) "The following generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a distant land will say, when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses ADONAI afflicted on it: ²² (23) 'Sulfur and salt, the whole land burnt! It cannot be planted, it cannot sprout, no grass can grow up on it—like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which ADONAI overturned in His anger and in His wrath!'

²³ (24) "All the nations will say, 'Why has ADONAI done this to this land? Why this great burning anger?'

²⁴ (25) "Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the covenant of ADONAI, the God of their fathers, which He cut with them when He brought them out from the land of Egypt. ²⁵ (26) They went and served other gods and bowed down to them—gods they never knew, that He had not allotted to them. ²⁶ (27) So ADONAI's anger burned against that land, bringing on it every curse written in this scroll. ²⁷ (28) ADONAI has uprooted them from their soil, in anger and wrath and great fury, and hurled them into another land, as is the case this day.'

²⁸ (29) "The secret things belong to ADONAI our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever—in order to do all the words of this *Torah* .

30 "Now when all these things come upon you—the blessing and the curse that I have set before you—and you take them to heart in all the nations where ADONAI your God has banished you, ² and you return to ADONAI your God and listen to His voice according to all that I am commanding you today—you and your children—with all your heart and with all your soul, ³ then ADONAI your God will bring you back from captivity and have compassion on you, and He will return and gather you from all the peoples where ADONAI your God has scattered you. ⁴ Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the heavens, from

† Deut. 28:69-29:28 are number as Deut. 29:1-29 in Christian translations. †† cf. Matt. 13:14; Eph. 4:18. ‡ Hebrew *shikkots dungy gods*

†† cf. Heb. 12:15. †† A merism, paired opposites indicating a totality—i.e., bringing complete ruin

there *ADONAI* your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. ⁵ *ADONAI* your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, and you will possess it; and He will do you good and multiply you more than your fathers. ⁶ Also *ADONAI* your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants—to love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.

⁷ “*ADONAI* your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. ⁸ Then you—you will return and listen to the voice of *ADONAI* and do all His *mitzvot* that I am commanding you today. ⁹ *ADONAI* your God will make you prosper in all the work of your hand—in the fruit of your womb, and the offspring of your livestock, and the produce of your soil—for good. For *ADONAI* will again rejoice over you for good, as He rejoiced over your fathers— ¹⁰ when you listen to the voice of *ADONAI* your God, to keep His *mitzvot* and His statutes that are written in this scroll of the *Torah*, when you turn to *ADONAI* your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

¹¹ “For this *mitzvah* that I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it far off. ¹² It is not in the heavens, that you should say, ‘Who will go up for us to the heavens and get it for us, and have us hear it so we may do it?’ ¹³ Nor is it across the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross over for us to the other side of the sea and get it for us, and have us hear it so we may do it?’ ¹⁴ No, the word is very near to you—in your mouth and in your heart, to do it. †

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and good, and death and evil. ¹⁶ What I am commanding you today is to love *ADONAI* your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His *mitzvot*, statutes and ordinances. Then you will live and multiply, and *ADONAI* your God will bless you in the land you are going in to possess. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away and you do not listen, but are drawn away and bow down to other gods and worship them, ¹⁸ I tell you today that you will certainly perish! You will not prolong your days on the land, where you are about to cross over the Jordan to go in to possess.

¹⁹ “I call the heavens and the earth to witness about you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰ by loving *ADONAI* your God, listening to His voice, and clinging to Him. For He is your life and the length of your days, that you may dwell on the land that *ADONAI* swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob—to give them.

Parashat Vayelech

Chazak! Be Courageous!

31 Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. ² He said to them, “I am 120 years old today. I am no longer able to go out and come in. *ADONAI* has said to me, ‘You are not to cross over this Jordan.’ ³ *ADONAI* your God—He will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations from before you, and you will dispossess them. Joshua will cross over before you, just as *ADONAI* has promised.

⁴ “*ADONAI* will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them. ⁵ *ADONAI* will give them over to you, and you are to do to them according to all the *mitzvot* that I commanded you. ⁶ *Chazak!* Be courageous! Do not be afraid or tremble before them. For *ADONAI* your God—He is the One who goes with you. He will not fail you or abandon you.”

⁷ Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong! Be courageous! For you are to go with this people into the land *ADONAI* has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you are to enable them to inherit it. ⁸ *ADONAI*—He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you. He will not fail you or abandon you. Do not fear or be discouraged.”

Public Torah Readings

⁹ Moses wrote down this *Torah* and gave it to the *kohanim*, the sons of Levi who carry the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI*, and to all the elders of Israel.

¹⁰ Then Moses commanded them saying, “At the end of every seven years, in the set time of the year of cancelling debts, during the feast of *Sukkot*, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before *ADONAI* your God in the place He chooses, you are to read this *Torah* before them in their hearing. ¹² Gather the people—the men and women and little ones, and the outsider within your town gates—so they may hear and so they may learn, and they will fear *ADONAI* your God and take care to do all the words of this *Torah*. ¹³ So their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear *ADONAI* your God—all the days you live on the land you are about to cross over the Jordan to possess.”

¹⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Behold, your time to die is near. Call Joshua, and present yourselves at the Tent of Meeting, and I will commission him.” Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁵ *ADONAI* appeared in the Tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood over the opening of the Tent. ¹⁶ *ADONAI* said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise up and prostitute themselves with the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will abandon Me and break My covenant that I cut with them. ¹⁷ Then My

† cf. Rom. 10:6-8.

anger will flare against them on that day, and I will abandon them and hide My face from them. So they will be devoured, and many evils and troubles will come on them. They will say on that day, 'Isn't it because our God is not among us that these evils have come on us?' ¹⁸ I will surely hide My face on that day because of all the evil they have done, for they have turned to other gods.

Moses Introduces His Song

¹⁹ "Now, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to *Bnei-Yisrael*—put it in their mouth, so that this song may be a witness for Me against *Bnei-Yisrael* .

²⁰ "For when I bring them to the land flowing with milk and honey that I swore to their fathers, and they eat and are satisfied and grow fat—then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and they will spurn Me and break My covenant. ²¹ Now when many evils and troubles have come on them, this song will confront them as a witness; for it will not be forgotten from the mouth of their descendants. For I know the intention they are devising this day, even before I bring them into the land that I swore." ²² That day Moses wrote this song and taught it to *Bnei-Yisrael* .

²³ Then he commissioned Joshua son of Nun and said, " *Chazak!* Be courageous! For you will bring *Bnei-Yisrael* into the land I swore to them—and I will be with you."

²⁴ Now when Moses had finished writing the words of this *Torah* on a scroll, right to the end, ²⁵ Moses commanded the Levites, carriers of the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* saying, ²⁶ "Take this scroll of the *Torah* , and place it beside the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* your God. It will remain there as a witness against you, ²⁷ for I know your rebellion and your stiff neck. Indeed, while I am still alive with you today, you have been rebellious against *ADONAI* —how much more then after my death? ²⁸ Gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your officials, so that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them. ²⁹ For I know that after my death you will certainly act corruptly and turn aside from the way I have commanded you. So evil will fall upon you in the latter days, because you will do what is evil in the sight of *ADONAI* , provoking Him to anger by the work of your hands."

³⁰ Moses spoke in the hearing of the whole community of Israel the words of this song, right to the end:

Parashat Haazinu

The Song of Moses

32 "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak!
Let the earth hear the words of my mouth.
² May my teaching trickle like rain,
my speech distill like dew—
like gentle rain on new grass,

like showers on tender plants.

³ For I will proclaim *ADONAI* 's Name,
ascribe greatness to our God!

⁴ The Rock—blameless is His work.

Indeed, all His ways are just.

God of faithfulness without iniquity,
righteous and upright is He.

⁵ Did it corrupt Him? No!

The blemish is His children's—
a generation crooked and twisted.

⁶ Is this how you pay back *ADONAI* ,
O foolish, unwise people?

Isn't He your Father who ransomed you? †
He made you and established you.

⁷ "Remember the days of antiquity,
understand the years across generations. ††

Ask your father and he will tell you,
your elders and they will say to you.

⁸ When *Elyon* gave nations their heritage,
when He separated the sons of man,
He set boundaries for the people
by the number of *Bnei-Yisrael* .

⁹ But *ADONAI* 's portion is His people—
Jacob is the share of His inheritance.

¹⁰ He found him in the wilderness land,
in the void of a howling waste.

He surrounded him, cared for him,
guarded him as the pupil of His eye.

¹¹ As an eagle stirs up its nest,
hovers over its young,

He spreads His wings, catches him,
lifts him up on His pinions.

¹² *ADONAI* alone guided him—
there was no foreign god with him.

¹³ "He made him mount the heights of the land.
so he ate the produce of the field.

He suckled him with honey from a rock,
with oil from a flinty boulder.

¹⁴ Butter of cattle and milk of a flock,
with fat of lambs,

rams of the Bashan and he-goats,
with fat of the kidneys of wheat,
and blood of grapes you drank.

¹⁵ But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked—
you got fat, you grew thick, you gorged!
He forsook God who made him.

He mocked the Rock of his salvation.

¹⁶ They made him jealous with strangers,
with abominations they angered Him.

¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons, a non-god,
gods they had not known—

to new ones who came in lately,
ones your fathers had not dreaded.

¹⁸ The Rock who birthed you, you ignored.
You forgot God who brought you forth.

¹⁹ " *ADONAI* saw, and He spurned His sons
and His daughters out of vexation.

† cf. Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6. †† Hebrew *dor va-dor*

20 He said, 'I will hide My face from them,
I want to see their hereafter.
For they are an upside down generation,
children with no faithfulness in them.
21 They made Me jealous with a non-god.
They vexed Me with airy idols.
So I will make them jealous with a non-people.
With a foolish nation I will vex them. †
22 For fire has ignited in My nostrils—
it will burn to *Sheol* beneath,
devour the earth and her produce,
and scorch the foundations of mountains.
23 I will heap calamities upon them.
With My arrows I will finish them.
24 Wasted by famine, ravaged by plague
and pestilence so bitter,
fangs of beasts I'll let loose on them,
with venom of creepers in the dust.
25 Outside the sword deals death,
and inside terror—
to both young men and young women,
infants, with men of gray hair.
26 I would have said,
"I will hack them to pieces,
make the memory of them cease from mankind,"
27 except I dread the taunt of the enemy,
lest their foes might misconstrue—
lest they say, "Our hand is held high,
and *ADONAI* has not done all this."
28 For they are a nation lacking counsel,
among them there is no understanding.
29 "If they were wise,
they would discern this,
they would understand their hereafter.
30 How can one chase a thousand
and two put ten thousand to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them
and *ADONAI* had handed them over?
31 Surely their rock is not like our Rock,
as even our enemies judge.
32 For their vine is from the vine of Sodom
and from the terraces of Gomorrah.
Its grapes are grapes of poison—
bitter clusters on it.
33 Venom of serpents is their wine—
poison of vipers so cruel.
34 "Is it not stored up with Me,
sealed up in My treasuries?
35 Vengeance is Mine, and payback, ††
for the time when their foot staggers.
Surely their day of disaster is near—
what is prepared rushes on them.
36 For *ADONAI* will judge His people—
for His servants, He will relent
when He sees that strength ‡
is gone

† cf. Rom. 10:19; 11:11,14. †† cf. Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30. ‡ Hebrew *yad* hand of power

and no one is left, slave or free.
37 He will say, "Where are their gods,
the 'rock' they took refuge in?
38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices
and drank the wine of their libation?"
Let them rise up and help you
and be a shelter over you!
39 See now that I, I am He!
There are no other gods beside Me.
I bring death and give life,
I have wounded but I will heal, ††
and none can rescue from My hand.
40 "Yes, I lift My hand up to heaven
and say, "As I Myself live forever,
41 when I sharpen My lightning sword
and My hand seizes it in judgment,
I will return vengeance on My foes,
and those who hate Me I will pay back.
42 I will make My arrows drunk from blood,
and My sword will devour flesh—
the blood of the slain and the captive,
the head of the leaders of the enemy."
43 "Make His people rejoice, O nations, ††
for He will avenge the blood of His servants. †††
He will return vengeance on His foes,
and atone for the land of His people."
44 Then Moses came and spoke all the words of this
song in the ears of the people—he and Joshua son of
Nun. 45 When Moses finished speaking all these words
to all Israel, 46 he said to them, "Put in your hearts all
the words that I call as witness against you to-
day—that you may command your children to keep
and do all the words of this *Torah*. 47 For it is not an
empty thing for you, because it is your life! By this
word you will prolong your days on the land, which
you are crossing over the Jordan to possess."
48 On that very day, *ADONAI* spoke to Moses, saying,
49 "Go up this mountain of the Avarim, Mount Nebo,
which is in the land of Moab facing Jericho, and see
the land of Canaan, which I am giving to *Bnei-Yisrael*
as a possession. 50 On the mountain that you are as-
cending, there be gathered to your people—as Aaron
your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to
his people— 51 because you both broke faith with Me
among *Bnei-Yisrael* at the waters of Meribath-kadesh
in the wilderness of Zin, because you did not treat Me
as holy in the midst of *Bnei-Yisrael*. 52 For you will see
the land from afar, but you will not enter there, into
the land that I am giving to *Bnei-Yisrael*."

Parashat V'Zot HaBrachah

The Blessing of Moses

33 This is the blessing with which Moses the man
of God blessed *Bnei-Yisrael* before his death.
2 He said,

†† cf. John 11:25-26. ††† cf. Rom. 15:10. †††† cf. Rev. 6:10.

“ *ADONAI* came from Sinai
 and dawned on *Bnei-Yisrael* from Seir.
 He shone forth from Mount Paran,
 and He came from the holy myriads—
 blazing fire † for them from His right hand.
³ Indeed, a lover of peoples is He—
 all His *kedoshim* are in His hand.
 They followed in Your steps,
 each receiving Your words.
⁴ *Torah* Moses commanded us—
 a heritage for the community of Jacob.
⁵ He became king in Jeshurun
 when the heads of the people gathered,
 all the tribes of Israel together.
⁶ ‘Let Reuben live and not die,
 though his people become few.’
⁷ Now this is for Judah. He said,
 ‘Hear, *ADONAI*, the voice of Judah!
 Bring him to his people.
 His hands contended for him,
 so You will be a help against his foes.’
⁸ For Levi he said,
 ‘Let Your Thummim and Urim be with Your pious
 man.
 You tested him at Massah,
 You strived with him at the waters of Meribah.’
⁹ He said of his father and mother,
 ‘I have not seen them,’
 nor did he acknowledge his brothers
 or recognize his children.
 For they observed Your word
 and kept Your covenant.
¹⁰ They will teach Jacob Your judgments
 and Israel Your *Torah*.
 They will put incense in your nose
 and whole burnt offerings on Your altar.
¹¹ *ADONAI*, bless his resources,
 find favor in the work of his hands.
 Crush the loins of those
 who rise against him and hate him,
 so they do not rise again.
¹² For Benjamin he said,
 ‘The beloved of *ADONAI*
 rests securely beside Him.
 He shields him all day long.
 Between His shoulders he rests.’
¹³ For Joseph he said,
 ‘May his land be blessed by *ADONAI*
 with heavenly bounty from the dew
 and from the deep lying beneath,
¹⁴ and with the bounty
 of the sun’s produce
 and the months’ yield,
¹⁵ and with the best
 from the ancient mountains
 and the bounty of the everlasting hills,
¹⁶ with earth’s bounty and its fullness

and the favor of the One
 dwelling in the bush.
 May it come on Joseph’s head,
 on the crown of the prince
 among his brothers.
¹⁷ The firstborn ox—majesty is his.
 His horns are the horns of the wild ox.
 With them he gores peoples,
 all at once, to the ends of the earth.
 They are the myriads of Ephraim,
 they are the thousands of Manasseh.’
¹⁸ For Zebulun he said,
 ‘Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out,
 and Issachar, in your tents.
¹⁹ Peoples they call to the mountain—
 there they offer righteous sacrifices.
 For they suckle the abundance of the seas
 and the hidden treasures of the sand.’
²⁰ For Gad he said,
 ‘Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad.
 Like a lion he crouches,
 and tears off an arm
 or even the crown of a head.
²¹ He chose the best for himself,
 for there a marked portion was reserved.
 He came with the heads of the people.
 He carried out *ADONAI*’s justice
 and His judgments for Israel.’
²² For Dan he said,
 ‘Dan is a lion’s cub
 leaping out of the Bashan.’
²³ For Naphtali he said,
 ‘O Naphtali, satisfied with favor
 and full of the blessing of *ADONAI*,
 possess the sea and the south.’
²⁴ For Asher he said,
 ‘Most blessed of sons is Asher—
 may he be the favorite of his brothers,
 and may he dip his foot in oil.
²⁵ The bolts of your gates
 will be iron and bronze.
 As your days, so will your strength be.’
²⁶ ‘There is none like God, Jeshurun,
 riding through the heavens to your aid
 and through the skies in His majesty.
²⁷ A refuge is the ancient God,
 and underneath are everlasting arms.
 He drove out the enemy before you
 and said, ‘Destroy!’
²⁸ So Israel rests in safety,
 untroubled is Jacob’s fountain
 in a land of grain and new wine.
 Yes, his heavens drip dew.
²⁹ Happy are you, O Israel!
 Who is like you, a people saved by *ADONAI*,
 the Shield of your help
 and the Sword of your triumph?
 Your enemies will cower before you,

† Hebrew is obscure; possibly fiery law mountain slopes

and you will trample on their backs.”

34 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. *ADONAI* showed him all the land—Gilead to Dan, ² and all of Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, ³ the Negev and the plain of the valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to him, “This is the land that I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob saying, ‘I will give it to your seed.’ I let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over there.”

⁵ So Moses the servant of *ADONAI* died there in the land of Moab, as was from the mouth of *ADONAI*.

⁶ Then He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor—but no one knows of his burial

place to this day. ⁷ Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was not dim nor his vigor gone. ⁸ *Bnei-Yisrael* wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Then the days of weeping, mourning for Moses, were ended.

⁹ Now Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. So *Bnei-Yisrael* listened to him and did just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

¹⁰ There has not risen again a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom *ADONAI* knew face to face, ¹¹ with all the signs and wonders *ADONAI* sent him to do in the land of Egypt—to Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land— ¹² by the strong hand and great awe that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Joshua

Joshua Introduction

The Hebrew name “Y” means “is salvation.” An alternate form of the name “Y” is , which is translated into English as Jesus. As Joshua was salvation to lead the children of Israel out of the wilderness into the land of promise, so is understood to be salvation to lead His people out of the wilderness of despair, sin, and death into the eternal promised land of the Kingdom of God.

Although the author of the book of Joshua is not indicated in the text, it is widely believed to be Joshua, the son of Nun, the successor of Moses. The book covers approximately twenty-five years of Israel’s history under Joshua’s leadership, from 1400 to 1375 BCE. The narrative is divided into two sections: the first section begins with the crossing of the Jordan River and chronicles the conquest of the Land of Canaan, and the second section records the division and settlement of the conquered land according to the tribes of Israel.

The book of Joshua is a book of remembrance. It was written as a reminder to the people of Israel that deliverance comes from God, that victory comes through trusting Him and obeying His commands, and that defeat comes through disobedience and lack of faith. When the children of Israel crossed the Jordan River, Joshua commanded twelve stones to be taken from the riverbed and placed as a memorial of God’s power for future generations: “so that all the peoples of the earth may know hand is mighty, and so that you may fear your God forever.” (Josh. 4:24). The book of Joshua continues to serve as a reminder of the power of God, and contemporary readers are challenged with Joshua’s charge of “then choose for yourselves today whom you will serve.... But as for me and my household, we will worship !” (Josh. 24:15).

Messiah is revealed both implicitly and explicitly in the book of Joshua. In chapter 5, Joshua is confronted by the “commander of army.” The context of this passage makes it clear that this commander is . This is not an angel, as evidenced by the fact that angels in Scripture do not accept worship (Josh. 5:14). Also, the commander orders Joshua to take off his shoes because the place he was standing on was holy (Josh. 5:15), just as the voice of God out of the burning bush had commanded Moses to remove his shoes on holy ground (Exod. 3:4-5). is also revealed in the scarlet thread let down by Rahab the harlot (Josh. 2:18). As Rahab put her faith in the God of Israel and was saved by the scarlet thread, so will all those be saved who put their faith in the atoning sacrifice of Messiah .

Joshua Headings

! Be strong!

Rahab’s Faith

Crossing the Jordan

Twelve Memorial Stones

Circumcision at Gilgal

Commander of Army

Jericho’s Walls Come Down

Achan’s Trouble

Gibeonites Connive a Treaty

Sun Stands Still

Conquering the North

The Conquered Kings

Territories Yet Unconquered

Inheritance East of Jordan

Caleb Inherits Hebron

Inheritance of Judah

Inheritance of Ephraim

Inheritance of Manasseh

Scouting the Land Further

Inheritance of Benjamin
 Portions for Other Tribes
 Six Cities of Refuge
 Towns for the Levites
 Keeps All His Promises
 Altar of Witness
 Keep and Do
 Whom Will You Worship?

Chazak! Be strong!

1 Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of *ADONAI* that *ADONAI* spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses's aide saying: ² "My servant Moses is dead. So now, arise, you and all these people, cross over this Jordan to the land that I am giving to them—to *Bnei-Yisrael*. ³ Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I am giving to you, as I spoke to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and Lebanon to the great river, the Euphrates River—all the land of the Hittites—to the Great Sea † toward the setting of the sun will be your territory. ⁵ No one will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not fail you or forsake you. ⁶ **Chazak! Be strong!** For you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be very strong, and resolute to observe diligently the *Torah* which Moses, My servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ This book of the *Torah* should not depart from your mouth—you are to meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. For then you will make your ways prosperous and then you will be successful. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? **Chazak! Be strong!** Do not be terrified or dismayed, for *ADONAI* your God is with you wherever you go."

¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the officials of the people saying: ¹¹ "Go through the camp and charge the people saying: 'Prepare provisions, for within three days you will be crossing over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which *ADONAI* your God is giving you to possess.'"

¹² Then Joshua spoke to the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh saying: ¹³ "Remember the word that Moses the servant of *ADONAI* commanded you saying: '*ADONAI* your God has given you rest, and has assigned to you this land.' ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones and your cattle will remain in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but you will cross over before your brothers, armed, all the mighty men of valor, and will help them ¹⁵ until *ADONAI* gives your brothers rest, as He has given you, and they also possess the land that *ADONAI* your God is giving them.

† i.e., the Mediterranean

Then you will return to the land of your inheritance, and possess what Moses the servant of *ADONAI* gave you, beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."

¹⁶ Then they answered Joshua saying: "All that you have commanded us, we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may *ADONAI* your God be with you as He was with Moses. ¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, he will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!"

Rahab's Faith

2 Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent out two spies from Shittim saying: "Go, explore the land, especially Jericho." So they went and came to the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and lodged there. ††

² The king of Jericho was told, "Some men from *Bnei-Yisrael* have just come here tonight to spy out the land."

³ So the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab saying: "Bring out the men who came to you, who entered your house—for they have come to spy out all the land."

⁴ But the woman took the two men and hid them, and said: "Yes, the men did come to me, but I didn't know where they were from. ⁵ So when it was time to shut the gate at dark, the men went out, and I don't know where they went. Pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them." ⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax that she had spread out on the roof. ⁷ So the men pursued them on the road to the fords of the Jordan. As soon as the pursuers had gone out, they shut the gate.

⁸ Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, ⁹ and she said to the men: "I know that *ADONAI* has given you the land—dread of you has fallen on us and all the inhabitants of the land are melting in fear before you. ¹⁰ For we have heard how *ADONAI* dried up the water of the Sea of Reeds before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹ When we heard about it, our hearts melted, and no spirit remained any more in anyone because of you.

†† cf. Heb. 11:34; Jacob 2:25.

For *ADONAI* your God, He is God, in heaven above and on earth beneath. ¹² So now, please swear to me by *ADONAI*, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's house. Give me a true sign ¹³ that you will spare the lives of my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all who belong to them, and save our lives from death."

¹⁴ The men said to her: "Our life for yours, if you don't report this business of ours. Then it will be when *ADONAI* gives us the land that we will deal kindly and loyally with you."

¹⁵ So she lowered them down by a rope through the window—for her house was in the wall; she was living in the wall. ¹⁶ Then she said to them: "Go to the hill country, lest the pursuers meet you, and hide yourselves there for three days, until the pursuers return. Afterward, you may go your way."

¹⁷ Then the men said to her: "We will be released from this oath that you have made us swear, ¹⁸ unless when we come into the land, you tie this line of scarlet thread in the window through which you lowered us down, and gather to yourself in the house your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household— ¹⁹ whoever goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood will be on his head and we will be innocent, but whoever is with you in the house, his blood will be on our head if any hand is laid on him. ²⁰ But if you divulge this business of ours, then we will be released from your oath you have made us swear."

²¹ So she said: "According to your words, so be it." Then she sent them away. After they had gone, she tied the scarlet cord to the window. ²² Then they departed and came to the hill country. They stayed there for three days until the pursuers returned. Now the pursuers had looked for them all along the road, but had not found them. ²³ Then the two men returned, came down from the hill country, crossed over and came to Joshua son of Nun.

They reported to him all that had befallen them.

²⁴ "Surely *ADONAI* has given all the land into our hands," they said to Joshua. "Indeed, all the inhabitants of the land have melted in fear before us."

Crossing the Jordan

3 Then Joshua rose up early in the morning, and he and all *Bnei-Yisrael* set out from Shittim and came to the Jordan. They lodged there before crossing over. ² Now it came about after three days that the officials went through the camp ³ and they charged the people saying, "When you see the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* your God and the Levitical *kohanim* carrying it, then you must set out from your place and follow it. ⁴ Yet keep a distance between you and it of about 2,000 cubits by measure. Don't come near it, so you may know the way by which you should go, for you haven't traveled this way before."

⁵ Then Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow *ADONAI* will do wonders in your midst." ⁶ Joshua spoke to the *kohanim* saying: "Take up the ark of the covenant and cross over ahead of the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went ahead of the people.

⁷ Now *ADONAI* said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

⁸ You are to command the *kohanim* who are carrying the ark of the covenant saying: 'When you reach the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you are to stand still in the Jordan.'"

⁹ So Joshua said to *Bnei-Yisrael*, "Come here, and listen to the words of *ADONAI* your God." ¹⁰ Joshua said, "By this you will know that the living God is among you, and that He will certainly drive out from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite. ¹¹ Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Sovereign of all the earth is advancing before you into the Jordan. ¹² So now, take for yourselves twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, one man for each tribe. ¹³ It will come to pass when the soles of the feet of the *kohanim* who are carrying the ark of *ADONAI*, Sovereign of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the Jordan's waters will be cut off. The waters coming downstream will stand up in one heap."

¹⁴ So it came to pass. When the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the *kohanim* were carrying the ark of the covenant ahead of the people.

¹⁵ Now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the harvest season. But as soon as those who were carrying the ark came into the Jordan and the feet of the *kohanim* carrying the ark dipped in the edge of the water, ¹⁶ the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great distance away at Adam, the town next to Zarethan. What was flowing down to the sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ Yet the *kohanim* carrying the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until the entire nation had finished crossing over the Jordan.

Twelve Memorial Stones

4 Now when all the nation had finished crossing over the Jordan, *ADONAI* spoke to Joshua saying: ² "Take for yourself twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, ³ and command them saying, 'Take for yourselves twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the feet of the *kohanim* are standing firm, and carry them over with you, and deposit them at the place where you will lodge tonight.'"

⁴ Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from *Bnei-Yisrael*, one man from each

tribe. ⁵ Joshua said to them, "Cross over before the ark of *ADONAI* your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you, lift up a stone on his shoulder, for the number of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁶ Let this be a sign among you. When your children ask later saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' ⁷ then you will say to them: 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI*—when it crossed the Jordan—the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones will be a reminder to *Bnei-Yisrael* forever."

⁸ So *Bnei-Yisrael* did so, as Joshua commanded. They lifted twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as *ADONAI* had said to Joshua, for the number of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael*. Then they carried them over with them to the lodging place and put them down there. ⁹ Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the spot where the feet of the *kohanim* carrying the ark of the covenant were standing—they are there to this day.

¹⁰ The *kohanim* who carried the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything that *ADONAI* had commanded Joshua to speak to the people was completed, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people hurried across, ¹¹ and when all the people had finished crossing over, the ark of *ADONAI* and the *kohanim* crossed over in the presence of the people. ¹² Also the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed, ahead of *Bnei-Yisrael*, just as Moses had said to them— ¹³ about 40,000 equipped for war crossed over before *ADONAI* for battle to the plains of Jericho.

¹⁴ On that day *ADONAI* exalted Joshua in the eyes of all Israel. So they revered him, just as they had revered Moses all the days of his life.

¹⁵ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Joshua saying: ¹⁶ "Command the *kohanim* who are carrying the ark of the testimony to come up from the Jordan." ¹⁷ Joshua therefore commanded the *kohanim* saying, "Come up from the Jordan!" ¹⁸ As soon as the *kohanim* who were carrying the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* came up from the middle of the Jordan and the soles of the feet of the *kohanim* were drawn up to the dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before.

¹⁹ Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. ²⁰ Those twelve stones, which they had taken out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. ²¹ Then he said to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying, "When your children ask their fathers in time to come saying: 'What are these stones?' ²² then you will inform your children saying, 'Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.' ²³ For *ADONAI* your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you crossed—just as *ADONAI* your God did to the Sea of Reeds, which He dried up before us until we crossed over— ²⁴ so that all the peo-

ples of the earth may know *ADONAI*'s hand is mighty, and so that you may fear *ADONAI* your God forever."

Circumcision at Gilgal

⁵ Now it came about when all the Amorite kings beyond the Jordan westward and all the Canaanite kings by the sea heard how *ADONAI* had dried up the waters of the Jordan before *Bnei-Yisrael* until they had crossed, their hearts melted, nor was there any spirit in them anymore, because of *Bnei-Yisrael*.

² At that time *ADONAI* said to Joshua, "Make yourself flint knives and circumcise again *Bnei-Yisrael* a second time." ³ So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised *Bnei-Yisrael* at Gibeath-Ha-Araloth. ⁴ Now this is the reason why Joshua circumcised: all the people that came out of Egypt who were males—all the men of war—had died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt. ⁵ Though all the people that came out were circumcised, none of the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had been circumcised. ⁶ For *Bnei-Yisrael* walked 40 years in the wilderness, until all the nation's men of war who came out of Egypt died out, because they had not listened to the voice of *ADONAI*. To them *ADONAI* had sworn that He would never let them see the land which *ADONAI* had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁷ But He raised up their children in their place. Joshua circumcised them, for they were uncircumcised, since they had not been circumcised along the way. ⁸ Now it came to pass after they had finished circumcising the entire nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they recovered.

⁹ Then *ADONAI* said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." Therefore the name of that place has been called Gilgal to this day. ¹⁰ While *Bnei-Yisrael* camped at Gilgal †, they observed Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, *matzot* and roasted grain.

¹² Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten of the produce of the land. *Bnei-Yisrael* had manna no longer, but ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan that year.

Commander of *ADONAI*'s Army

¹³ Now it came to pass when Joshua was near Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there was a man standing in front of him with his sword drawn in his hand. Joshua approached him and said to him: "Are you for us or for our adversaries?"

¹⁴ "Neither," he said. "Rather, I have now come as commander of *ADONAI*'s army."

† Meaning rolling

Then Joshua fell on his face to the ground and worshiped. Then he asked him, "What is my lord saying to his servant?"

¹⁵ Then the commander of *ADONAI*'s army replied to Joshua, "Take your sandal off of your foot, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

6 Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of *Bnei-Yisrael*—no one going out and no one coming in. ² Then *ADONAI* said to Joshua, "Look, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and mighty warriors. ³ Now you are to march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. So you are to do for six days. ⁴ Seven *kohanim* will carry seven *shofarot* of rams' horns before the ark. Then on the seventh day you are to circle the city seven times while the *kohanim* blow the *shofarot*. ⁵ It will be when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when you hear the sound of the *shofar*, have all the people shout a loud shout—then the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up, everyone straight ahead."

⁶ So Joshua son of Nun summoned the *kohanim* and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant. Let seven *kohanim* carry seven *shofarot* of rams' horns before the ark of *ADONAI*." ⁷ Then he said to the people, "Move forward, march around the city, and let the armed force march ahead of the ark of *ADONAI*."

⁸ And it was so. After Joshua had spoken to the people, seven *kohanim* carrying the seven *shofarot* of rams' horns before *ADONAI* went forward and blew the *shofarot*, and the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* followed them. ⁹ Also the armed force went before the *kohanim* who blew the *shofarot*, and the rear guard came behind the ark, while the *shofarot* continued to blow. ¹⁰ But Joshua ordered the people saying: "You must not shout nor let your voice be heard nor let a word proceed out of your mouth until the day I tell you 'shout!' Then you will shout." ¹¹ So he had the ark of *ADONAI* go around the city, circling it once. Then they came into the camp and spent the night there.

¹² The next day Joshua rose early in the morning. The *kohanim* took up the ark of *ADONAI*, ¹³ and the seven *kohanim* carrying the seven *shofarot* of rams' horns marched in front of the ark of *ADONAI* and blew the *shofarot*, with the armed force marching before them and the rear guard marching behind the ark of *ADONAI*, while the *shofarot* continued to blow. ¹⁴ So the second day they circled the city once and returned to the camp. So they did for six days.

Jericho's Walls Come Down

¹⁵ Now on the seventh day they rose early, at dawn, and marched around the city in the same way seven times. Only on that day did they march around the city seven times. ¹⁶ Then on the seventh time, when the *kohanim* blew the *shofarot*, Joshua ordered the people, "Shout! For *ADONAI* has given you the city! ¹⁷ But the city will be under the ban of destruction—it and all

that is in it belong to *ADONAI*. Only Rahab the harlot will live, she and all who are with her in the house, because she hid the scouts that we sent. ¹⁸ But you, just keep yourselves from the things under the ban. Otherwise you would make yourselves accursed by taking of the things under the ban, and so you would make the camp of Israel accursed and bring trouble on it. ¹⁹ All the silver and gold and vessels of bronze and iron are holy to *ADONAI*, and must go into the treasury of *ADONAI*."

²⁰ So when the *shofarot* blew, the people shouted. When the people heard the sound of the *shofar*, the people shouted a loud shout—and the wall fell down flat! So the people went up into the city, everyone straight ahead, and they captured the city. ²¹ They utterly destroyed everything in the city—man and woman, young and old, ox, sheep, and donkey—with the edge of the sword.

²² Then Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land: "Go into the harlot's house and bring the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." ²³ So the young spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her relatives and all who belonged to her. All her relatives they brought out and put them outside the camp of Israel.

²⁴ Then they burned the city with fire and all that was in it. Only the silver, the gold and the vessels of bronze and iron did they put into the treasury of the House of *ADONAI*. ²⁵ But Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all who belonged to her, Joshua spared. She has lived in the midst of Israel to this day, because she hid the scouts whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

²⁶ At that time Joshua made an oath saying:

"Cursed before *ADONAI* is the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho! On his firstborn he will lay its foundation, and on his youngest son he will set up its gates."

²⁷ So *ADONAI* was with Joshua, and his fame was throughout the region.

Achan's Trouble

7 But *Bnei-Yisrael* unfaithfully violated the ban. Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the banned things. ^{††} So *ADONAI*'s anger burned against *Bnei-Yisrael*.

² Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-Aven, east of Beth-El, and spoke to them saying: "Go up and spy out the land." So the men went up and spied out Ai.

³ When they returned to Joshua, they reported to him: "Let not all the people go up—only about two or three thousand men need go up and strike Ai, so don't wear out all the people there, for they are just a few."

⁴ So about 3,000 men from the people went up there,

† cf. Heb. 11:30. †† "ban, banned things" from Hebrew *cherem*

but they fled before the men of Ai. ⁵ The men of Ai struck down about 36 of their men, and they chased them from outside the gate as far as Shebarim, [†] striking them down on the slope. So the hearts of the people melted and became like water.

⁶ Joshua then tore his clothes and fell to the ground on his face before the ark of *ADONAI* until evening, both he and the elders of Israel, and they put dust on their heads. ⁷ “Alas, *ADONAI Elohim!*” Joshua said. “Why did You ever bring this people across the Jordan? Is it to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites—to destroy us? If only we had been content and dwelled beyond the Jordan! ⁸ Oh my Lord, what can I say, now that Israel has turned its back before its enemies? ⁹ For when the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land hear of it, they will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. Then what will You do for Your great Name?”

¹⁰ Then *ADONAI* said to Joshua, “Arise! Why are you fallen on your face? ¹¹ Israel has sinned. Yes, they have also transgressed My covenant, which I commanded them. Now they have even taken of the things under the ban of destruction. So they have also stolen and even deceived, and even put them among their own possessions. ¹² So *Bnei-Yisrael* cannot stand before their enemies. So they turn their necks before their enemies, because they have come under the ban. I will not be with you any more unless you destroy whatever is under the ban from among you. ¹³ Arise! Consecrate the people and say, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, for thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: Something under the ban is in the midst of you, Israel. You will not be able to stand up before your enemies until you remove whatever is under the ban from among you. ¹⁴ In the morning you will approach by your tribes. It will be that the tribe that *ADONAI* takes will come forward by families, and the family that *ADONAI* takes will come forward by households, and the household that *ADONAI* takes will come forward man by man. ¹⁵ Then whoever is taken with whatever is under the ban must be burned with fire, he and all belonging to him, because he has transgressed the covenant of *ADONAI*, and because he has committed a disgrace in Israel.’”

¹⁶ So Joshua rose up early in the morning and brought Israel forward by their tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁷ Then he brought forward the clans of Judah, and he took the family of the Zerahites. Then he brought forward the family of the Zerahites man by man, and Zabdi was taken. ¹⁸ Then he brought forward his household man by man, and Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁹ So Joshua said to Achan, “My son, give glory now to *ADONAI*, God of Israel, and give praise to Him, and confess to me now what you have done—hide nothing from me.”

[†] Perhaps as far as the stone quarries

²⁰ Achan responded to Joshua and said: “It’s true! I have sinned against *ADONAI*, God of Israel! This is what I have done: ²¹ When I saw among the spoil a beautiful Shinar mantle and 200 shekels of silver and a wedge of gold 50 shekels in weight, I coveted them and took them. Look, they are buried in the ground in the middle of my tent, with the silver under it.”

²² So Joshua sent messengers who ran to the tent, and behold, it was buried in his tent with the silver underneath it. ²³ Then they took them from the middle of the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all *Bnei-Yisrael*, and they laid them down before *ADONAI*.

²⁴ Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan son of Zerah, the silver, the mantle, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep and his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them up to the Valley of Achor.

²⁵ Then Joshua said, “Why have you brought trouble on us? *ADONAI* will trouble you this day.” Then all Israel stoned him with stones, burned them with fire, and stoned them with stones. ²⁶ They raised over him a great heap of stones that stands to this day. Then *ADONAI* turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.

8 Then *ADONAI* said to Joshua: “Do not be afraid or dismayed. Take all the people of war with you and arise, go up to Ai. Behold, I have given the king of Ai, his people, his, city and his land into your hand. ² Then you will do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king—except you will take its spoil and its cattle as booty for yourselves. Set an ambush for the city behind it.”

³ So Joshua and all the people of war arose to go up to Ai. Joshua selected 30,000 men, valiant warriors, and sent them at night. ⁴ He commanded them saying: “Look, you are going to ambush the city from behind it. Don’t go too far from the city, but all of you be ready. ⁵ Then I and all the troops with me will approach the city. Then it will be when they come out against us, like the first time, that we will flee before them. ⁶ So they will come out after us until we have drawn them away from the city. For they will think, ‘They are fleeing before us like the first time.’ While we are fleeing before them, ⁷ you will rise up from the ambush and take possession of the city, for *ADONAI* your God will give it into your hand. ⁸ Now when you have seized the city, you will set the city on fire—according to the word of *ADONAI* you must do. See that you do as I have ordered you.”

⁹ So Joshua sent them off, and they went to the ambush site, taking position between Beth-El and Ai, to the west of Ai. But Joshua spent that night among the people. ¹⁰ Then Joshua rose up early in the morning and mustered the people. He and the elders of Israel marched before the people to Ai. ¹¹ All the people of war with him went up, advanced, and came in front of the city. They camped to the north of Ai, with a valley

between him and Ai. ¹² But he had taken about 5,000 men and set them in ambush between Beth-El and Ai, to the west of the city. ¹³ So they stationed the people, the main army that was to the north of the city, and its rear guard to the west of the city. Then Joshua walked that night in the midst of the valley.

¹⁴ So it came to pass when the king of Ai saw this, the men of the city hurried and rose up early, and went out to meet Israel in battle, he and all his people at the appointed place facing the Arabah. But he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. ¹⁵ So Joshua and all Israel pretended to be beaten before them and fled by the way of the wilderness. ¹⁶ Then all the people who were in Ai were summoned to pursue them, so they pursued Joshua and were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷ Not a man was left in Ai or Beth-El who did not go out after Israel, so they left the city open as they chased after Israel.

¹⁸ Then ADONAI said to Joshua, "Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand." So Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹ As soon as he stretched out his hand, the ambush arose quickly from their place, ran and entered the city and captured it; and immediately set the city on fire. ²⁰ Now the men of Ai looked back and saw, behold, the smoke of the city rising up to the sky! They had no place to flee this way or that, since the people who had been fleeing to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers. ²¹ When Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had captured the city and that the smoke of the city rose up, they turned back and struck down the men of Ai.

²² The others also came out of the city against them, so they were surrounded by Israel, some on this side and some on that side. They struck them down until not one survivor or fugitive was left. ²³ But they captured the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

²⁴ After Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the field in the wilderness where they pursued them, and all of them were fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword. ²⁵ All who fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000—all the people of Ai. ²⁶ For Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he stretched out the javelin, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. ²⁷ Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took as their booty, according to the word of ADONAI which He had commanded Joshua. ²⁸ So Joshua burnt Ai and made it a permanent heap of desolation to this day. ²⁹ Then he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. At sunset Joshua commanded that they take his carcass down from the tree, cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and piled over it a great heap of stones, which remains to this day.

³⁰ Then Joshua built an altar to ADONAI, God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, ³¹ as Moses the servant of ADONAI had commanded *Bnei-Yisrael*, as written in the scroll of

the *Torah* of Moses, an altar of uncut stones on which no man had wielded any iron tool. They offered on it burnt offerings to ADONAI and sacrificed fellowship offerings. ³² There on the stones he wrote a copy of the *Torah* of Moses, which he had written, in the presence of *Bnei-Yisrael*. ³³ Then all Israel, with their elders and officials, and their judges, were standing on both sides of the ark facing the Levitical *kohanim* carrying the ark of the covenant of ADONAI—the outsider as well as the native-born. Half of them stood in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal—just as Moses the servant of ADONAI had commanded before—in order to bless the people of Israel.

³⁴ Then afterward he read all the words of the *Torah*—the blessing and the curse—according to all that is written in the book of the *Torah*. ³⁵ There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, including the women and the little ones and the outsiders walking among them.

Gibeonites Connive a Treaty

9 Now when all the kings who were west of the Jordan, in the hill country, in the lowland, and along the shore of the Great Sea to the vicinity of Lebanon—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—heard about it, ² they gathered themselves together as a unified alliance to fight against Joshua and Israel.

³ But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, ⁴ they acted craftily. They went and traveled as ambassadors, took worn-out sacks for their donkeys and worn-out wine skins, cracked and patched up, ⁵ along with worn-out, patched up sandals on their feet and worn-out clothes on them. All the bread of their provision was dry and had become crumbly. ⁶ Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country. So now, make a treaty-covenant with us."

⁷ Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites: "Perhaps you are living among us. How then should we make a covenant with you?"

⁸ But they said to Joshua, "We are your servants."

Then Joshua asked them, "Who are you? Where do you come from?"

⁹ So they replied to him: "Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the Name of ADONAI your God. For we have heard the report of Him and all that He did in Egypt, ¹⁰ and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan—to King Sihon of Heshbon and to King Og of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. ¹¹ So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us saying, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey, go to meet them and say to them: "We will be your subjects, so now make a treaty-covenant with us."' ¹² This is our bread, which was hot when we took it for our provi-

sion from our homes on the day we left to come to you, but now behold, it is dry and crumbly. ¹³ And these wineskins, which were new when we filled them, but now see, they are cracked. Also, these our garments and our sandals are worn-out because of the very long journey."

¹⁴ So the men of Israel took some of their provisions, and did not seek counsel from *ADONAI*'s mouth. ¹⁵ So Joshua made peace with them and cut a covenant with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the community swore to them.

¹⁶ But it came about at the end of three days after they had cut a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors, and were living among them. ¹⁷ So *Bnei-Yisrael* journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-Jearim. ¹⁸ But *Bnei-Yisrael* did not strike them, because the leaders of the community had sworn to them by *ADONAI*, God of Israel. Then the entire community murmured against the leaders, ¹⁹ but all the leaders answered the entire community, "We have sworn to them by *ADONAI*, God of Israel, so now we cannot touch them. ²⁰ This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them. ²¹ Yes, let them live," the leaders said further, "but let them chop wood and draw water for the entire community." So the leaders decreed concerning them.

²² Then Joshua summoned them and he spoke to them saying: "Why have you deceived us saying: 'We are very far from you,' when you are living among us? ²³ Now therefore, you are cursed, and you will never cease to be servants, wood-choppers, and water-carriers for the House of my God."

²⁴ So they answered Joshua and said: "It was because your servants were clearly told that *ADONAI* your God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you. So we were very afraid for our lives because of you, and so we did this. ²⁵ Now behold, we are in your hand. Whatever seems good and right in your eyes to do to us, do."

²⁶ Thus he did to them, delivering them from the hand of *Bnei-Yisrael*, so they did not slay them. ²⁷ On that day Joshua made them wood-choppers and water-carriers for the community, and for the altar of *ADONAI* in the place which He would choose. So it is to this day.

Sun Stands Still

10 Now it came to pass that Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it—just as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king—and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and remained among them. ² So he feared greatly, because Gibeon was a large city, as one of the royal cities—in fact, larger than Ai—and all its

men were mighty. ³ Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent word to Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon saying: ⁴ "Come up and help me! Let's attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and *Bnei-Yisrael*." ⁵ So 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—gathered themselves and went up, they and all their armies, camped against Gibeon and attacked it.

⁶ Then the men of Gibeon sent word to Joshua in camp at Gilgal saying: "Don't abandon your servants! Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us, for all the kings of the Amorites living in the hill country have gathered against us." ⁷ So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him and all the mighty men of valor.

⁸ *ADONAI* said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will stand before you." ⁹ So Joshua came upon them suddenly by marching all night from Gilgal. ¹⁰ *ADONAI* threw them into confusion before Israel, defeated them with a crushing defeat at Gibeon, chased them by the road that goes up to Beth-Horon, and struck them as far as Azekah and Makedah. ¹¹ While they were fleeing before Israel down the descent of Beth-Horon, *ADONAI* cast down great stones from heaven on them all the way to Azekah so they died—more of them died from the hailstones than those *Bnei-Yisrael* killed with the sword.

¹² Then Joshua spoke to *ADONAI*, on the day *ADONAI* gave the Amorites over to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and said in the eyes of Israel:

"Sun, stand still over Gibeon,
Moon, over the Aijalon Valley!"

¹³ So the sun stood still and the moon stopped until the nation took vengeance on its enemies. (Is it not written in the Book of Jashar?) Thus the sun halted in the middle of the sky, and did not hurry to go down for about a full day. ¹⁴ There was no day like that before it or after it, when *ADONAI* listened to the voice of a man. For *ADONAI* fought for Israel.

¹⁵ Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal. ¹⁶ Now these five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makedah. ¹⁷ So it was reported to Joshua, "The five kings are found hidden in the cave at Makedah." ¹⁸ Joshua said, "Roll large stones onto the mouth of the cave, assign men over it to guard them, ¹⁹ but don't stay there yourselves. Chase after your enemies and attack them at the rear. Don't let them enter their cities, for *ADONAI* your God has given them into your hand."

²⁰ So it was that Joshua and *Bnei-Yisrael* finished striking them with a very great slaughter until they were wiped out, though some of their survivors escaped into the fortified cities. ²¹ Then all the people returned safely to Joshua in the camp at Makedah. No one dared sharpen his tongue against *Bnei-Yisrael*.

²² Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring out those five kings to me from the cave."

²³ So they did so, and brought out those five kings to him from the cave—the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. ²⁴ When they brought out those kings to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, "Come forward and put your feet on the necks of these kings." So they came forward and put their feet on their necks. ²⁵ Then Joshua said to them, "Never fear or be dismayed. *Chazak!* Be strong! For thus will *ADONAI* do to all your enemies whom you will fight." ²⁶ After this, Joshua struck them and put them to death, then hanged them on five trees, and they remained hanging on the trees until evening. ²⁷ It came about at sunset that Joshua commanded that they be taken down from the trees and thrown into the cave where they had hidden themselves. Then they placed large stones at the mouth of the cave which are there to this very day.

²⁸ On that day Joshua captured Makkedah and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword, putting it and every single soul in it under a ban of destruction, leaving no survivors. So he did to the king of Makkedah as 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 *ADONAI* also gave it with its king into the hand of Israel. So he struck it and every single soul in it with the edge of the sword, leaving no survivors in it. So he did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

³¹ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish, camped against it, and fought against it. ³² *ADONAI* delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, so he captured it on the second day, and struck it and every single soul in it with the edge of the sword, just as he had done to Libnah. ³³ Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish, but Joshua defeated him and his people until he had left him no survivors.

³⁴ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon, camped against it and fought against it. ³⁵ They captured it on that day and struck it and every single soul in it with the edge of the sword, putting them under the ban that day, just as he had done to Lachish.

³⁶ Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron, and they fought against it. ³⁷ They captured it and struck it, its king, all its towns, and every single soul that was in it with the edge of the sword, leaving no survivors, just as he had done to Eglon, putting it and every single soul in it under the ban.

³⁸ Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned back to Debir and fought against it. ³⁹ He captured it and its king, and all its towns, struck them with the edge of the sword, and put every single soul in it under the ban, leaving no survivors. Just as he had done to He-

bron, so he did to Debir and its king, as he had also done to Libnah and its king.

⁴⁰ So Joshua conquered the entire country—the hill country, the Negev, the lowland, and the slopes—with all their kings. He left no survivors, but he put everything that breathed under the ban, just as *ADONAI* God of Israel had commanded. ⁴¹ Thus Joshua defeated them from Kadesh-Barnea to Gaza, all the country of Goshen as far as Gibeon. ⁴² Thus Joshua captured all those kings and their lands at a single stroke, because *ADONAI* God of Israel fought for Israel. ⁴³ Then Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal.

Conquering the North

11 Now when Jabin king of Hazor heard about it, he sent word to Jobab king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, ² and to the kings in the north, in the hill country, in the Arabah south of Chinneroth, in the lowland and in the regions of Dor to the west, ³ the Canaanites in the east and west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites at the foot of Hermon in the land of Mizpah. ⁴ So they came out, they and all their armies with them, a multitude with as many people as the sand on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots. ⁵ All these kings joined forces, came and camped together at the waters of Merom to fight with Israel.

⁶ But *ADONAI* said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid because of them, for tomorrow at this time I will give all of them slain before Israel. You are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." ⁷ So Joshua and all the people of war with him attacked them suddenly at the waters of Merom and fell upon them.

⁸ Then *ADONAI* gave them into the hand of Israel, so they defeated them and chased them as far as Great Zidon and Misrephoth-Maim, and up to the Valley of Mizpeh eastward. They struck them down until they left them no survivors. ⁹ Joshua did to them as *ADONAI* had instructed him—he hamstrung their horses and burnt their chariots with fire.

¹⁰ At that time Joshua turned back and captured Hazor and struck its king with the sword, because Hazor had formerly been the head of all those kingdoms.

¹¹ They struck down every single soul in it with the edge of the sword, putting them to the ban. There was none left that breathed after he burned Hazor with fire. ¹² Thus Joshua captured all the cities of those kings and all their kings, and he struck them with the edge of the sword, putting them to the ban, just as Moses the servant of *ADONAI* had commanded. ¹³ But as for the cities that stood on their mounds, Israel did not burn any of them, except Hazor alone, which Joshua did burn. ¹⁴ All the spoil of these cities and the cattle, *Bnei-Yisrael* took as their booty, but they struck down every person with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them, not sparing anyone who breathed.

¹⁵ Just as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses His servant, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that *ADONAI* had commanded Moses. ¹⁶ So Joshua captured all this land: the hill country, the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the lowland, the Arabah, the hill country of Israel and its lowland, ¹⁷ from the Mount Halak † that ascends to Seir all the way to Baal-Gad in the valley of Lebanon at the foot of Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings, struck them down and put them to death. ¹⁸ For a long time Joshua made war with all those kings. ¹⁹ There was not a city that made peace with *Bnei-Yisrael* except the Hivites who inhabited Gibeon. All the rest they took in battle. ²⁰ For it was of *ADONAI* to harden their hearts to encounter Israel in battle, that they might be put to the ban, that they might receive no mercy, in order to destroy them as *ADONAI* had commanded Moses.

²¹ At that time Joshua went and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, Debir, Anab, and from the entire hill country of Judah, and from the entire hill country of Israel. Joshua put a ban on them with their cities. ²² There was none of the Anakim left in the land of *Bnei-Yisrael*, except some were left in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

²³ So Joshua captured the whole country, according to all that *ADONAI* had spoken to Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land had rest from war.

The Conquered Kings

12 Now these are the kings of the land whom *Bnei-Yisrael* defeated and possessed their land beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise, from the valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon, and all the Arabah eastward: ² King Sihon of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the middle of the valley, and half Gilead, even up to the Jabbok River, the border of the children of Ammon; ³ and the Arabah up to the Sea of Chinneroth eastward, and as far as the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, eastward the way to Beth-Jeshimoth, and on the south, at the foot of the slopes of Pisgah. ⁴ Also the territory of King Og of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, ⁵ and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salcah and all Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and half of Gilead, as far as the border of King Sihon of Heshbon. ⁶ Moses the servant of *ADONAI* and *Bnei-Yisrael* defeated them, then Moses the servant of *ADONAI* gave it as a possession to the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh.

⁷ Now these are the kings of the land whom Joshua and *Bnei-Yisrael* defeated beyond the Jordan westward, from Baal-Gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount

Halak that goes up to Seir (Joshua gave it to the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their divisions: ⁸ in the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, on the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negev, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites): ⁹ one king of Jericho, one king of Ai which was near Beth-El, ¹⁰ one king of Jerusalem, one king of Hebron, ¹¹ one king of Jarmuth, one king of Lachish, ¹² one king of Eglon, one king of Gezer, ¹³ one king of Debir, one king of Geder, ¹⁴ one king of Hormah, one king of Arad, ¹⁵ one king of Libnah, one king of Adullam, ¹⁶ one king of Makkedah, one king of Beth-El, ¹⁷ one king of Tappuah, one king of Hopher, ¹⁸ one king of Aphek, one king of Sharon, ¹⁹ one king of Madon, one king of Hazor, ²⁰ one king of Shimron-Meron, one king of Achshaph, ²¹ one king of Taanach, one king of Megiddo, ²² one king of Kedesh, one king of Jokneam in Carmel, ²³ one king of Dor in the region of Dor, one king of Goiim in the Gilgal, ²⁴ one king of Tirzah, for a total of 31 kings.

Territories Yet Unconquered

13 Now Joshua was old and advanced in years when *ADONAI* said to him, "You are old and getting on in years, yet very much of the land is still left to possess. ² This is the land still left: all the regions of the Philistines and all the Geshurites; ³ from the Shihor which is near Egypt to the territory of Ekron northward (counted as Canaanite); the five Philistine lords of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron; also the Avvim ⁴ in the south, all the land of the Canaanites—from Mearah of the Sidonians to Aphek, as far as the border of the Amorites; ⁵ the land of the Gebalites; and all Lebanon toward the sunrise, from Baal-Gad at the foot of Mount Hermon to the entrance of Hamath; ⁶ all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-Maim, all the Sidonians.

"I Myself will drive them out from before *Bnei-Yisrael*. Only allot it to Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded you. ⁷ So now, divide this land as an inheritance for the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

Inheritance East of Jordan

⁸ With the half-tribe, the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance, which Moses gave them beyond the Jordan eastward, just as Moses the servant of *ADONAI* gave them; ⁹ from Aroer, that is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the flatland from Medeba to Dibon; ¹⁰ and all the cities of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, up to the border of the children of Ammon; ¹¹ and Gilead, and the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan up to Salcah; ¹² all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he was left of the remnant of the Rephaim), for Moses

† Or the smooth mountain

defeated them and drove them out. ¹³ Nevertheless, *Bnei-Yisrael* did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites; but Geshur and Maacath lived among Israel to this day.

¹⁴ Only to the tribe of Levi he gave no inheritance—the fire offerings of *ADONAI* God of Israel are his inheritance, as He spoke to him.

¹⁵ To the tribe of the children of Reuben according to their clans, Moses gave as ¹⁶ their territory: from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Valley, along with the city in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland up to Medeba, ¹⁷ Heshbon and all its towns on the tableland, Dibon, Bamoth-Baal, Beth-Baal-Meon, ¹⁸ Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, ¹⁹ Kiriathhaim, Sibmah and Zereth-Shahar on the hill of the valley, ²⁰ Beth-Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth-Jeshimoth— ²¹ all the towns of the tableland and the entire kingdom of King Sihon of the Amorites who reigned in Heshbon. (Moses defeated him with the chiefs of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the princes of Sihon who were living in the land, ²² and Balaam son of Beor the diviner, whom *Bnei-Yisrael* killed with the sword among the rest of their slain.) ²³ As for the border of the children of Reuben, the Jordan was their border. This was the inheritance of the children of Reuben according to their clans, the towns and their villages.

²⁴ To the tribe of Gad, Moses gave the children of Gad according to their clans ²⁵ as their territory: Jazer, all the towns of Gilead, half the land of the children of Ammon up to Aroer which is near Rabbah, ²⁶ from Heshbon to Ramath-Mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim to the border of Lidbir. ²⁷ In the valley, Beth-Haram, Beth-Nimrah, Succoth and Zaphon—that is, the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Heshbon, with the Jordan as its border, to the lowest part of the Sea of Chinneroth beyond the Jordan eastward. ²⁸ This is the inheritance of the children of Gad according to their clans, the towns and their villages.

²⁹ To the half-tribe of Manasseh, Moses also gave inheritance. For the half-tribe of the children of Manasseh according to their clans, ³⁰ their territory was from Mahanaim all of Bashan, the entire kingdom of King Og of Bashan and all the tent-villages of Jair which are in Bashan—60 towns; ³¹ also half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were for the children of Machir son of Manasseh, for half of the children of Machir according to their clans.

³² These are the inheritances that Moses apportioned in the plains of Moab, across the Jordan to the east of Jericho. ³³ But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance— *ADONAI* God of Israel is their inheritance, as He had spoken to them.

14 Now these are the portions that *Bnei-Yisrael* possessed in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the *kohen* and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the ancestral houses of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael* apportioned to them. ² Their inheritance was by the lot, as

ADONAI had commanded by Moses's hand, for the nine tribes and half-tribe. ³ For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half-tribe across the Jordan. But he gave no inheritance to the Levites among them. ⁴ For the children of Joseph became two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. They gave no portion to the Levites in the land, except towns to live in, with their pasturelands around them for their livestock and for their cattle. ⁵ As *ADONAI* had commanded Moses, so *Bnei-Yisrael* did, and apportioned the land.

Caleb Inherits Hebron

⁶ Then the children of Judah approached Joshua in Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: "You know the word that *ADONAI* had spoken to Moses the man of God at Kadesh-Barnea concerning me and you. ⁷ I was 40 years old when Moses the servant of *ADONAI* sent me from Kadesh-Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him back word as it was in my heart. ⁸ Nevertheless, my fellows that went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear, but I fully followed *ADONAI* my God. ⁹ So Moses swore on that day saying: 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden will be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, because you have fully followed *ADONAI* my God.' ¹⁰ So now behold, *ADONAI* has kept me alive, just as He said, these 45 years, since the time that *ADONAI* spoke this word to Moses while Israel was journeying in the wilderness, and now behold, I am 85 years old today. ¹¹ I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me—as my strength was then, so is my strength now, for war and for going out and coming in. ¹² Now therefore, give me this hill country about which *ADONAI* spoke on that day. For you heard on that day how the Anakim were there as well as great, fortified cities. Perhaps *ADONAI* will be with me, and I will drive them out, just as *ADONAI* has spoken."

¹³ So Joshua blessed him, and he assigned Hebron to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his portion. ¹⁴ Therefore, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he followed *ADONAI* the God of Israel fully. ¹⁵ Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-Arba, for Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim. Then the land had rest from war.

Inheritance of Judah

15 Now the allotment for the tribe of the children of Judah according to their families was as far as the border of Edom, southward to the wilderness of Zin at the extreme south. ² Their southern border was from the lower end of the Salt Sea, from the bay projecting southward. ³ Then it proceeded south of the Ascent of Akrabbim and passed on to Zin, and then went up by the south of Kadesh-Barnea and passed on to Hezron, and went up to Addar and turned toward

Karka. ⁴ It passed along to Azmon and went on to the Wadi of Egypt, where the border ended at the sea—this will be your southern border.

⁵ The eastern border is the Salt Sea to the end of the Jordan. The border on the northern side was from the bay of the sea at the end of the Jordan. ⁶ It then went up to Beth-Hoglah and passed north of Beth-Arabah, and went up to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben.

⁷ The border then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and turned northward toward Gilgal, facing the Ascent of Adummim, which is south of the wadi. Next the border passed along to the waters of En-Shemesh and ended at En-Rogel. ⁸ Then the border went up the Valley of Ben-Hinnom to the southern flank of the Jebusites—that is, Jerusalem—and went up to the top of the mountain that flanks the Hinnom Valley to the west, which is at the northern end of the Rephaim Valley. ⁹ From the top of the mountain the border curved to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah and went out to the towns of Mount Ephron, then curved to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-Jearim).

¹⁰ From Baalah the border turned westward to Mount Seir, passed along to the northern slope of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon) and went down to Beth-shemesh, then passed Timnah. ¹¹ Next the border went out to the slope north of Ekron, then went out to Shikkeron, passed along to Mount Baalah, went on to Jabneel, and the border ended at the sea.

¹² The western border was the Great Sea and its coastline. These were the borders around the children of Judah according to their clans.

¹³ Now to Caleb son of Jephunneh he gave a portion among the children of Judah, at the command of ADONAI to Joshua—Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). ¹⁴ So Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak—Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, children of Anak. ¹⁵ Then he went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir (now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-Sepher).

¹⁶ Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Achsah as a wife to the one who attacks Kiriath-Sepher and captures it." ¹⁷ So Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's kinsman, captured it, so he gave him his daughter Achsah as a wife. ¹⁸ Now it came about when she came to him, that she persuaded Othniel to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her: "What do you need?"

¹⁹ "Give me a blessing," she said. "For you have given me land in the Negev †, you should also give me springs of water." So he gave her the Upper Springs and the Lower Springs.

²⁰ This is the portion of the tribe of the children of Judah by their clans: ²¹ the towns at the end of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the border of Edom in the south were Kavzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²² Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³ Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴ Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵ Hazor-Hadattah, Keriath-Hezron (that is,

† *i.e., south country, a desert*

Hazor), ²⁶ Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷ Hazar-Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-Pelet, ²⁸ Hazar-Shual, Beer-Sheba, Biziothiah, ²⁹ Baalah, Iim, Ezem, ³⁰ El-Tolad, Chesil, Hormah, ³¹ Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³² Lebaot, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon—a total of 29 towns, with their villages.

³³ In the lowland: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴ Zanoach, En-Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵ Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶ Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, and Gederothaim—14 towns with their villages. ³⁷ Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-Gad, ³⁸ Dilan, Mizpeh, Joktheel, ³⁹ Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, ⁴⁰ Cabbon, Lahmas, Chithlish, ⁴¹ Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah—16 towns with their villages. ⁴² Libnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³ Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, ⁴⁴ Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah—9 towns with their villages. ⁴⁵ Ekron with its towns and villages; ⁴⁶ from Ekron to the sea, all that were under Ashdod's hand, with their villages, ⁴⁷ Ashdod, its dependencies and its villages; Gaza, its dependencies and its villages, all the way to the Wadi of Egypt and the coastline of the Great Sea.

⁴⁸ In the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, ⁴⁹ Dannah, Kiriath-Sannah (that is, Debir), ⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, ⁵¹ Goshen, Holon, and Giloh—11 towns with their villages. ⁵² Arab, Rumah, Eshan, ⁵³ Janum, Beth-Tappuah, Apekah, ⁵⁴ Humtah, Kiriath-Arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior—9 towns with their villages. ⁵⁵ Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶ Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷ Kayin, Gibeah, and Timnah—10 towns with their villages; ⁵⁸ Halhul, Beth-Zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹ Maarath, Beth-Anoth, and Eltekon—6 towns with their villages.

⁶⁰ Kiriath-Baal (that is, Kiriath-Jearim) and Rabbah—2 towns with their villages.

⁶¹ In the wilderness: Beth-Arabah, Middin, Secacah, ⁶² Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En-Gedi—6 towns with their villages.

⁶³ As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out. So the Jebusites continue to live among the children of Judah in Jerusalem to this day.

Inheritance of Ephraim

16 The allotment for the children of Joseph went from the Jordan at Jericho to the waters of Jericho on the east to the wilderness, going up from Jericho through the hill country to Beth-El. ² From Beth-El it went out to Luz, then continued to the border of the Archites at Ataroth. ³ Then it went down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, to the territory of Lower Beth-Horon, on to Gezer, and ended at the sea. ⁴ So the children of Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim, received their portion.

⁵ Now the territory of the children of Ephraim according to their clans was as follows: the border of their inheritance eastward was Atroth-Addar, up to Upper Beth-Horon. ⁶ Then the border went out westward at Michmethath on the north, then the border turned eastward to Taanath-Shiloh, and passed by it to the

east of Janoah.⁷ Then it went down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, then reached Jericho and came out at the Jordan.⁸ From Tappuah the border went along westward to the Wadi Kanah and ended at the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim according to their clans,⁹ together with the towns which were set apart for the children of Ephraim in the midst of the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all these towns with their villages.

¹⁰ But they did not drive out the Canaanites that were living in Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live in the midst of Ephraim to this day, and became forced laborers.

Inheritance of Manasseh

17 Now this was the allotment for the tribe of Manasseh, the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, since he was a man of war, he got Gilead and Bashan.² So for the rest of the children of Manasseh according to their clans—for the sons of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hopher, and Shemida—these were the male children of Manasseh son of Joseph according to their clans.³ But Zelophehad, son of Hopher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, had no sons but only daughters—these were the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.⁴ So they appeared before Eleazar the *kohen*, before Joshua son of Nun, and before the leaders saying: “*ADONAI* commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our kinsmen.” Therefore according to the commandment of *ADONAI* he gave them a portion among their father’s kinsmen.⁵ Thus ten shares fell to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan that is beyond the Jordan,⁶ because the daughters of Manasseh received a portion among his sons. Meanwhile the land of Gilead belonged to the rest of the sons of Manasseh.

⁷ The border of Manasseh ran from Asher to Michmethath, which is facing Shechem. Then the border went along southward to the inhabitants of En-Tappuah.⁸ The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the children of Ephraim.⁹ Next the border went down to the Wadi Kanah, south of the wadi, by towns belonging to Ephraim among Manasseh’s towns. But the border of Manasseh was on the north side of the wadi, and ended at the sea.¹⁰ The south side belonged to Ephraim and the north side belonged to Manasseh, and the sea was its border. They reached to Asher on the north and to Issachar on the east.¹¹ Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh possessed 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—three regions.

¹² Yet the children of Manasseh could not take possession of these towns, because the Canaanites were

resolved to live in that land.¹³ But when *Bnei-Yisrael* became stronger, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly dispossess them.

¹⁴ Then the children of Joseph spoke to Joshua saying: “Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? For we are a numerous people whom *ADONAI* has thus far blessed?”

¹⁵ So Joshua said to them, “If you have so many people, go you up to the forest and clear a place for yourself there in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you.”

¹⁶ “The hill country will not be enough for us,” the children of Joseph replied. “But all the Canaanites who inhabit the valley land have iron chariots—both those who are in Beth-Shean and its villages and those who are in the Jezreel Valley.”

¹⁷ But Joshua spoke to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim, and to Manasseh saying: “You are a numerous people with great strength! You shouldn’t have just one allotment,¹⁸ because the hill country should be yours. Though it is a forest, you will clear it, and to its farthest borders it will be yours—for you will drive out the Canaanites, even though they have iron chariots and even though they are strong.”

Scouting the Land Further

18 Then the whole congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* assembled at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there, after the land was now subdued before them.² Yet there remained among *Bnei-Yisrael* seven tribes that still had not received their portions.³ So Joshua said to *Bnei-Yisrael*, “How long will you be slack about going in to possess the land which *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers, has given you?⁴ Appoint for yourselves three men from each tribe, and I will send them, and they will arise and walk through the land, and describe it according to their inheritance, and then return to me.⁵ They are to divide it into seven portions: Judah will remain within its territory in the south, and the house of Joseph will remain within their territory in the north.⁶ After you have described the seven portions of land, bring the description here to me. Then I will cast lots for you here before *ADONAI* our God.⁷ But the Levites have no portion among you—for the priesthood of *ADONAI* is their inheritance. Also Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan eastward, which Moses the servant of *ADONAI* gave them.”

⁸ So the men arose and went, and Joshua charged those who went to write a description of the land, saying: “Go and walk through the land and describe it, then return to me, and I will cast lots for you here before *ADONAI* in Shiloh.”⁹ So the men went, passing through the land, and described it in a scroll, town by town, in seven parts. Then they came to Joshua at the camp at Shiloh.¹⁰ Then Joshua cast lots for them in

Shiloh before *ADONAI*, and there Joshua apportioned the land to *Bnei-Yisrael* according to their divisions.

Inheritance of Benjamin

¹¹ Now the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up, for their clans. The territory of their allotment lay between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph. ¹² Now their border on the north side was from the Jordan—the border went up to the side of Jericho on the north, and went up through the hill country westward, and it ended at the wilderness of Beth-Aven. ¹³ Then the border passed from there to Luz, to the side of Luz (that is, Beth-El) southward. Next the border went down to Atroth-Addar, near the mountain that lies to the south of Lower Beth-Horon.

¹⁴ On the west side, from the hill facing Beth-Horon southward, the border curved, turning about southward, and ended at Kiriath-Baal (that is, Kiriath-Jearim), a town of the children of Judah. This was the west side.

¹⁵ Then the south side was from the outskirts of Kiriath-Jearim, then the border went westward, going to the spring of the Waters of Nephtoah. ¹⁶ Then the border went down to the foot of the mountain by the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, which is at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. Then it went down to the Valley of Hinnom, to the slope of the Jebusite southward, and went down to En-Rogel. ¹⁷ Then it curved north, and went to En-Shemesh and ran to Geliloth opposite the Ascent of Adummim, and went down to the Stone of Bohan son of Reuben. ¹⁸ Next it passed northward to the slope facing the Arabah (of the Jordan Valley), and went down to the Arabah. ¹⁹ Then the border passed along the side of Beth-Hoglah northward, and the border ended at the northern bay of the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan. This was the southern border.

²⁰ The Jordan was to be the border on the east side. This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, and its borders all around according to their clans.

²¹ Now the towns of the tribe of the children of Benjamin according to their clans were Jericho, Beth-Hoglah, Emek-Keziz, ²² Beth-Arabah, Zemaraim, Beth-El, ²³ Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴ Chephar-Ammonah, Ophni, and Geba—12 towns with their villages.

²⁵ Gibeon, Ramah, Beerot, ²⁶ Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, ²⁷ Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸ Zela, Eleph, and Jebus (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath—14 towns with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their clans.

Portions for Other Tribes

19 Then the second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their clans. Now their portion was in the midst of the portion of the children of Judah. ² They had for their inheritance Beer-Sheba (or Sheba), Moladah, ³ Hazar-Shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴ El-Tolad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁵ Zik-

lag, Beth-Marcaboth, Hazar-Susah, ⁶ Beth-Lebaoth, and Sharuhem—13 towns with their villages; ⁷ also Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—4 towns with their villages; ⁸ all the villages that were around these towns as far as Baalath-Beer, Ramah of the Negev. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their clans. ⁹ The inheritance of the children of Simeon was taken out of the allotment of the children of Judah, for the portion of the children of Judah was too much for them; so the children of Simeon had inheritance within Judah's inheritance.

¹⁰ Now the third lot came up for the children of Zebulun according to their clans. The territory of their inheritance was as far as Sarid. ¹¹ Their border went up westward to Maralah, then reached Dabbesheth, and on to the wadi alongside Jokneam. ¹² It turned from Sarid eastward toward the sunrise to the border of Chisloth-Tabor, then went on to Dobrath and up to Japhia. ¹³ From there it went east to Gath-Hepher, to Ethkazim, and went on to Rimmon, where it curved to Neah. ¹⁴ Then the border circled around on the north to Hannathon and ended at the Valley of Iphtahel.

¹⁵ Included also were Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Beth-Lehem—12 towns with their villages.

¹⁶ This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun according to their clans, these towns with their villages.

¹⁷ The fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the children of Issachar according to their clans. ¹⁸ Now their territory was to Jezreel, and included Chesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁹ Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰ Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹ Remeth, En-Gannim, En-Haddah, and Beth-pazzez. ²² The border extended to Tabor, Shahazim, and Beth-Shemesh, and ended at the Jordan—16 towns with their villages. ²³ This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar according to their clans, the towns with their villages.

²⁴ Then the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher according to their clans. ²⁵ Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, ²⁶ Allam-Melech, Amad, and Mishal. It extended to Carmel westward and Shihor-Libnath. ²⁷ Then it turned toward the sunrise to Beth-Dagon, extended to Zebulun and to the Iphtahel Valley on the north toward Beth-Emek and Neiel, then went on to Cabul on the north, ²⁸ then Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, up to greater Sidon. ²⁹ Next the border turned to Ramah, then to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the border turned to Hosah and ended at the sea in the region of Achzib, ³⁰ Also included were Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob—22 towns with their villages. ³¹ This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher according to their clans, these towns with their villages.

³² The sixth lot came out for the children of Naphtali, for the children of Naphtali according to their clans.

³³ Their border went from Heleph and from Elon-Beza-Anannim, including Adami-Nekeb and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum, and ended at the Jordan. ³⁴ Then the border turned westward to Aznoth-Tabor, and went on

from there to Hukok. It touched Zebulun on the south, touched Asher on the west, and Judah at the Jordan toward the east. ³⁵ The fortified cities were Ziddim-Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, ³⁶ Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷ Kedesh, Edrei, En-Hazor, ³⁸ Iron, Migdal-El, Horem, Beth-Anath, and Beth-Shemesh—19 towns with their villages. ³⁹ This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali according to their clans, the towns with their villages.

⁴⁰ The seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their clans. ⁴¹ The territory of their inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-Shemesh, ⁴² Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³ Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴ Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵ Jehud, Bene-Berak, Gath-Rimmon, ⁴⁶ and the Waters of Jarkon and Rakkon along the border opposite Joppa. ⁴⁷ The territory of the children of Dan slipped away from them, so the children of Dan went up and fought against Leshem and captured it, and struck it with the edge of the sword, possessed it and settled in it, and called Leshem Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor. ⁴⁸ This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan according to their clans, these towns with their villages.

⁴⁹ When they had finished allotting the land for inheritance by its borders, *Bnei-Yisrael* gave a portion to Joshua son of Nun in their midst. ⁵⁰ According to the command of *ADONAI* they gave him the city that he requested, Timnath-Serah in the hill country of Ephraim. So he built up the city and lived in it.

⁵¹ These are the portions which Eleazar the *kohen* and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the ancestral houses of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael* distributed for inheritance by lot in Shiloh before *ADONAI*, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. So they finished apportioning the land.

Six Cities of Refuge

20 Then *ADONAI* spoke to Joshua saying, ² "Speak to *Bnei-Yisrael* saying, 'Designate your cities of refuge, about which I spoke to you through Moses. ³ So the manslayer who kills any person by mistake and without premeditation may flee there. They will be your refuge from the avenger of blood. ⁴ When one flees to one of those cities, he must stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and state his case in the hearing of the elders of that city. Then they are to take him into their city and give him a place to live among them. ⁵ Now if the blood avenger pursues him, then they will not hand the manslayer over to him, since he killed his neighbor without premeditation and did not hate him beforehand. ⁶ So he will stay in that city until he can stand trial before the congregation, or until the death of the *kohen gadol* in those days. Then the manslayer may return to his own city and to his own house, to the city from which he had fled.'"

⁷ So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-Arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill

country of Judah. ⁸ Across the Jordan east of Jericho, they designated Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland 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 appointed cities for all *Bnei-Yisrael* and for the outsider who is dwelling among them, so that whoever kills any person unintentionally might flee there and not die by the hand of the blood avenger, before standing trial before the congregation.

Towns for the Levites

21 Then the heads of ancestral houses of the Levites approached Eleazar the *kohen* and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of ancestral houses of the tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael*, ² and they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan saying: " *ADONAI* commanded through Moses to give us towns to live in, with their pastures for our cattle." ³ So *Bnei-Yisrael* gave to the Levites from their inheritance, according to the command of *ADONAI*, these towns and their pastures: ⁴ the lot came out for the clan of the Kohathites. The children of Aaron the *kohen*, who were of the Levites, received 13 towns by lot from the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Simeon, and the tribe of Benjamin. ⁵ The rest of the children of Kohath received 10 towns by lot from the clans of the tribe of Ephraim, the tribe of Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. ⁶ The children of Gershon received 13 towns by lot from the clans of the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Asher, the tribe of Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁷ The children of Merari according to their clans received 12 towns from the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the tribe of Zebulun.

⁸ So *Bnei-Yisrael* gave by lot to the Levites these towns with their pastures, as *ADONAI* had commanded through Moses. ⁹ They gave from the tribe of the children of Judah and from the tribe of the children of Simeon these towns which are here mentioned by name. ¹⁰ They were for the children of Aaron, of the clans of the Kohathites, of the children of Levi, for theirs was the first lot. ¹¹ So they gave them Kiriath-Arba, Arba was the father of Anak (that is, Hebron) in the hill country of Judah, with its surrounding pastures. ¹² But the fields of the city and its villages they had already given to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his possession. ¹³ But to the children of Aaron the *kohen* they assigned Hebron (the city of refuge for the manslayer) with its pastures, Libnah with its pastures, ¹⁴ Jattir with its pastures, Eshtemoa with its pastures, ¹⁵ Holon with its pastures, Debir with its pastures, ¹⁶ Ain with its pastures, Juttah with its pastures, and Beth-Shemesh with its pastures—9 towns from these two tribes.

¹⁷ Then from the tribe of Benjamin: Gibeon with its pastures, Geba with its pastures, ¹⁸ Anathoth with its pastures, and Almon with its pastures—4 towns. ¹⁹ All the towns of the *kohanim*, the children of Aaron, were 13 towns with their pastures.

²⁰ As for the other clans of the children of Kohath, the remaining Levites descended from the children of Kohath, the towns of their lot were from the tribe of Ephraim. ²¹ So they gave them Shechem (the city of refuge for the manslayer) with its pastures in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pastures, ²² Kibzaim with its pastures, and Beth-Horon with its pastures—4 towns.

²³ From the tribe of Dan: Elteke with its pastures, Gibbethon with its pastures, ²⁴ Aijalon with its pastures, and Gath-Rimmon with its pastures—4 towns. ²⁵ From the half-tribe of Manasseh: Taanach with its pastures and Gath-Rimmon with its pastures— 2 towns. ²⁶ All the towns of the clans of the rest of the children of Kohath were 10 with their pastures.

²⁷ Now to the children of Gershon of the clans of the Levites: from the half-tribe of Manasseh they gave Golan (the city of refuge for the manslayer) in Bashan with its pastures and Beeshterah with its pastures—2 towns. ²⁸ From the tribe of Issachar: Kishion with its pastures, Dobrath with its pastures, ²⁹ Jarmuth with its pastures, and En-Gannim with its pastures—4 towns. ³⁰ From the tribe of Asher: Mishal with its pastures, Abdon with its pastures, ³¹ Helkath with its pastures, and Rehob with its pastures—4 towns. ³² From the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh (the city of refuge for the manslayer) in Galilee with its pastures, Hammoth-Dor with its pastures, Kartan with its pastures—3 towns. ³³ All the towns of the Gershonites according to their clans were 13 towns with their pastures.

³⁴ To the remaining Levites of the clans of the children of Merari, they gave from the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam with its pastures, Kartah with its pastures, ³⁵ Dimnah with its pastures, and Nahalal with its pastures—4 towns. ³⁶ From the tribe of Reuben: Bezer with its pastures, Jahaz with its pastures, ³⁷ Kedemoth with its pastures, and Mephaath with its pastures—4 cities. ³⁸ From the tribe of Gad: Ramoth (the city of refuge for the manslayer) in Gilead with its pastures, Mahanaim with its pastures, ³⁹ Heshbon with its pastures, and Jazer with its pastures—4 towns in all. ⁴⁰ All the towns that went by lot to the children of Merari (the remaining Levites) according to their clans, were 12 towns.

⁴¹ The total of the towns of the Levites within the holdings of *Bnei-Yisrael* was 48 towns with their pastures. ⁴² Each of these towns had its own pastures; so it was for all these towns.

ADONAI Keeps All His Promises

⁴³ So *ADONAI* gave to Israel the entire land that He had sworn to give to their fathers. They took possession and settled in it. ⁴⁴ Then *ADONAI* gave them rest on all sides, just as He had sworn to their fathers. Not one man of all their enemies withstood them, for *ADONAI* gave all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵ Not one good thing that *ADONAI* had promised to the house of Israel failed. All came to pass.

Altar of Witness

22 Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh, ² and said to them: “You have kept all that Moses the servant of *ADONAI* commanded you, and have listened to my voice in all that I commanded you. ³ You have not abandoned your kinsmen these many days to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of *ADONAI* your God. ⁴ So now *ADONAI* your God has given rest to your kinsmen, as He said to them. So now, turn and go to your tents, to the land that is your possession, which Moses the servant of *ADONAI* gave you beyond the Jordan. ⁵ Only be very careful to observe the *mitzvah* and the *Torah* which Moses the servant of *ADONAI* commanded you, to love *ADONAI* your God and walk in all His ways, and to keep His *mitzvot*, cling to Him and worship Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

⁶ So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents. ⁷ Now to the one half-tribe of Manasseh Moses had given inheritance in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua gave territory among their kinsmen to the west of the Jordan. Moreover, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them ⁸ and spoke to them saying: “Return to your tents with great wealth and with very much cattle, with silver, gold, bronze, iron, and with very many clothes. Share the spoil of your enemies with your brothers.”

⁹ So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned and departed from *Bnei-Yisrael* at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, to the land of their inheritance that they had possessed, according to the mouth of *ADONAI* by Moses’s hand.

¹⁰ Now when they came to the region near the Jordan in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan—a large, conspicuous altar.

¹¹ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* heard about it and said: “Behold, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built an altar opposite the land of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan, across from *Bnei-Yisrael*.” ¹² And when *Bnei-Yisrael* heard of it, the whole congregation of *Bnei-Yisrael* assembled at Shiloh to go up against them in war. ¹³ So *Bnei-Yisrael* sent word to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas son of Eleazar the *kohen*, ¹⁴ and with him ten chieftains, one chieftain from each ancestral house of each of the tribes of Israel. Every one of them was the head of his ancestral house among the thousands of Israel.

¹⁵ So they came to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in the land of Gilead, and spoke with them saying: ¹⁶ “Thus says the whole congregation of *ADONAI*: ‘What is this treachery that you have committed today against the

God of Israel, by turning away from following *ADONAI*, building yourselves an altar, rebelling this day against *ADONAI*? ¹⁷ Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves to this day, although a plague came on the congregation of *ADONAI*, ¹⁸ that you would turn away this day from following *ADONAI*? Now you rebel against *ADONAI* today, tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel! ¹⁹ If, however, the land of your possession is unclean, then cross over to the land of the possession of *ADONAI*, where *ADONAI*'s Tabernacle stands. Acquire holdings among us, but do not rebel against *ADONAI* or against us by building an altar for yourselves other than the altar of *ADONAI* our God. ²⁰ Did not Achan son of Zerah act unfaithfully concerning the things under the ban, and so wrath fell on the entire community of Israel? Nor did that man perish alone in his iniquity!"

²¹ Then the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh answered, and spoke to the heads of the thousands of Israel: ²² "God of gods is *ADONAI*! God of gods is *ADONAI*! He knows, and may Israel itself know! If we acted in rebellion or in treachery against *ADONAI*, don't spare us this day! ²³ If we have built an altar to turn away from following *ADONAI*, or if it was to offer burnt offering or grain offering on it, or to offer sacrifices of fellowship offerings on it, let *ADONAI* Himself require it. ²⁴ But we have done this rather out of anxious concern, for a reason, saying: 'In the future, your children might say to our children: "What have you to do with *ADONAI*, God of Israel? ²⁵ For *ADONAI* has made the Jordan a border between us and you, you children of Reuben and children of Gad—you have no share in *ADONAI*!' So your children may make our children stop fearing *ADONAI*.'

²⁶ "Therefore we said: 'Let's now build an altar for ourselves—not for burnt offering or for sacrifice—²⁷ but as a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, so that we may do the service of *ADONAI* before Him with our burnt offerings, with our sacrifices, and with our fellowship offerings. Then your children may not say to our children in times to come, "You have no share in *ADONAI*!"'

²⁸ Therefore we said: 'If they say such to us or to our future generations, then we will say, "See the replica of the altar of *ADONAI* which our fathers made—not for burnt offering, or for sacrifice, but as a witness between us and you.'" ²⁹ Far be it from us that we should rebel against *ADONAI* and turn away this day from following *ADONAI*, by building an altar for burnt offering, for grain offering, or for sacrifice, besides the altar of *ADONAI* our God that stands before His Tabernacle."

³⁰ So when Phinehas the *kohen* and the leaders of the congregation—the heads of the thousands of Israel who were with him—heard the words that the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spoke, it pleased them well. ³¹ So Phinehas son of Eleazar the *kohen* said to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the children of

Manasseh, "Today we know that *ADONAI* is in the midst of us, because you have not committed this treachery against *ADONAI*. Now you have delivered *Bnei-Yisrael* from the hand of *ADONAI*."

³² Then Phinehas son of Eleazar the *kohen* and the leaders returned from the children of Reuben and from the children of Gad, from the land of Gilead, to the land of Canaan, to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and brought back a report to them. ³³ The report pleased *Bnei-Yisrael*, and *Bnei-Yisrael* blessed God, and they did not speak of going up against them in war, to destroy the land in which the children of Reuben and the children of Gad were living. ³⁴ So the children of Reuben and the children of Gad named the altar, "for it is a witness between us that *ADONAI* is God."

Keep and Do Torah

23 Now it came about after many days, when *ADONAI* had given rest to Israel from all their enemies around them, and Joshua was old and advanced in years, ² that Joshua summoned all Israel, their elders, their heads, their judges, and their officials, and said to them: "I have grown old and am advanced in years. ³ Now you have seen all that *ADONAI* your God has done to all these nations because of you, for it was *ADONAI* your God who was fighting for you. ⁴ Behold, I have allotted to you as an inheritance, according to your tribes, these nations that remain, along with all the nations that I have cut off, from the Jordan to the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun. ⁵ So *ADONAI* your God, He Himself will thrust them out from before you, and drive them from before you, so you will possess their land, just as *ADONAI* your God spoke to you.

⁶ "Be very resolute to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the *Torah* of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right or to the left, ⁷ and not intermingle with these nations who are still remaining among you. Do not mention the names of their gods or swear by them or worship them or bow down to them. ⁸ But cling to *ADONAI* your God, as you have done to this day. ⁹ For *ADONAI* has driven out from before you great and mighty nations. As for you, no one remained standing before you to this day.

¹⁰ One of you can put a thousand to flight, for *ADONAI* your God, He Himself is fighting for you, just as He said to you. ¹¹ For your own sake, therefore, be most mindful to love *ADONAI* your God. ¹² For if you ever go back and cling to the remnant of these nations that are still remaining among you, and intermarry with them, and you associate with them and they with you, ¹³ know for certain that *ADONAI* your God will no longer drive these nations out from before you. Instead they will become a snare and a trap for you, a scourge in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which *ADONAI* your God has given you.

¹⁴ "Now today I am about to go the way of all the earth. You will know with all your heart and with all

your soul that not one word of the good things which *ADONAI* your God spoke concerning you has failed to happen. All of them have come to pass for you; not one word has failed. ¹⁵ Now it will be that just as all the good things which *ADONAI* your God has spoken to you have come upon you, so all the evil things will *ADONAI* bring upon you, until He has wiped you off this good land which *ADONAI* your God has given you. ¹⁶ When you transgress the covenant of *ADONAI* your God, which He commanded you, and go and worship other gods and bow down to them, then will the anger of *ADONAI* burn against you, and you will perish quickly off this good land which He has given you."

Whom Will You Worship?

24 Then Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned Israel's elders, heads, judges, and officials. So they presented themselves before God. ² Then Joshua said to all the people: "Thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel: 'From ancient times your fathers—Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor—lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods. ³ Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through the entire land of Canaan and multiplied his offspring. I gave him Isaac, ⁴ then to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave Mount Seir to possess it as his own, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

⁵ "So I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in its midst, and afterward I brought you out. ⁶ I brought your fathers out of Egypt. When you came to the sea, the Egyptians pursued your fathers to the Sea of Reeds with chariots and horsemen. ⁷ But when they cried out to *ADONAI*, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, then He brought the sea upon them, and it covered them; and your eyes saw what I did to the Egyptians. Then you stayed in the wilderness for a long time.

⁸ "Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites who were living beyond the Jordan. Though they fought against you, I gave them into your hand, and you possessed their land when I destroyed them from before you. ⁹ Then Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, rose and fought against Israel. He even sent and called for Balaam son of Beor to curse you. ¹⁰ But I refused to listen to Balaam; instead, he had to keep blessing you. Thus I delivered you from his hand.

¹¹ "Then you crossed over the Jordan and came to Jericho, but the men of Jericho fought against you—the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—but I delivered them into your hand. ¹² Then I sent the hornet before you and it drove them out from before you—the two kings of the Amorites—not by your sword or your bow. ¹³ I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities that you had not built and you have settled in them, vineyards and olive groves that you had not planted, that you are eating.'

¹⁴ "Now therefore, fear *ADONAI* and worship Him in sincerity and in truth. Get rid of the gods that your fathers had worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and worship *ADONAI*. ¹⁵ If it seems bad to you to worship *ADONAI*, then choose for yourselves today whom you will serve—whether the gods that your fathers worshiped that were beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will worship *ADONAI*!"

¹⁶ Then the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake *ADONAI* to worship other gods! ¹⁷ For it was *ADONAI* our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us all along the way that we traveled and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. ¹⁸ It was *ADONAI* who drove out from before us all the peoples, the Amorites that lived in the land. Therefore we also will worship *ADONAI*, for He is our God."

¹⁹ But Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to worship *ADONAI*, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He will not pardon your transgression and your sins. ²⁰ If you forsake *ADONAI* and worship foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you, after He has done good to you."

²¹ But the people said to Joshua, "No! For we will worship *ADONAI*."

²² So Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses to yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves *ADONAI*, to worship Him."

"We are witnesses," they responded.

²³ "Now therefore, get rid of the foreign gods that are in your midst, and incline your hearts to *ADONAI*, God of Israel." ²⁴ And the people said to Joshua, "We will worship none but *ADONAI* our God, and we will obey none but His voice."

²⁵ So Joshua cut a covenant with the people that day, and set for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. ²⁶ Then Joshua wrote these words in the scroll of the *Torah* of God. Also he took a great stone and set it up there under the oak that was by the Sanctuary of *ADONAI*. ²⁷ Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone will be a witness to us. For it has heard all the words of *ADONAI* which He has spoken to us. So it will be a witness to you, lest you deny your God."

²⁸ Joshua then dismissed the people, each to his own inheritance.

²⁹ Now it came to pass after these things that Joshua son of Nun, the servant of *ADONAI*, died at the age of 110 years. ³⁰ So they buried him in the territory of his own portion in Timnath-Serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ³¹ Israel worshiped *ADONAI* all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work of *ADONAI* that He had done for Israel.

³² Joseph's bones, which *Bnei-Yisrael* had brought up from Egypt, they buried in Shechem, in the parcel of

ground that Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for 100 pieces of silver. † It became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

† *cf. John 4:5.*

³³ Then Eleazar son of Aaron died, and they buried him in Gibeah, which had been given to Phinehas his son, in the hill country of Ephraim.

Judges

Judges Introduction

The Hebrew word is a plural word that means “judges.” comes from the root-verb *shapat*, which means “govern” or “rule.” The book of Judges derives its name from the judges that led the people of Israel before they had a king. The text of Scriptures does not indicate who authored the book of Judges; however, the Talmud ascribes its authorship to the prophet Samuel. The book covers the time in Israel’s history from Joshua’s death to the rise of the monarchy, a period of 325 years from approximately 1380 to 1050 BCE. Although the children of Israel had conquered and occupied most of the land of Canaan, the individual tribes had not taken full possession of their allotted territories, which allowed heathen nations to remain in the land. These nations eventually became a snare to the children of Israel, who conceded to following their pagan ways. As a result, the Hebrews were punished for their idolatry.

A pattern of apostasy, oppression by the heathens, repentance, and deliverance by God—through raising up a judge to deliver the people—is a reoccurring one in the book of Judges. Covenant is another important theme in the book. God’s desire for Israel is that they would walk in a loving relationship with Him—and Him alone. In Judges 2, God reminds the people of Israel that He will not break His covenant with them, and that He had asked them not to make a covenant with any of the surrounding nations. Israel, however, disobeyed His command. Whenever the children of Israel forsook their covenant relationship with God, He turned them over to their enemies so that they may repent and turn back to Him. Every time Israel cried out and repented, God raised up a judge to deliver them from their enemies because of His covenant relationship with this nation. An appropriate summary for the book of Judges is found in chapter 17 and repeated in chapter 21: “In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes” (17:6). The children of Israel did not go astray because they did not have an earthly king; they went astray because they rejected their heavenly King. In Leviticus 26, God tells the people of Israel that if they walk in His statutes and keep His mitzvot (commandments), He would walk among them and be their God, and they would be His people. God’s desire has always been for intimacy with His people. In order to deliver them from their enemies, God has raised up a just Judge, Messiah. According to Psalms 2, all those who accept His rule will be delivered, but the nations that reject His rule will suffer the negative consequences.

Judges Headings

- Tribes Possess the Land
- After Joshua, Israel Abandons
- Rise of Judges
- Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar
- Deborah, Barak, and Yael
- Deborah’s Song
- Midianite Oppression
- Calling of Gideon
- Signs of the Fleece
- Gideon’s Victories, Ephod, and Death
- Bloodshed of Abimelech and Shechem
- Troubles in Gilead
- Jephthah’s Valor and Vow
- Birth of Samson
- Riddle of the Lion
- Victory with a Jawbone
- Delilah Betrays Samson
- Samson Avenged
- Micah’s Idols

The Danites Seek a New Home
 Crime at Gibeah of Benjamin
 Battle of Gibeah
 Israel Preserves the Benjamites

Tribes Possess the Land

¹ Now it came to pass after the death of Joshua that *Bnei-Yisrael* inquired of *ADONAI* saying, "Who will be the first to go up for us against the Canaanites to attack them?" ² *ADONAI* said, "Judah will go up. Behold, I have given the land into his hand."

³ Judah then said to his brother Simeon, "Come up with me to my allotted territory, so that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I also will go with you into your allotted territory." So Simeon went with him.

⁴ When Judah went up, *ADONAI* delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands; they struck down 10,000 of them at Bezek. ⁵ They found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, engaged him in battle, and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

⁶ Though Adoni-Bezek fled, they pursued him, caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his big toes.

⁷ So Adoni-Bezek said, "Seventy kings, having their thumbs and big toes cut off, used to pick up scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me." They brought him to Jerusalem and he died there.

⁸ Then the children of Judah attacked Jerusalem, captured it, struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. ⁹ Afterward, the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the hill country, in the Negev and in the lowland.

¹⁰ Judah then marched against the Canaanites who dwelt in Hebron (the former name of Hebron was Kiriath-Arba), and they defeated Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi. ¹¹ From there Judah marched against the inhabitants of Debir (the former name of Debir was Kiriath-Sepher). ¹² Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kiriath-Sepher and captures it, to him will I give my daughter Achsah for a wife." ¹³ So Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger kinsman, captured it. So Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah as a wife. ¹⁴ Now it came about when she came to him, she had persuaded Othniel to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What do you need?"

¹⁵ "Give me a blessing," she said. "For you have given me land in the Negev; you should also give me springs of water." So Caleb gave her the Upper Springs and the Lower Springs.

¹⁶ The children of the Kenite, Moses's father-in-law, went up with the children of Judah from the City of Palms to the wilderness of Judah, which is in the Negev of Arad. They went and settled with the people.

¹⁷ Then Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they defeated the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath.

They utterly destroyed it, and thus the name of the city was called Hormah. ¹⁸ Also, Judah captured Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory and Ekron with its territory. ¹⁹ *ADONAI* was with Judah, and he possessed the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had iron chariots. ²⁰ Then they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had promised, so he drove out from there the three sons of Anak.

²¹ But the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem, so the Jebusites continued to live with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

²² Also, the house of Joseph marched against Beth-El, and *ADONAI* was with them. ²³ The house of Joseph sent men to spy out Beth-El (the former name of the city was Luz). ²⁴ Now the scouts saw a man coming out from the city and they said to him, "Please show us the entrance into the city and we will deal kindly with you."

²⁵ So he showed them the entrance into the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man go free with all his family. ²⁶ So the man went into the land of the Hittites, built a city, and named it Luz, which is its name to this day.

²⁷ Manasseh, however, did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-Shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages. So the Canaanites resolved to dwell in that land. ²⁸ When Israel became strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out.

²⁹ Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were living in Gezer, so the Canaanites settled in Gezer among them. ³⁰ Nor did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, so the Canaanites settled among them, but became subject to forced labor.

³¹ Nor did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acco or the inhabitants of Zidon, Achlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or Rehob; ³² so the Asherites lived among the Canaanites who were dwelling in the land, because they did not drive them out.

³³ Nor did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-Shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-Anath, but lived among the Canaanites dwelling in the land, though the inhabitants of Beth-Shemesh and Beth-Anath became forced labor for them.

³⁴ But the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the hill country, for they would not let them come down to the valley. ³⁵ Also the Amorites persisted in

dwelling in Mount Heres, in Aijalon and in Shaalbim, but when the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, they became forced labor for them.³⁶ So the territory of the Amorites ran from the Ascent of Akrabbim † from the Rock and upward.

After Joshua, Israel Abandons ADONAI

2 Now the angel of ADONAI came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and He said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and took you into the land which I swore to your fathers. I also said, 'I will never break My covenant with you.'² Now as for you, you must make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land. You must break down their altars.' But you have not listened to My voice. What is this you have done?"³ Therefore, I also said, 'I will not drive them out from before you, but they will be thorns in your sides, and their gods will be a snare to you.'"⁴ Now when the angel of ADONAI spoke these words to all *Bnei-Yisrael*, the people lifted up their voices and wept.⁵ So they called the name of that place Bochim, †† and they sacrificed there to ADONAI.

⁶ Now when Joshua had sent the people away, *Bnei-Yisrael* went every man to his inheritance to possess the land.⁷ Then the people worshiped ADONAI all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of ADONAI that He had done for Israel.⁸ Then Joshua son of Nun, the servant of ADONAI, died at the age of 110 years,⁹ and they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-Heres, in the hill country of Ephraim north of Mount Gaash.

¹⁰ But when all that generation were gathered to their fathers, there arose another generation after them that did not experience ADONAI or the work that He had done for Israel.¹¹ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* did what was evil in ADONAI's eyes, and worshiped the Baalim.¹² They abandoned ADONAI, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples around them, and bowed down to them. So they provoked the anger of ADONAI.¹³ So they forsook ADONAI and worshiped Baal and the Ashtaroth.¹⁴ So the anger of ADONAI burned against Israel, and He gave them over to the hands of plunderers who plundered them, and He sold them over into the hand of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand up before their enemies.¹⁵ Whenever they went out, the hand of ADONAI was against them for evil, as ADONAI had spoken and as ADONAI had sworn to them. So they were severely distressed.

Rise of Judges

¹⁶ Then ADONAI raised up judges who delivered them from the hand of those who plundered them.¹⁷ Yet they listened not to their judges, for they prostituted

themselves after other gods and bowed down to them. They quickly turned aside from the way in which their fathers walked in obeying the commandments of ADONAI; they did not do so.¹⁸ Whenever ADONAI raised judges up for them, ADONAI was with the judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For ADONAI was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and crushed them.¹⁹ But when the judge died, they would keep turning back and acted more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods, worshiping them, and bowing down to them. They abandoned none of their practices and stubborn ways.

²⁰ So the anger of ADONAI burned against Israel, and He declared, "Since this nation has transgressed My covenant that I commanded their fathers and has not listened to My voice,²¹ I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died,²² in order to test Israel by them, whether or not they will keep the way of ADONAI to walk in it as their fathers did."²³ So ADONAI left those nations, without driving them out quickly. Thus so He had not given them into the hand of Joshua.

3 Now these are the nations that ADONAI left, to test all Israel who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan.² It was only in order that the generations of *Bnei-Yisrael* might learn from war, which they had not experienced before.³ These nations included the five Philistine lords, and all the Canaanites, Zidonians and the Hivites living in the hill country of Lebanon from Mount Baal-hermon to the entrance of Hamath.⁴ They were for testing Israel, to know whether they would obey the *mitzvot* of ADONAI, which He had commanded their fathers by Moses' hand.

⁵ But *Bnei-Yisrael* settled among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites,⁶ and took their daughters for themselves as wives, gave their own daughters to their sons, and worshiped their gods.⁷ *Bnei-Yisrael* did what was evil in ADONAI's eyes, forgot ADONAI their God and worshiped the Baalim and the Asherahs.⁸ So ADONAI's anger burned against Israel, and He sold them over into the hand of King Cushan-Rishathaim of Aram-Naharaim, and *Bnei-Yisrael* served Cushan-Rishathaim for eight years.

Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar

⁹ When *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to ADONAI, ADONAI raised up a deliverer for *Bnei-Yisrael* to deliver them—Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger kinsman.¹⁰ The Spirit of ADONAI came upon him as he judged Israel. When he went out to war, ADONAI gave King Cushan-Rishathaim of Aram into his hand so that he had the upper hand over Cushan-Rishathaim.

¹¹ Then the land had peace 40 years.

When Othniel son of Kenaz died,¹² *Bnei-Yisrael* again did what was evil in ADONAI's eyes. So ADONAI

† Or Scorpion Ascent †† Means weepers

strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. ¹³ So he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and Amalek, then went and defeated Israel and took possession of the City of Palms. ¹⁴ *Bnei-Yisrael* became subject to King Eglon of Moab for 18 years.

¹⁵ But when *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to *ADONAI*, *ADONAI* raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud son of Gera the Benjamite—a left-handed man. Now *Bnei-Yisrael* sent tribute with him to King Eglon of Moab. ¹⁶ Ehud made himself a double-edged sword, a cubit in length, which he girded on his right thigh under his cloak. ¹⁷ Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Eglon was a very fat man. ¹⁸ Now when Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he dismissed the people who had carried the tribute, ¹⁹ but he himself turned back, at the idols that were near Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king."

"Keep silence!" he replied, so all his attendants left him.

²⁰ Then Ehud approached him while he was sitting alone in a roof chamber where it was cool, and said, "I have a message from God for you," so he arose from his throne. ²¹ Then Ehud reached with his left hand, drew the sword from his right thigh and thrust it into his belly. ²² Even the handle went in after the blade and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not withdraw the sword out of his belly—and the filth came out. ²³ Then Ehud went out by the porch, shut the doors of the roof chamber on him, and locked them.

²⁴ After he had gone out, his courtiers came and looked, but behold, the doors of the roof chamber were locked. So they said, "He is only relieving himself in the cool chamber." ²⁵ So they waited till they were embarrassed, but behold, he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber. So they took the key and opened them—and behold, their master was lying dead on the floor.

²⁶ But Ehud escaped while they were lingering, passed beyond the idols and escaped to Seirah. ²⁷ When he arrived, he blew the *shofar* in the hill country of Ephraim, so *Bnei-Yisrael* went down with him from the hill country, and he was in front of them. ²⁸ He said to them, "Follow me, for *ADONAI* has delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan opposite Moab, and allowed no one to cross over. ²⁹ Then they struck down at that time about 10,000 men of Moab—all stout men of valor—not a man escaped.

³⁰ So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. Then the land had peace for 80 years.

³¹ After him came Shamgar son of Anath, who struck down 600 Philistine men with an ox-goad. So he also delivered Israel.

Deborah, Barak, and Yael

⁴ But *Bnei-Yisrael* again did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes after Ehud had died. ² So *ADONAI* sold them over into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. His army commander was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-Ha-Goyim. ³ So *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to *ADONAI*, for he had 900 iron chariots, and had harshly oppressed *Bnei-Yisrael* for 20 years.

⁴ Now Deborah, a woman who was a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. ⁵ She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-El in the hill country of Ephraim, and *Bnei-Yisrael* came up to her for judgment. ⁶ Now she sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "Hasn't *ADONAI*, God of Israel, commanded, 'Go, march to Mount Tabor, and take with you 10,000 men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun?' ⁷ Then at the Kishon torrent, I will draw out to you Sisera, commander of Jabin's army with his chariots and his multitude, and I will give him into your hand."

⁸ But Barak said to her, "If you are going with me, then I will go. But if you aren't going with me, I won't go."

⁹ "Surely I will go with you," she said. "However, no honor will be yours on the way that you are about to go—for *ADONAI* will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." So Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ Then Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali together to Kedesh, and 10,000 men marched up after him, and Deborah went up with him.

¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite had separated himself from the Kenites, from the children of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far as the oak in Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh.

¹² They told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. ¹³ So Sisera ordered all his chariots—900 iron chariots—and all the troops that were with him, from Harosheth-Ha-Goyim to the Kishon.

¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, "Arise! For this is the day in which *ADONAI* will deliver Sisera into your hand. Has *ADONAI* not gone out before you?" So Barak came down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him. ¹⁵ *ADONAI* threw Sisera and all his chariots and all his army into confusion before Barak with the edge of the sword. Then Sisera got down from his chariot and fled away on foot. ¹⁶ But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth-Ha-Goyim. The whole army of Sisera fell by the sword; not one was left.

¹⁷ Meanwhile, Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Yael the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between King Jabin of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. ¹⁸ So Yael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me! Don't be

† Or *Haroshet of the Nations*

afraid!" So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a blanket.

¹⁹ He said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a skin of milk and made him drink some, and covered him. ²⁰ Then he said to her, "Stand at the entrance of the tent, and if anyone comes and asks you saying, 'Is there a man here?' then you will say, 'There's no one.'"

²¹ Then Yael, Heber's wife, took a tent pin and got a hammer in her hand, approached him stealthily and drove the pin into his temple until it pierced through into the ground—for he was exhausted and in a deep sleep. So he died. ²² Now behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Yael came out to meet him and said to him, "Come, I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he entered with her, and behold, Sisera was lying dead, with a tent-pin in his temple!

²³ So on that day God subdued King Jabin of Canaan before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ²⁴ The hand of *Bnei-Yisrael* pressed hard on King Jabin of Canaan until they had cut off King Jabin of Canaan.

Deborah's Song

5 Then Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang on that day saying:

² "When leaders take the lead in Israel, when people freely offer themselves, bless *ADONAI*!

³ Listen, O kings! Give ear, O rulers! I, to *ADONAI* I will sing, I will sing praise to *ADONAI*, the God of Israel.

⁴ *ADONAI*, when You came out from Seir, when You marched from Edom's field, the earth trembled, the heavens also dropped, yes, the clouds dropped water.

⁵ The mountains quaked before *ADONAI*, this Sinai at the presence of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel!

⁶ In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Yael, the highways were deserted, travelers walked by crooked paths.

⁷ Villages were deserted in Israel, deserted, until I, Deborah, arose, a mother in Israel arose.

⁸ They chose new gods—then war was in the gates. No shield or spear was seen among 40,000 in Israel!

⁹ My heart is with Israel's rulers, who offer themselves freely among the people. Bless *ADONAI*!

¹⁰ Riders on white donkeys, sitting on saddle blankets, traveling on the road, sing!

¹¹ Louder than the sound of archers,

at the watering places! There let them rehearse the righteous acts of *ADONAI*, the righteous deeds for His villages in Israel.

Then the people of *ADONAI* went down to the gates.

¹² Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, utter a song!

Arise, Barak, lead away your captives, O son of Abinoam!

¹³ Then a remnant of nobles came down. *ADONAI*'s people came down to me with the mighty ones.

¹⁴ Those with root in Amalek are from Ephraim, following you, Benjamin, with your peoples.

From Machir came down rulers, and from Zebulun wielding the marshal's staff.

¹⁵ Issachar's chiefs were with Deborah. Issachar was with Barak.

Into the valley they rushed at his heels. Among the divisions of Reuben there were great resolves of heart.

¹⁶ Why did you stay in the sheepfolds—to hear the piping for the flocks?

Among the clans of Reuben there was much searching of heart.

¹⁷ Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan, and Dan, why did he stay by the ships?

Asher sat at the seacoast, dwelling by its docks.

¹⁸ Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives to death, and Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield.

¹⁹ The kings came, they fought, then the kings of Canaan fought, at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo, but they took no spoil of silver.

²⁰ From heaven, the stars fought, in their courses they fought Sisera.

²¹ The Kishon torrent swept them away—that ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon! O my soul, march on with strength!

²² Then the horses' hooves beat from the dashing, the dashing of his mighty steeds.

²³ 'Curse Meroz!' said the angel of *ADONAI*, 'Utterly curse its inhabitants, for they came not to the aid of *ADONAI*, to the aid of *ADONAI* among the mighty.'

²⁴ Blessed above women is Yael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, above women in the tent is she blessed.

²⁵ Water he asked, milk she gave him. In a lordly bowl she brought him butter.

²⁶ Her hand reached for the tent pin, her right hand to the workmen's hammer,

and with the hammer she struck Sisera,
 she smashed his head—
 yes, she crushed and pierced his temple.
²⁷ At her feet he collapsed, he fell, he lay.
 Between her feet he bowed, he fell.
 Where he bowed, there he fell dead.
²⁸ Through the window, Sisera's mother
 looked out, through the lattice.
 and lamented shrilly:
 'Why does his chariot delay in coming?
 Why do the wheels of his chariots tarry?'
²⁹ The wisest of her princesses answer her,
 yes, she repeats the words to herself:
³⁰ 'Are they not finding, dividing the spoil?
 A maiden, maidens for every warrior!
 To Sisera a spoil of dyed garments—
 a spoil of dyed garments of embroidery,
 double-dyed garments of embroidery
 for the necks of every spoiler!'
³¹ So let all Your enemies perish, *ADONAI*!
 But may those who love Him be
 like the rising of the sun in its might."
 Then the land had peace for 40 years.

Midianite Oppression

6 Then *Bnei-Yisrael* did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, so *ADONAI* gave them into the hand of Midian for seven years. ² Midian maintained an upper hand over Israel, and because of Midian *Bnei-Yisrael* made themselves hideouts in the mountains—caves and strongholds. ³ Whenever Israel had done their sowing, the Midianites, Amalekites and people from the east would come up and raid them. ⁴ They would set up camp by them, destroy the produce of the land as far as Gaza, and leave nothing in Israel to live on—not a sheep, ox, or donkey. ⁵ For they would come up with their cattle and their tents, and invade like a multitude of locusts. Both they and their camels were innumerable, and they would come to the land to ruin it. ⁶ So Israel was brought very low because of Midian, and *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to *ADONAI*.

⁷ Now it came about when *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to *ADONAI* because of Midian, ⁸ that *ADONAI* sent a prophet to *Bnei-Yisrael*, and he said to them, "Thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel, 'It was I who brought you up from Egypt, and brought you out of the house of bondage. ⁹ Then I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all your oppressors, and drove them out from before you and gave you their land. ¹⁰ Then I said to you, "I am *ADONAI* your God. You are not to fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are dwelling. But you have not obeyed My voice.'"

Calling of Gideon

¹¹ Then the angel of *ADONAI* came and sat under the terebinth that was at Ophrah, that belonged to Joash

the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress—in order to hide it from the Midianites. ¹² Then the angel of *ADONAI* appeared to him and said to him, " *ADONAI* is with you, O mighty man of valor."

¹³ But Gideon said to him, "O my lord, if *ADONAI* is with us, then why has all this befallen us? So where are all His wonders that our fathers told us about saying 'Didn't *ADONAI* bring us up from Egypt?' But now *ADONAI* has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

¹⁴ Then *ADONAI* turned toward him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have not I sent you?" †

¹⁵ Then he said to him, "Me, my Lord? With what would I deliver Israel? Look, my family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

¹⁶ But *ADONAI* said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you will strike down Midian as if it were one man."

¹⁷ Then he said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Your eyes, then please, show me a sign that it is really You talking with me. ¹⁸ Please, don't leave from here, until I come to You and bring out my offering and lay it before You."

So He said, "I will stay until you come back."

¹⁹ Then Gideon went in and prepared a kid and *matzot* from an ephah of flour. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to Him under the terebinth and presented them. ²⁰ Then the angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the *matzah* and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." So he did so. ²¹ Then the angel of *ADONAI* put out the end of the staff that was in His hand and touched the meat and the *matzah*. Fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the *matzah*. Then the angel of *ADONAI* vanished from his sight.

²² When Gideon realized that He was the angel of *ADONAI*, Gideon said, "Alas, my Lord *ADONAI*! For I have seen the angel of *ADONAI* face to face!"

²³ But *ADONAI* said to him, " *Shalom* to you. Fear not, you will not die." ²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to *ADONAI* and called it *ADONAI - shalom*. To this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

²⁵ Now it came to pass the same night that *ADONAI* said to him, "Take the young bull that belongs to your father and a second bull of seven years old, pull down the altar of Baal that belongs to your father, cut down the Asherah that is beside it, ²⁶ build an altar to *ADONAI* your God on the top of this stronghold in an orderly manner, and take the second bull and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah pole that you will cut down." ²⁷ So Gideon took ten of his male servants and did as *ADONAI* had spoken to him. But since he was too afraid of his father's household and the townspeople to do it by day, he did it at night.

²⁸ Now when the townspeople arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was broken down,

† cf. Heb. 11:32-34.

the Asherah pole that was beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered up on the altar that was built. ²⁹ So they said one to another, "Who did this thing?" And when they inquired and asked around, they said: "Gideon son of Joash did this thing." ³⁰ Then the townspeople said to Joash, "Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has broken down the altar of Baal, and even cut down the Asherah pole that was beside it."

³¹ But Joash said to all who stood against him, "So you're going to defend Baal? You're going to rescue him? Whoever defends him will be put to death in the morning! If he is a god, let him defend himself—since someone has broken down his altar." ³² So on that day he was called Jerubbaal saying, "Let Baal contend with him, since he broke down his altar."

³³ Now all the Midianites, the Amalekites and the people of the east gathered together, crossed over and camped in the valley of Jezreel. ³⁴ But the *Ruach ADONAI* clothed Gideon, and he blew the *shofar*, and Abiezer rallied behind him. ³⁵ Then he sent messengers throughout Manasseh, and they also rallied behind him. Then he sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they came up to join them.

Signs of the Fleece

³⁶ Then Gideon said to God, "If You are going to deliver Israel by my hand, as You have spoken, ³⁷ see, I am putting a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece, and all the ground is dry, then I will know that You will deliver Israel by my hand, as You have spoken." ³⁸ And it was so. When he rose up early the next day, he squeezed the fleece and wrung dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water.

³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, "Let not Your anger burn against me if I speak once more. Let me please test once more with the fleece—let it now be dry only on the fleece, but let there be dew over all the ground." ⁴⁰ God did so that night, since it was dry only on the fleece, and there was dew over all the ground.

7 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him, rose up early and camped beside En-Harod, while the camp of Midian was north of them, by Gibeath-Moreh, in the valley.

² But *ADONAI* said to Gideon, "Too many are the people who are with you, for Me to give the Midianites into their hand. Otherwise Israel would glorify itself against Me saying, 'My own hand has delivered me.' ¹³ So now, make a proclamation in the ears of the people saying, 'Whoever is afraid or anxious may turn back and leave from Mount Gilead.'" So 22,000 people turned back, while 10,000 remained.

⁴ But *ADONAI* said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Now it will be that he of whom I say to you, 'This will go with you,' he will go with you, but anyone of whom I say to you, 'This one will not go

with you,' he will not go." ⁵ So he brought the troops down to the water, and *ADONAI* said to Gideon, "You are to set apart everyone who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, and everyone who bows down on his knees to drink." ⁶ Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was 300 men, but all the rest of the people bowed down on their knees to drink water. ⁷ Then *ADONAI* said to Gideon, "With the 300 men who lapped I will deliver you and give the Midianites into your hand. So let all the other people go, every man to his place." ⁸ So the 300 took provisions and their *shofarot* in their hands. He sent all the other men of Israel each to his tent, but he kept the 300 men.

Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley. ⁹ It came to pass the same night that *ADONAI* said to him, "Arise, get down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand. ¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go down, first go down to the camp with your attendant Purah. ¹¹ Then you will hear what they are saying, and after that your hands will be strengthened to attack the camp." So he went down with his attendant Purah to an outpost of the army that was in camp.

¹² Now the Midianites, the Amalekites and all the people of the east were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were countless, as numerous as the sand on the seashore. ¹³ Yet when Gideon came, behold, there was a man relating a dream to his fellow, saying, "Listen, I just now had a dream: there was a loaf of barley bread that came tumbling into the camp of Midian, came up to a tent and struck it so it fell, and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat."

¹⁴ His companion answered and said, "This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel—God has delivered Midian and all the camp into his hand!"

¹⁵ Now when Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship. Then he returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise! For *ADONAI* has given into your hand the camp of Midian."

¹⁶ Then he divided the 300 men into three columns, and he put into the hands of all of them *shofarot* and empty pitchers, with torches inside the pitchers.

¹⁷ Then he said to them, "Watch me and do likewise. So behold, when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do just as I do. ¹⁸ When I and all that are with me blow the *shofar*, then you also blow the *shofarot* all around the camp, and say, 'For *ADONAI* and for Gideon!'"

¹⁹ So Gideon and the 300 men who were with him came up to the outermost part of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just posted the watch. Then they blew the *shofarot* and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands.

²⁰ When the three columns blew the *shofarot* and broke the pitchers, they held the torches in their left hands and the *shofarot* in their right hands to blow, and they shouted, "A sword for *ADONAI* and for

† cf. 2 Cor. 4:7.

Gideon!" ²¹ Each one stood in his place around the camp, and then the entire army ran, shouting as they fled. ²² Now when they blew the 300 *shofarot*, *ADONAI* set every man's sword against his fellow throughout the entire army. So the army fled as far as Beth-Shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-Meholah, by Tabbath.

²³ Then men of Israel were summoned from Naph-tali, Asher and all Manasseh, and they pursued Midian. ²⁴ Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim saying, "Come down against Midian and seize the waters down to Beth-Barah, all along the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were summoned and took control of the waterside as far as Beth-Barah by the Jordan. ²⁵ Then they captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; they slew Oreb at the Rock of Oreb and they slew Zeeb at the Wine-press of Zeeb. They kept pursuing Midian, and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon from across the Jordan.

Gideon's Victories, Ephod, and Death

8 Now the men of Ephraim said to him, "What is this thing you have done to us, not calling us when you went to fight against Midian?" So they criticized him sharply.

² But he said to them, "What have I now done compared to you? Is not the gleaning of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? ³ God has given into your hand the princes of Midian—Oreb and Zeeb—so what was I able to do compared to you?" Their anger with him subsided after he said this.

⁴ Then Gideon reached the Jordan and crossed over. He and the 300 men with him were exhausted, yet still pursuing. ⁵ He said to the men of Succoth, "Please, give loaves of bread to the people on foot with me, for they are exhausted, and I am chasing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."

⁶ But the officials of Succoth said, "Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand? So why should we give bread to your army?"

⁷ Gideon replied, "Therefore when *ADONAI* delivers Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will thresh your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and briers." ⁸ From there he went up to Penuel and spoke to them similarly, but the men of Penuel answered him just as the men of Succoth had answered. ⁹ So he spoke also to the men of Penuel saying, "When I come back safely, I will tear down this tower."

¹⁰ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and with them their armies of about 15,000 men, all who were left of all the army of the people of the east—the fallen were 120,000 swordsmen. ¹¹ Now Gideon went up by the road of the tent dwellers on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and ambushed the camp when it was off guard. ¹² When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them and captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.

¹³ Gideon son of Joash returned from the battle by the Ascent of Heres. ¹⁴ He captured a boy from the people of Succoth and questioned him, so he wrote down for him the officials of Succoth and its elders—77 men. ¹⁵ When he came to the men of Succoth, he said, "Behold Zebah and Zalmunna—about whom you mocked me saying, 'Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand? Why should we give bread to your exhausted men?'" ¹⁶ Then he seized the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he punished the men of Succoth. ¹⁷ He also tore down the tower of Penuel and slew the men of the city.

¹⁸ Then he asked Zebah and Zalmunna, "What kind of men did you kill at Tabor?"

"As you are, so they were," they answered. "Each one looked like the children of a king."

¹⁹ "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother," he said. "As *ADONAI* lives, if only you had let them live, I would not kill you." ²⁰ Then he said to Jeter his first-born, "Arise, kill them!" But the boy could not draw his sword, for he was afraid, since he was still a youth.

²¹ Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Rise up yourself and fall on us—for as the man is, so is his strength." So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

²² Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us—you, your son, and your grandson as well. For you have delivered us from the hand of Midian."

²³ But Gideon replied to them, "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. *ADONAI* alone will rule over you." ²⁴ Yet Gideon said to them, "I would make a request of you, that you would give me every man an earring from his spoil." (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

²⁵ "We'll certainly give them!" they replied. So they spread out a robe, and each one of them threw an earring from his spoil. ²⁶ So the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels of gold—besides the crescent ornaments, the pendants and the purple robes that were on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that were on their camels' necks. ²⁷ Gideon made it into an ephod, and put it in his town Ophrah. But all Israel prostituted themselves after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and his household.

²⁸ So Midian was subdued before *Bnei-Yisrael*, and they lifted up their heads no more. The land had tranquility for 40 years in the days of Gideon. ²⁹ Jerubbaal son of Joash went and lived in his own house. ³⁰ Now Gideon had 70 sons of his own issue, for he had many wives. ³¹ Also his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son—he called his name Abimelech.

³² Then Gideon son of Joash died at a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. ³³ But it came to pass, as

† cf. Rev. 11:15.

soon as Gideon was dead, that *Bnei-Yisrael* again prostituted themselves after the Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. ³⁴ So *Bnei-Yisrael* did not remember *ADONAI* their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side. ³⁵ Nor did they show kindness to the household of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon, in accord with all the goodness which he had done for Israel.

Bloodshed of Abimelech and Shechem

9 Now Abimelech son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem, to his mother's brothers, and spoke to them and the whole clan of his mother's father's household saying, ² "Speak now, in the ears of all the leaders of Shechem: Which is better for you, that 70 men—all the sons of Jerubbaal—rule over you, or that a single man rules over you? Remember also that I am your flesh and bone."

³ When his mother's brothers discussed all these words of his in the ears of all Shechem's leaders, their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother." ⁴ So they gave him 70 pieces of silver from the temple of Baal-berith †. Abimelech then hired idle and reckless fellows, who followed him. ⁵ Then he went to his father's house at Ophrah and slew his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, 70 men, on top of one stone. But Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, survived, for he hid himself. ⁶ Then all the leaders of Shechem and all Beth-Millo assembled themselves together and went and made Abimelech king at the terebinth of the pillar that was in Shechem.

⁷ Now when they told Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, lifted up his voice, called out and said to them, "Listen to me, O lords of Shechem, that God may listen to you! ⁸ Once the trees set out to anoint a king over them. So they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.' ⁹ But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I stop yielding my oil, that honors God and man, and go wave over the trees?' ¹⁰ Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come and reign over us.' ¹¹ But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I stop yielding my sweetness and my delicious fruit, and go wave over the trees?' ¹² So the trees said to the vine, 'You come and reign over us.' ¹³ But the vine said to them, 'Should I stop yielding my new wine, which cheers God and man, and go wave over the trees?' ¹⁴ Then all the trees said to the bramble, 'You come and reign over us.' ¹⁵ And the bramble said to the trees, 'If you truly are going to anoint me king over you, then come and take refuge in my shadow; but if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon.'

¹⁶ "So now, if you have acted in truth and integrity by making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt kindly with Jerubbaal and his household, and have done for him as he deserved— ¹⁷ for my father fought for you, and risked his life and delivered you from the hand of Midian, ¹⁸ but you have risen up against my father's

household today and have slain his sons—70 men on one stone—and have made Abimelech, son of his maidservant, king over the lords of Shechem just because he is your brother— ¹⁹ if you then have dealt in truth and integrity with Jerubbaal and with his household today, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. ²⁰ But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the lords of Shechem and Beth-millo, and let fire come out from the lords of Shechem and from Beth-millo and devour Abimelech!"

²¹ Then Jotham ran away and fled, and went to Beer and remained there because of his brother Abimelech.

²² After Abimelech had ruled over Israel for three years, ²³ God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the lords of Shechem. So the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech— ²⁴ in order that the violence done to Jerubbaal's 70 sons might come due, so their blood might be laid on their brother Abimelech who slew them, and on the lords of Shechem who strengthened his hands to slay his brothers.

²⁵ So the lords of Shechem set up ambushers on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed anyone who passed by them along that road. So it was reported to Abimelech. ²⁶ Now Gaal son of Ebed had come with his relatives and moved to Shechem, and the lords of Shechem put their trust in him. ²⁷ When they went out into the field, they gathered grapes of their vineyards, trod them and had a party. Then they went into the house of their god, ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech.

²⁸ Then Gaal son of Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Isn't he the son of Jerubbaal? Isn't Zebul his deputy? Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem—but why should we serve him? ²⁹ Now, if this people were under my hand, then I would get rid of Abimelech." So he said to Abimelech, "Mustering your army and come out!"

³⁰ When Zebul the governor of the city heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed, his anger burned. ³¹ So he sent messengers to Abimelech in deceit saying, "Watch out, Gaal son of Ebed and his relatives have moved to Shechem, and look, they are inciting the city against you. ³² So now, arise by night, you and the people who are with you, and lie in wait in the field. ³³ So it will be in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, you will rise early and advance on the city; and behold, when he and the people who are with him come out against you, then you should do to them whatever your hand finds."

³⁴ So Abimelech and all the people who were with him rose up by night and lay in wait against Shechem in four columns. ³⁵ Now Gaal son of Ebed went out and stood at the entrance of the city gate. Then Abimelech and the people who were with him emerged from the ambush. ³⁶ When Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains!"

† Meaning Lord of the Covenant

But Zebul said to him, "You're seeing the shadow of the mountains as if they were men."

³⁷ Then Gaal spoke up again and said, "Look, people are coming down from the middle of the land, and one column is coming by the road of the Diviner's Oak."

³⁸ Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your mouth now? With it you said, 'Who is Abimelech that we should serve him?' Isn't this the people that you have trashed? Now go out and fight him!" ³⁹ So Gaal went out ahead of the lords of Shechem and fought with Abimelech. ⁴⁰ But Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him, and many fell wounded up to the entrance of the gate. ⁴¹ While Abimelech stayed in Arumah, Zebul drove Gaal and his relatives out so that they could not stay in Shechem.

⁴² Now it came to pass the next day that the people went out into the field, and it was reported to Abimelech. ⁴³ So he took his people, divided them into three columns, and lay in ambush in the field. When he looked and saw the people were coming out of the city, he pounced on them and struck them down.

⁴⁴ Then Abimelech and the column that was with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the city gate, and the other two columns rushed on all who were in the open field and struck them down. ⁴⁵ So Abimelech fought against the city all that day, captured the city and killed the people that were in it. Then he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

⁴⁶ Now when all the lords of Shechem's Tower heard about it, they went into the vault of the temple of Elberith. ⁴⁷ When Abimelech was told that all the lords of Shechem's Tower had gathered there, ⁴⁸ he and all the people with him went up to Mount Zalmon. Then Abimelech took an axe in his hand and cut down a branch from the trees and lifted it up and laid it on his shoulder. Then he said to the people who were with him, "What you've seen me do, hurry and do likewise." ⁴⁹ So all the people likewise each cut down his branch and followed Abimelech. He laid them against the vault and set the vault on fire over them. So all the people of Shechem's Tower also died—about a thousand men and women.

⁵⁰ Then Abimelech went to Thebez, camped against Thebez and captured it. ⁵¹ But there was a strong tower in the center of the city, and all the men and women with all the city leaders fled there and shut themselves in, and went up to the roof of the tower. ⁵² So Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it, and approached the door of the tower to burn it with fire. ⁵³ But a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. ⁵⁴ Then he called quickly to the young man, his armor-bearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest they say of me, 'A woman slew him.'" So his young man thrust him through, and he died. ⁵⁵ So when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they each departed to his place. ⁵⁶ Thus God repaid the wickedness

of Abimelech—what he had done to his father by slaying his 70 brothers. ⁵⁷ Also all the wickedness of the men of Shechem God requited on their heads. Thus on them came the curse of Jotham son of Jerubbaal.

Troubles in Gilead

10 After Abimelech, Tola son of Puah son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, arose to deliver Israel. He dwelt in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim. ² He judged Israel for 23 years, then died and was buried in Shamir. ³ After him Jair the Gileadite arose, and judged Israel for 23 years. ⁴ He had 30 sons who rode on 30 donkeys and had 30 towns in the land of Gilead, which are called Jair's Villages to this day. ⁵ Then Jair died and was buried in Kamon. ⁶ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* again did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. They worshiped the Baalim, the Ashtaroth, gods of Aram, gods of Zidon, gods of Moab, gods of the children of Ammon and gods of the Philistines. They abandoned *ADONAI* and did not worship Him. ⁷ So *ADONAI*'s anger burned against Israel, and He sold them over into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the children of Ammon. ⁸ They shattered and crushed *Bnei-Yisrael* that year—for 18 years all *Bnei-Yisrael* who were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. ⁹ Then the children of Ammon also crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin and the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was greatly distressed.

¹⁰ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* cried out to *ADONAI* saying, "We have sinned against You, for we have forsaken our God and have worshiped the Baalim."

¹¹ So *ADONAI* said to *Bnei-Yisrael*, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the children of Ammon, the Philistines, ¹² the Zidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites who oppressed you? When you cried out to Me, I delivered you from their hand. ¹³ Yet you have forsaken Me and worshiped other gods; therefore, I will deliver you no more. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress."

¹⁵ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* said to *ADONAI*, "We have sinned. Do to us whatever seems good to You, but please, deliver us this day." ¹⁶ Then they removed the foreign gods from among them, and worshiped *ADONAI*. So His soul could not bear the misery of Israel.

¹⁷ Then the children of Ammon were summoned and camped in Gilead. *Bnei-Yisrael* gathered together and camped in Mizpah. ¹⁸ The people of the princes of Gilead said one to another, "Whoever begins to fight against the children of Ammon will be chief over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

Jephthah's Valor and Vow

11 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, [†] but he was the son of a prostitute,

[†] cf. Heb. 11:32.

while Gilead was Jephthah's father. ² But Gilead's wife bore him sons, and when the wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, "You won't inherit in our father's house, for you are a son of another woman." ³ Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Some worthless fellows joined with Jephthah and went out with him.

⁴ Now it came about after a while that the children of Ammon fought with Israel. ⁵ When the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah from the land of Tob. ⁶ They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our chief, so we may fight the children of Ammon."

⁷ Jephthah then said to the elders of Gilead, "Didn't you hate me and drive me out of my father's house? So why are you coming to me now that you're in trouble?"

⁸ "Here is why we're now turning to you," the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah. "Come with us, fight the children of Ammon, and then you will become head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

⁹ So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you take me back home to fight the children of Ammon, and *ADONAI* gives them over to me, I should become your head!"

¹⁰ The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "Let *ADONAI* be witness between us if we don't do as you say."

¹¹ Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and chief over them, after Jephthah repeated all his terms before *ADONAI* at Mizpah.

¹² Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon saying, "What have you to do with me, that you have come to me to make war on my land?"

¹³ The king of the children of Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel took away my land, when they came up from Egypt, from the Arnon to the Jabbok as far as the Jordan. Now, therefore, return them peaceably."

¹⁴ But Jephthah sent messengers again to the king of the children of Ammon, ¹⁵ and said to him, "Thus says Jephthah, 'Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the children of Ammon. ¹⁶ For upon departing from Egypt, Israel traveled through the wilderness to the Sea of Reeds and came to Kadesh, ¹⁷ then Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom saying, "Please, let me pass through your land," but the king of Edom would not consent. Similarly, he sent word to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel, after staying at Kadesh, ¹⁸ traveled through the wilderness, around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, came to the east side of the land of Moab and they camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was the border of Moab. ¹⁹ Then Israel sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon, and Israel said to him, "Please, let us pass through your land to my

place." ²⁰ But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his troops, camped in Jahaz and fought against Israel. ²¹ But *ADONAI* God of Israel gave Sihon and all his troops into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them. So Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country. ²² Thus they possessed all the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon as far as the Jabbok, and from the wilderness as far as the Jordan. ²³ So now *ADONAI* God of Israel dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel. So should you possess their land? ²⁴ Don't you possess what Chemosh your god gives you to possess? Likewise, whatever *ADONAI* our God has dispossessed from before us, this we will possess. ²⁵ Besides, are you any better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them? ²⁶ While Israel was living in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities on both sides of the Arnon for 300 years, why didn't you try to recover them all that time? ²⁷ So I myself have not transgressed against you, yet you are doing me harm by waging war against me. May *ADONAI*, the Judge, judge today between *Bnei-Yisrael* and the children of Ammon."

²⁸ However, the king of the children of Ammon paid no attention to the words of Jephthah that he sent him. ²⁹ Then the *Ruach ADONAI* came upon Jephthah, so he marched through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he crossed over to the children of Ammon. ³⁰ Then Jephthah vowed a vow to *ADONAI* and said, "If You will indeed give the children of Ammon into my hand, ³¹ then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return safely from the children of Ammon, it will be *ADONAI*'s, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering."

³² So Jephthah crossed over to the children of Ammon to fight against them, and *ADONAI* gave them into his hand. ³³ So he utterly defeated them from Aroer until you come to Minnith—20 towns—and as far as Abel-cheramim. So the children of Ammon were subdued before *Bnei-Yisrael*.

³⁴ Now when Jephthah arrived at his home in Mizpah, behold, his daughter was coming out to meet him with tambourines and with dances. Now she was his only child. Besides her he had no son or daughter.

³⁵ Upon seeing her, he tore his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter! You made me bow down in grief—you've made me miserable! For I have opened my mouth to *ADONAI*, and I cannot take it back." †

³⁶ "My father, you have opened your mouth to *ADONAI*," she said to him. "Do to me what proceeded from your mouth—since *ADONAI* brought vengeance on your enemies, the children of Ammon." ³⁷ She said further to her father, "Let this thing be done for me. Let me be alone two months, so that I may go on the

† cf. Matt. 5:34, 37; Jacob 5:12.

mountains and mourn my virginity, I and my companions."

³⁸ "Go!" he said. So he sent her away for two months. So she left, she and her companions, and mourned on the mountains because of her virginity. ³⁹ Then at the end of two months she returned to her father, who did with her according to his vow he had made—so she was never intimate with a man. So it became a custom in Israel, ⁴⁰ that the daughters of Israel would go annually to commemorate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

12 Then the men of Ephraim were summoned and crossed over to Zaphon. They said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the children of Ammon without calling us to go with you? We will burn your house over you with fire." ² So Jephthah responded to them, "I and my people were in a bitter conflict with the children of Ammon, yet when I called you, you didn't deliver me from their hand. ³ So when I saw that you weren't going to deliver, I put my life in my hand and crossed over against the children of Ammon, and *ADONAI* gave them into my hand. So why have you come up to me today, to fight me?"

⁴ Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought Ephraim. The men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, "You Gileadites are just fugitives of Ephraim in the midst of Ephraim and in the midst of Manasseh." ⁵ The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan opposite Ephraim. So when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead would ask him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he said, "No," ⁶ then they would say to him, "Say now, 'Shibboleth,'" and he said "Sibboleth" since he could not pronounce it right, then they would seize him and slay him at the fords of the Jordan. At that time 42,000 of Ephraim fell.

⁷ Jephthah judged Israel 6 years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in one of the towns of Gilead. ⁸ After him Ibzan of Beth-Lehem judged Israel. ⁹ Now he had 30 sons, and 30 daughters—he sent them outside and brought in 30 girls from outside for his sons. He judged Israel 7 years, ¹⁰ then Ibzan died and was buried in Beth-Lehem.

¹¹ Then after him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel. He judged Israel 10 years, ¹² then Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun. ¹³ After him Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. ¹⁴ He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons who rode on 70 donkeys, and he judged Israel 8 years. ¹⁵ Then Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

Birth of Samson

13 *Bnei-Yisrael* again did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, and *ADONAI* gave them into the hand of the Philistines for 40 years. ² Now there was a certain man from Zorah, from a Danite clan, whose name was

Manoah. His wife was barren and bore no children.

³ Then the angel of *ADONAI* appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold now, you are barren and have not borne children, but you will conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Now therefore be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. ⁵ For behold, you will conceive and bear a son. Let no razor come upon his head, for the boy will be a Nazirite to God from the womb. ^{††} He will begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines."

⁶ Then the woman came and told her husband saying, "A man of God came to me and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome! But I did not ask him where he was from, nor did he tell me his name. ⁷ He said to me, 'Behold, you will conceive and bear a son. So, drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the child will be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'"

⁸ Then Manoah entreated *ADONAI* and said, "My Lord, please let the man of God whom You have sent come to us again and teach us what we will do for the boy to be born."

⁹ God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she was sitting in the field, but her husband Manoah was not with her.

¹⁰ So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, and said to him, "Look, the man that came to me the other day has appeared to me!"

¹¹ So Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he asked him, "Are you the one who spoke to the woman?"

"I am," he said.

¹² Then Manoah said, "Now may your words come about! What will be the child's rule and his mission?"

¹³ The angel of *ADONAI* said to Manoah, "Let the woman abstain from all that I mentioned to her. ¹⁴ She should not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, or drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. She must observe all that I commanded her."

¹⁵ Then Manoah said to the angel of *ADONAI*, "Please, let us detain you so that we may prepare a young goat for you."

¹⁶ But the angel of *ADONAI* said to Manoah, "If you could detain me, I would not eat your food. But if you present a burnt offering, then offer it to *ADONAI*." For Manoah did not realize that he was the angel of *ADONAI*.

¹⁷ Then Manoah asked the angel of *ADONAI*, "What is your name, so that when your words come to pass we may honor you?" ¹⁸ But the angel of *ADONAI* said to him, "Why do you ask for my name? It is wonderful."

¹⁹ Manoah took the young goat with the meal offering and offered them on the rock to *ADONAI*, and He did something wonderful as Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ For it came about when the flame

† cf. Luke 1:13. †† cf. Luke 1:15.

went up from off the altar toward heaven that the angel of *ADONAI* ascended in the flame of the altar. Manoah and his wife were looking on, then they fell on their faces to the ground. ²¹ But the angel of *ADONAI* appeared no more to Manoah or to his wife.

Then Manoah realized that he was the angel of *ADONAI*. ²² Manoah said to his wife, "We will surely die, because we have seen God." ²³ But his wife said to him, "If *ADONAI* had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a meal offering from our hand, nor would He have shown us all these things or let us hear such things as these at this time."

²⁴ Then the woman bore a son, and called his name Samson. So the boy grew up and *ADONAI* blessed him. ²⁵ The *Ruach ADONAI* began to stir him in Mahaneh-Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Riddle of the Lion

14 Then Samson went down to Timnah and eyed in Timnah a woman, one of the daughters of the Philistines. ² So he came back and told his father and mother saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. So now get her for me as a wife."

³ Then his father and his mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your kinsmen, or among all our people, that you are going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?"

But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she is the right one in my eyes."

⁴ But his father and mother did not know that it was of *ADONAI*, for He was seeking a pretext against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel. ⁵ While his father and mother went down to Timnah, Samson went to the vineyards of Timnah, and behold, a young lion came roaring at him. ⁶ Then the *Ruach ADONAI* came mightily upon him, and he tore him apart as one would have split a young goat—yet he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

⁷ So he went down and talked with the woman, and she looked right in Samson's eyes. ⁸ After a while he returned to get her, but turned aside to look at the carcass of the lion; and behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion. ⁹ So he scraped it into his hands and went on, eating as he went. Now when he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them and they ate it, though he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey from the carcass of the lion.

¹⁰ Then his father went down to the woman, and Samson made a banquet there, for so the young men used to do. ¹¹ Now it came to pass, when they saw him, they brought 30 companions to be with him.

¹² Then Samson said to them, "Let me now propose a riddle to you. If you can indeed solve it for me during the seven days of the banquet, and figure it out, then I will give you 30 linen garments and 30 changes of

clothes; ¹³ but if you cannot solve it for me, then you must give me 30 linen garments and 30 changes of clothes."

"Propose your riddle," they said to him. "Let's hear it!"

¹⁴ So he said to them, "Out of the eater came forth food, out of the strong came forth sweet."

But for three days they could not solve the riddle. ¹⁵ Now on the seventh day, they said to Samson's wife, "Coax your husband so that he will explain the riddle to us—or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us to impoverish us?"

¹⁶ So Samson's wife wept before him and said, "You only hate me! You don't love me! You proposed a riddle to the sons of my people—yet you haven't explained it to me!"

"Look," he said, "I haven't explained it to my father or my mother, so should I explain it to you?" ¹⁷ But she wept before him the seven days while their banquet lasted. So it was on the seventh day he told her, because she nagged him. Then she told the riddle to the sons of her people. ¹⁸ So the men of the city said to him on the seventh day, before the sun went down, "What is sweeter than honey?

And what is stronger than a lion?"

But he responded to them, "If you hadn't plowed with my heifer, you wouldn't have solved my riddle."

¹⁹ Then the *Ruach ADONAI* came mightily upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed 30 of their men, took their spoil, and gave the changes of clothes to those who solved the riddle. Since his rage was burning, he went up to his father's house. ²⁰ But Samson's wife was given to his companion who had been his best man.

Victory with a Jawbone

15 But after a while, during the time of wheat harvest, Samson visited his wife with a young goat. "I am going to my wife in her room," he said.

But her father would not let him enter. ² "I thought for sure you had utterly hated her," her father said, "so I gave her to your best man. Her younger sister— isn't she better than her? Please, let her be yours instead."

³ Then Samson said to them, "This time I am blameless from the Philistines when I do harm to them." ⁴ So Samson went and caught 300 foxes, and took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail and put one torch between every two tails. ⁵ Then he set fire to the torches and released them into the standing grain of the Philistines, thus he burned up both the stacks and the standing grain, along with vineyards and olive trees.

⁶ Then the Philistines asked, "Who did this?" They were told, "Samson, son-in-law of the Timnite, because he took his wife and gave her to his best man." So the Philistines came up and burnt her and her father with fire.

⁷ Then Samson said to them, "Since you have acted like this, surely I will take revenge on you—after that I will quit." ⁸ So he struck them leg upon thigh with a great slaughter. Then he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

⁹ Then the Philistines went up and camped in Judah and spread out in Lehi. ¹⁰ The men of Judah asked, "Why have you marched against us?"

They replied, "We have come to arrest Samson—to do to him as he did to us."

¹¹ Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam and said to Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines are ruling over us? So what is this that you have done to us?"

He said to them, "As they did to me, so I have done to them."

¹² "We have come down to bind you," they said to him, "so that we may hand you over to the Philistines."

So Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you yourselves won't kill me."

¹³ "No, we won't kill you," they said to him, "but we will bind you fast and hand you over to them." So they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock. ¹⁴ When he arrived at Lehi, the Philistines shouted upon meeting him. But the *Ruach ADONAI* came mightily upon him so that the ropes that were on his arms became like flax burned with fire and his bonds melted off his wrists. ¹⁵ Then he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out and took it, and killed a thousand men with it. ¹⁶ Then Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey,

a heap . . . two heaps,

with the jawbone of a donkey

I struck down a thousand men."

¹⁷ As soon as he had finished speaking, he threw the jawbone from his hand. Then he named that place Ramat-Lehi. ¹⁸ Then he became very thirsty, so he called to *ADONAI* and said, "You have granted this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant. So now, will I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?"

¹⁹ But God split the hollow place that is in Lehi, and water came out of it. When he drank, he regained his strength and revived. Therefore he called it En-Hakore ^{††}, which is in Lehi to this day. ²⁰ Then he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines for 20 years.

Delilah Betrays Samson

16 Once Samson went to Gaza and eyed a prostitute there, so he went to her. ² The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here." So they surrounded him, lay in ambush for him all night at the gate of the city, and kept quiet all night saying, "When morning light comes, then we kill him." ³ But Samson lay in bed till midnight, got up at midnight, grabbed the doors of the city gate along with the two gateposts and pulled

[†] Meaning High Place of the Jawbone ^{††} Meaning Spring of One Calling Out

them up bar and all. Then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain that is near Hebron.

⁴ It came about afterward that he fell in love with a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. ⁵ So the Philistine lords came up to her and said to her, "Coax him, see where his great strength comes from and by what we may overpower him, so we may bind him to subdue him—then we'll each of us give you 1,100 pieces of silver."

⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me please, where does your great strength come from? How could you be bound to subdue you?"

⁷ Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh cords that have never been dried, then I would be weak and be like any other man." ⁸ So the Philistine lords brought up to her seven fresh cords that had never been dried, and she bound him with them, ⁹ while an ambush was waiting in an inner room.

"The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" she said to him. But he broke the cords just as a strand of straw snaps when it touches fire. So his strength remained unknown.

¹⁰ Delilah said to Samson, "Oh, you deceived me! You lied to me! Now tell me please, how you can be bound?"

¹¹ He told her, "If they only bind me with new ropes never used for work, then I will be weak and be like any other man." ¹² So Delilah took new ropes, tied him up with them and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" Yet while the ambush was waiting in the inner room, he snapped them from his arms like a thread.

¹³ So Delilah said to Samson, "Up to now you've mocked me and told me lies! Tell me how you can be bound!"

He told her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web of a loom." ¹⁴ So she pinned it with a pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin of the loom and the web.

¹⁵ "How can you say, 'I love you,'" she said to him, "when your heart is not with me? This is three times you've deceived me and not told me where your great strength comes from."

¹⁶ Now it came about when she nagged him daily with her speeches and kept bothering him, his soul was annoyed to death. ¹⁷ So he divulged to her all his heart and said to her, "No razor has ever been upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaved, then my strength will go from me, and I will be weak and be like any other man."

¹⁸ Now when Delilah realized that he had confided to her all his heart, she sent and called for the Philistine lords saying, "Come up this time, for he has told me all his heart." So the Philistine lords came up to her and brought the silver in their hand. ¹⁹ Then she made him

sleep upon her knees, and she called for a man and had the seven locks of his head shaved off. She even began to humiliate him while his strength departed from him. ²⁰ Then she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, "I'll go out as at other times, and shake myself off." He did not comprehend that *ADONAI* had departed from him.

²¹ Then the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains, and he became a grinder in the prison. ²² However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it was shaved off.

Samson Avenged

²³ Now the Philistine lords gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to celebrate, as they said, "Our god has given our enemy Samson into our hand."

²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god, as they said, "Our god has given into our hand our enemy and the destroyer of our country, who has slain many of us."

²⁵ Now it came about when their hearts were merry that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may amuse us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he did make them laugh, when they made him stand between the pillars.

²⁶ Then Samson said to the lad that held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the temple rests, so I may lean on them." ²⁷ Now the temple was full of men and women. All the Philistine lords were there and about 3,000 men and women on the roof looking on while Samson was amusing them.

²⁸ Then Samson called out to *ADONAI* and said, "My Lord *ADONAI*, please remember me and please strengthen me only this once, O God, so that I may this once take revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes." ²⁹ Then Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the temple rested and leaned on them, one with his right hand and the other with his left. ³⁰ Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He bent with all his might so that the temple fell on the lords and on all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed during his life.

³¹ Then his kinsmen and all his father's household came down, lifted him, brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. For he had judged Israel 20 years.

Micah's Idols

17 Now there was a man of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah. ² And he said to his mother, "The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, which you also repeated it in my ears, behold, the silver is

with me; I took it." And his mother said, "Blessed be my son of *ADONAI*." ³ And he returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, "I wholly dedicate the silver from my hand to *ADONAI* for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore, I will return it to you." ⁴ So when he returned the silver to his mother, his mother took 200 pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith who made it into a graven image and a molten image; and they were kept in the house of Micah. ⁵ Now the man Micah had a shrine of gods, and he made an ephod and household idols, and consecrated one of his sons to become his priest. ⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. ⁷ Now there was a young man from Beth-Lehem of Judah—of the clan of Judah—who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. ⁸ Then the man departed from the town, from Beth-Lehem of Judah, to sojourn wherever he could find a place; and as he journeyed he arrived to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. ⁹ And Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he replied to him, "I am a Levite from Beth-Lehem of Judah, and I am traveling to stay wherever I may find a place." ¹⁰ So Micah said to him, "Stay with me and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, and a suit of apparel, and your provision." So the Levite went in. ¹¹ And the Levite was content to stay with the man, and the young man became to him as one of his sons. ¹² So Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest and lived in the house of Micah. ¹³ Then Micah said, "Now I know that *ADONAI* will do me good, seeing I have a Levite as my priest."

The Danites Seek a New Home

18 In those days there was no king in Israel, and in those days the tribe of Dan was seeking an inheritance for itself to settle in, for to that day no territory had fallen to them for an inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel. ² So the children of Dan sent five men from their clan, out of their entire population, men of valor from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and explore it, and said to them, "Go, explore the land."

When they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they lodged there. ³ When they were near the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young man, the Levite. So they turned aside there and asked him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What do you have here?"

⁴ He said to them, "Thus and thus Micah did for me—he hired me and I became his priest."

⁵ "Please inquire of God," they said to him, "so we may know whether our way that we are going will be successful."

⁶ "Go in peace," the priest said to them. "The way that you are going has *ADONAI*'s approval."

⁷ Then the five men left and came to Laish, and saw the people there living securely, like the Zidonians, tranquil and unsuspecting. For there was no humiliation or anything oppressive in the land. Moreover, they were distant from the Zidonians and had no dealings with anybody.

⁸ When they came back to their kinsmen at Zorah and Eshtaol, their kinsmen asked them, "What do you say?"

⁹ "Arise, let's go up against them!" they said. "For we have seen the land—see, it's very good. Yet you're sitting still! Don't be sluggish! Go enter, possess the land! ¹⁰ When you get there, you will come to unsuspecting people. The land is spacious. For God has put it in your hand—a place where there is no lack of anything on the earth."

¹¹ So from the Danite clan from Zorah and Eshtaol, 600 men set out, armed with weapons of war. ¹² They went up and camped at Kiriath-Jearim in Judah. Therefore they called that place Mahaneh-Dan to this day—behold, it is west of Kiriath-Jearim. ¹³ From there they passed on to the hill country of Ephraim and came to Micah's house.

¹⁴ Then the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish said to their kinsmen, "Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod, household idols, a carved image and a molten image? Now therefore, consider what you have to do."

¹⁵ So they turned aside there and came to the house of the young Levite at Micah's house, and asked him about his welfare. ¹⁶ Now the 600 men of the children of Dan, armed with their weapons of war, were standing by the entrance of the gate. ¹⁷ The five men who had gone to spy out the land went up and entered there. They took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols and the molten image, while the priest was standing by the entrance of the gate with the 600 men armed with weapons of war.

¹⁸ Now after these had gone into Micah's house and taken the carved image, the ephod, the household idols and the molten image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?"

¹⁹ "Be quiet!" they said to him. "Put your hand on your mouth and go with us and be to us a father and a priest! Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one man or to be priest to a tribe and a clan in Israel?" ²⁰ So the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, the household idols and the carved image, and went along among the people.

²¹ So they turned and set off, and placed the little ones and the cattle and the goods in front of them. ²² When they were at a good distance from Micah's house, the men that were in the houses near Micah's house gathered and caught up with the children of Dan. ²³ They called out to the children of Dan, who turned their faces around and said to Micah, "What's the matter with you that you have called them out?"

²⁴ "You have taken away my gods which I made," he said, "and the priest, and walked away! What do I have left? And how then do you say to me, 'What's the matter with you?'"

²⁵ But the children of Dan said to him, "Don't let your voice be heard among us, lest bitter fellows fall upon you, and you lose your life with the lives of your household." ²⁶ Then the children of Dan went on their way, and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

²⁷ Then they took what Micah had made, and his priest, and came to Laish, to a tranquil and unsuspecting people, and struck them with the edge of the sword, and they burned the town with fire. ²⁸ There was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon and they had no alliance with anyone. It was in the valley near Beth-rehob.

Then they rebuilt the town and lived in it. ²⁹ So they called the name of the town Dan, after the name of their father Dan born to Israel; however, the former name of the town was Laish. ³⁰ The children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image. Jonathan son of Gershom son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the exile from the land. ³¹ So they set them up Micah's carved image that he had made, all the time that the House of God was in Shiloh.

Crime at Gibeah of Benjamin

19 Now in those days, there was no king in Israel. There was a certain Levite dwelling in a remote part of the hill country of Ephraim, who got himself a concubine out of Beth-Lehem in Judah. ² But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house to Beth-Lehem in Judah, and was there for a period of four months.

³ Then her husband arose and went after her to speak kindly to her to bring her back. He had his servant and a pair of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house, and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was glad to meet him. ⁴ His father-in-law, the young woman's father, kept him staying with him three days, eating, drinking and lodging there.

⁵ Now on the fourth day they woke up early in the morning, and he rose up to depart, but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward you may go." ⁶ So the two of them sat down and ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please, be willing to spend the night, and let your heart be merry." ⁷ Then the man rose up to depart, but his father-in-law urged him, so he lodged there again. ⁸ Then he woke up early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the young woman's father said, "Please, strengthen yourself and tarry until afternoon!" So both of them ate. ⁹ And when the man rose up to depart, he and his concubine and his ser-

vant, his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Behold now, the day is waning toward evening; please, spend the night. Behold, the day is drawing to a close; lodge here and let your heart be merry. Then tomorrow get up early for your journey so that you may go home."

¹⁰ But the man would not spend that night, so he rose up and departed and came to a place near Jebus—that is, Jerusalem—and with him were a pair of saddled donkeys and his concubine. ¹¹ When they were near Jebus and the day was almost gone, the servant said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and lodge in it."

¹² But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners, who are not of *Bnei-Yisrael*. Let's go on to Gibeah. ¹³ Come on," he said to his servant, "let's try to reach one of these places—we'll spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah." ¹⁴ So they passed on and went their way, and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. ¹⁵ Then they turned aside there to enter and lodge in Gibeah. When he went in, he sat down in the town square, for there was no one who took them into his house to spend the night.

¹⁶ Now behold, an old man was coming from his work in the field at evening. The man was of the hill country of Ephraim but dwelled in Gibeah, while the rest of the men of the place were Benjamites. ¹⁷ When he lifted up his eyes and saw the wayfaring man in the open square of the town, the old man asked, "Where are you going, and where do you come from?"

¹⁸ "We are passing from Beth-Lehem of Judah," he said to him, "to the remote part of the hill country of Ephraim, for I am from there, and I went to Beth-Lehem of Judah. But now I am going to the House of *ADONAI*, yet no one has taken me into his house.

¹⁹ Nevertheless, there is both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and also bread and wine for me, your handmaid, and the young man that is with your servants—there is no lack of anything."

²⁰ The old man said, " *Shalom* to you! Let all your needs be on me—only don't spend the night in the open square!" ²¹ So he brought him into his house and gave the donkeys fodder, and they washed their feet and ate and drank.

²² While they were making their hearts merry, behold, some worthless men of the town surrounded the house. Pounding the door, they shouted to the owner of the house, "Bring out the man that came into your house," they said to the old man, "so we may have relations with him."

²³ But the man, the owner of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my fellows, please don't do this evil. After all, this man has come into my house. Don't commit this disgraceful deed. ²⁴ Look, here is my virgin daughter, and his concubine—I will bring them out to you now, and you may abuse them

and do to them whatever pleases you, but don't do such a degrading thing to this man!"

²⁵ But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and brought her out to them, and they raped her and abused her all the night until morning. When dawn broke, they let her go. ²⁶ As the morning came, the woman came and fell down at the doorway of the man's house where her master was, until it was full daylight.

²⁷ When her master rose up in the morning opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way, behold, the woman his concubine had collapsed at the doorway of the house, with her hands on the thresh-old. ²⁸ "Get up!" he said to her, "and let's go." But there was no response. So he placed her on the donkey. Then the man got up and went to his place.

²⁹ Now when he entered his house, he took a knife and laid hold of his concubine and cut her, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her to all the territory of Israel. ³⁰ So it was, that everyone who saw it said, "Nothing like this has ever happened or been seen, since the day that *Bnei-Yisrael* came up from the land of Egypt to this day! Think it over, take counsel and speak up!"

Battle of Gibeah

20 Then all *Bnei-Yisrael* went out and was assembled as one man, from Dan to Beer-Sheba with the land of Gilead, before *ADONAI* at Mizpah. ² The chiefs of the people and of the tribes of Israel presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God—400,000 foot soldiers armed with swords. ³ Now the children of Benjamin heard that *Bnei-Yisrael* had gone up to Mizpah.

Bnei-Yisrael asked, "Tell us, how did this wickedness take place?"

⁴ So the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered and said, "I came with my concubine to Gibeah of Benjamin to spend the night. ⁵ Then men of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house over me at night. They intended to kill me, but instead, they raped my concubine until she died. ⁶ So I took my concubine and cut her into pieces and sent her throughout the land of Israel's possession. For they have committed something obscene and degrading in Israel. ⁷ Behold, all you sons of Israel, give your advice and counsel here."

⁸ Then all the people arose as one man saying, "Not one of us will go to his tent, nor will any of us return to his house. ⁹ But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot. ¹⁰ We will take ten men of a hundred throughout the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to supply provisions for the troops, so that when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, they may do to them according to all the disgrace that they have committed in Israel."

¹¹ So all the men of Israel were gathered against the town, knit together as one man. ¹² And the tribes of Israel sent men through the tribe of Benjamin saying, "What is this wickedness that has taken place among you?" ¹³ Now therefore, give up the men, the worthless fellows that are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge this evil from Israel."

But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their kinsmen *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁴ So the children of Benjamin were gathered from their towns to Gibeah, to go out to battle against *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁵ On that day the children of Benjamin mustered 26,000 swordsmen from the towns, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered 700 chosen men. ¹⁶ Out of all these troops there were 700 chosen men that were left-handed, each of whom could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. ¹⁷ Meanwhile the men of Israel, apart from Benjamin, numbered 400,000 swordsmen; all men of war.

¹⁸ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* arose, went up to Beth-El and inquired of God. They asked, "Who is to go up first to battle for us against the children of Benjamin?"

ADONAI replied, "Judah first."

¹⁹ So *Bnei-Yisrael* rose up in the morning and camped against Gibeah. ²⁰ The men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and arrayed for battle against Gibeah. ²¹ But the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and struck down 22,000 men of Israel on the field that day.

²² But the people of the men of Israel rallied their strength and arrayed for battle again in the same place where they had arrayed themselves the first day.

²³ Yet *Bnei-Yisrael* went up and wept before *ADONAI* until evening, then inquired of *ADONAI* saying, "Shall I again draw near to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother?"

ADONAI said, "Go up against him."

²⁴ So *Bnei-Yisrael* advanced against the children of Benjamin on the second day. ²⁵ Benjamin came out against them from Gibeah again the second day and struck down 18,000 of *Bnei-Yisrael* on the field—all drawing the sword.

²⁶ Then all *Bnei-Yisrael* went up, and all the people came to Beth-El and wept and sat there before *ADONAI*. They fasted that day until evening and they offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before *ADONAI*. ²⁷ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* inquired of *ADONAI* (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, ²⁸ and Pinchas son of Eleazar son of Aaron had ministered before it in those days) saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or should I cease?"

ADONAI replied, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give him into your hand."

²⁹ So Israel set men in ambush against Gibeah on all sides. ³⁰ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* advanced against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and arrayed against Gibeah, as at other times. ³¹ The children of

Benjamin came out against the people, but they were drawn away from the town, and they began to strike and kill some of the people (about 30 men of Israel), as at other times, on the highways, of which one goes up to Beth-El and the other to Gibeah. ³² So the children of Benjamin said, "They are defeated before us as before." But *Bnei-Yisrael* said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the town to the highways." ³³ Then all the troops of Israel rose up from their place and arrayed themselves at Baal-tamar, and the troops of Israel in ambush burst out of their place west of Geba. ³⁴ Then 10,000 troops chosen from all Israel made a frontal attack on Gibeah, and the battle became fierce; but the Benjamites did not know that disaster was about to strike them.

³⁵ Then *ADONAI* struck Benjamin before Israel— *Bnei-Yisrael* killed 25,100 of Benjamin that day, all drawing the sword. ³⁶ So the children of Benjamin realized that they were defeated. Now the men of Israel had yielded ground to Benjamin, because they relied on the ambush that they had laid against Gibeah. ³⁷ So the men in ambush rushed suddenly upon Gibeah, then the men in another ambush advanced and struck the whole town with the edge of the sword. ³⁸ Now there was a prearranged sign between the men of Israel and the men in ambush—they would make a great beacon of smoke rise up from the town— ³⁹ then the men of Israel would return to the battle. When Benjamin began to strike, killing about 30 of the men of Israel, they said, "Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle." ⁴⁰ But when the beacon began to arise up from the town in a pillar of smoke, Benjamin looked behind them, and behold, the whole town was going up in smoke to the sky. ⁴¹ Then the men of Israel turned back, and the men of Benjamin were terrified, for they realized that disaster had struck them. ⁴² Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel toward the way of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them. Meanwhile those who came from the towns massacred them in their midst. ⁴³ They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them and easily overtook them, near Gibeah toward the east. ⁴⁴ Thus 18,000 men of Benjamin fell, all of them were men of valor. ⁴⁵ Then the rest turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, but they picked off 5,000 of them on the highways. They pressed hard after them to Gidom, and struck down 2,000 more of them. ⁴⁶ So all who fell that day of Benjamin were 25,000 men drawing the sword—all of them were men of valor.

⁴⁷ But 600 men turned and escaped into the wilderness, to the rock of Rimmon, and stayed at the rock of Rimmon four months. ⁴⁸ The men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword—the entire city, the cattle and all that they found. They also set on fire all the towns that they found.

Israel Preserves the Benjamites

21 Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah saying, "None of us will give his daughter to Benjamin in marriage." ² So the people came to Beth-El and sat there till evening before God, and lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. ³ They said, "ADONAI God of Israel, why has this happened in Israel, that one tribe should be missing in Israel?"

⁴ Then it was on the next day that the people rose up early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. ⁵ Then *Bnei-Yisrael* asked, "Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up to the assembly before ADONAI?" For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who did not come up to ADONAI at Mizpah saying, "He will surely be put to death."

⁶ Now *Bnei-Yisrael* felt sorry for Benjamin their brother and said, "Today one tribe has been cut off from Israel. ⁷ What should we do about providing wives for those who are left, since we have sworn by ADONAI not to give them any of our daughters in marriage?"

⁸ Then they inquired, "Which one of the tribes of Israel that did not go up to ADONAI at Mizpah?" Then behold, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh-Gilead to the assembly. ⁹ For when the people were numbered, behold, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead was there. ¹⁰ So the congregation sent 12,000 valiant warriors there, and commanded them saying, "Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the little ones. ¹¹ Now this is the thing that you will do: you are to utterly destroy every male and every woman who has lain with a man." ¹² So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead 400 young virgins who had not known a man by lying with him. They brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

¹³ Then the whole congregation sent and spoke to the children of Benjamin who were in the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed *shalom* to them. ¹⁴ When Benjamin returned at that time, they gave them the women whom they had spared from the women of Jabesh-Gilead. Yet they were not enough for them.

¹⁵ So the people were sorry for Benjamin because ADONAI had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶ Then the elders of the congregation said, "What should we do about wives for those who are left, since the women have been destroyed out of Benjamin?"

¹⁷ They said "The survivors of Benjamin must have heirs, so that a tribe would not be blotted out from Israel. ¹⁸ Yet we cannot give them wives of our daughters," for *Bnei-Yisrael* had sworn saying, "Cursed is he who gives a wife to Benjamin!"

¹⁹ So they said, "Behold, there is the feast of ADONAI from year to year at Shiloh" (which is to the north of Beth-El, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Beth-El to Shechem, and to the south of Lebonah). ²⁰ So they commanded the children of Benjamin saying, "Go and hide in the vineyards, ²¹ and watch, and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh should come out to join in the dances, then come out of the vineyards, and let each of you catch his wife from among the daughters of Shiloh. Then go to the land of Benjamin. ²² So it will be, if their fathers or brothers come to complain to us, that we will say to them, 'Grant them graciously for us, because we did not provide each one of them his wife in battle—nor did you give the girls to them, else you would now be guilty.'"

²³ So the children of Benjamin did so, and took the number of wives from the dancers whom they carried off. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and rebuilt the towns and settled in them.

²⁴ So *Bnei-Yisrael* departed from there at that time, each man to his tribe and family. Everyone went out from there to his own inheritance.

²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Ruth

Ruth Introduction

Ruth is a poetic story dealing with issues of love, loss, and legacy. It contains some memorable passages and timeless truths. Love between a husband and wife, a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, and perhaps above all, the love of God for the Jewish people and those who would be “grafted in” to the commonwealth of Israel. Loss permeates the story, as well, in the form of deaths in the family and famine in the land. Finally, legacy is the net result, as the very Messianic line is preserved through the characters in this book.

In a Jewish life, Ruth is typically read at the Feast of Weeks, a Jewish holiday known in the Church world as “Pentecost.” The theme of the harvest is intertwined with those of family relations and Israelite culture.

The name “Ruth” is a contraction for *reuth*—meaning companion or friend. This is the only place in the Hebrew Bible the name is found. Most Talmud scholars ascribe the authorship to Samuel, although some have suggested Nathan may be the writer. The prevalent view is that Ruth was written between 1011 and 931 BCE, during the time of the Judges—where it served as a bright spot in an otherwise dark period. The book was written to the Israelites, and serves the purpose of establishing David as God’s chosen king.

This book illustrates the sovereignty of God. The main characters move through the story as actors working through a drama on God’s stage. Ruth was led back to Bethlehem and married Boaz in the plan of God. Boaz was sovereignly chosen to overcome the stigma of Ruth’s family history from the outcast tribe of Moab. His willingness to redeem Ruth brought him into the lineage of the future king—David. Not only was Boaz a willing kinsman-redeemer, in so doing he became a type of the Kinsman Redeemer of all mankind. In his compassionate obedience, Boaz helped to fulfill God’s covenantal promise to David (2 Sam. 7) that a king from his line would always rule in Israel. In fact, the ultimate fulfillment will be when the King of Kings sits on the throne of David.

For Messianic believers, the book of Ruth serves as a seminal treatise on the potential within the international church to boldly stand in relationship to the people of Israel. Ruth’s epigrammatic plea, “Do not plead with me to abandon you...where you go I will go...your people will be my people, and your God my God” (Ruth 1:16), stands as an eternal promise and invitation for Gentiles to knit their hearts with the hearts of Israel—the people and place. The meandering that leads the company from and back to Bethlehem (Ruth 1:2) fulfills essential biblical Messianic prophecy about the birthplace of Messiah (Mic. 5:1). The role of the brilliantly foreshadows the future, great kinsman redeemer, Jesus. God’s mercy, in knitting a Moabitess into the lineage of the revered king David and his greater son, foreshadows the gospel of grace. In fact, Ruth yields a deathblow to religiosity and prejudice and opens the door to grace beyond measure, amazing grace indeed! (John 1:17).

Ruth Headings

- Elimelech’s Family in Moab
- Ruth’s Covenant with Naomi
- Gleaning in Boaz’s Field
- Naomi the Matchmaker
- Who Will Redeem?

Elimelech’s Family in Moab

1 It came to pass in the days when judges were governing, there was a famine in the land. A man went from the town of Beth-Lehem [†] in Judah to dwell in the region of Moab with his wife and his two sons.

[†] *Meaning House of Bread*

² The man’s name was Elimelech, his wife’s name was Naomi, and his two sons were named Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephratites from Beth-Lehem in Judah. They came to the region of Moab and remained there.

³ Then Naomi’s husband Elimelech died, so she was left with her two sons. ⁴ They married Moabite women—one was named Orpah and the second was

named Ruth, and they dwelt there about ten years.⁵ Then those two, Mahlon and Chilion, also died. So the woman was left without her children and her husband.

⁶ Then she got up, along with her daughters-in-law to return from the region of Moab, because in the region of Moab she had heard that *ADONAI* had taken note of His people and given them food.⁷ So she left the place where she was, along with her two daughters-in-law, and they started out on the road to return to the land of Judah.

⁸ So Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to your mother's house. May *ADONAI* show you the same kindness that you have shown to the dead and to me.⁹ May *ADONAI* grant that you find rest, each of you in the house of her own husband." Then she kissed them and they wept loudly.

¹⁰ "No!" they said to her, "we will return with you to your people."

¹¹ Now Naomi said, "Go back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Do I have more sons in my womb who could become your husbands?¹² Go home, my daughters! I am too old to have a husband. Even if I were to say that there was hope for me and I could get married tonight, and then bore sons,¹³ would you wait for them to grow up? Would you therefore hold off getting married? No, my daughters, it is more bitter for me than for you—for the hand of *ADONAI* has gone out against me!"

¹⁴ Again they broke into loud weeping. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye. But Ruth clung to her.¹⁵ She said, "Look, your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Return, along with your sister-in-law!"

Ruth's Covenant with Naomi

¹⁶ Ruth replied,
"Do not plead with me to abandon you,
to turn back from following you.
For where you go, I will go,
and where you stay, I will stay.
Your people will be my people,
and your God my God.

¹⁷ Where you die, I will die,
and there I will be buried.
May *ADONAI* deal with me, and worse,
if anything but death comes between me and you!"

¹⁸ When she saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she no longer spoke to Ruth about it.

¹⁹ So the two of them went on until they arrived in Beth-Lehem. As soon as they arrived in Beth-Lehem the whole city was excited because of them, and the women asked, "Is this Naomi?"

²⁰ "Do not call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara—since *Shaddai* has made my life bitter.[†]²¹ I went away full, but *ADONAI* has brought me back empty. Why should you call me Naomi, since *ADONAI* has testi-

fied against me and *Shaddai* has brought calamity on me?"

²² So Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth the Moabite returned from the region of Moab. They arrived in Beth-Lehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Gleaning in Boaz's Field

² Now, Naomi had a relative on her husband's side—from Elimelech's family—a prominent man of substance whose name was Boaz.

² Ruth the Moabite, said to Naomi, "Please let me go out to the field and glean grain behind anyone in whose eyes I may find favor."

Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter."³ So Ruth went out and gleaned in the field behind the reapers. She just so happened to be in the field of Boaz, who was from Elimelech's family.

⁴ Soon after Boaz arrived from Beth-Lehem, he said to the harvesters, "*ADONAI* be with you."

They replied, "May *ADONAI* bless you."

⁵ Then Boaz asked the foreman of his harvesters, "Whose young woman is this?"

⁶ "She is a Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the region of Moab," the foreman replied.

⁷ "She asked 'Please allow me to glean and gather among the barley sheaves behind the harvesters.' So she came and has been working in the field since morning until now, except for a little while in the shelter."

⁸ Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Listen to me, my daughter. Do not go to glean in another field or even pass on from here, but stay close to my female workers.⁹ Keep your eyes on the field that they are harvesting, and follow after them. I strongly ordered the young men not to touch you. When you are thirsty, you can go to the jars and drink from the water the young men have drawn."

¹⁰ Then she fell upon her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes that you have noticed me, even though I am a foreigner?"

¹¹ Boaz replied and said to her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband's death has been fully reported to me—how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people you did not know before.¹² May *ADONAI* repay you for what you have done, and may you be fully rewarded by *ADONAI*, God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

¹³ She said, "May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your maidservant, even though I am not one of your maidservants."

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here and eat some bread and dip your piece into the wine vinegar." So she sat beside the harvesters and he held out to her roasted grain. She ate until she was full, and

† Meaning pleasant vs. bitter

some was still left. ¹⁵When she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his workers saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, do not humiliate her. ¹⁶Also be sure to pull out some grain for her from the sheaves and leave them for her to pick up, and do not rebuke her."

¹⁷So she gleaned in the field until evening. When she thrashed what she had gathered, there was about an ephah of barley. ¹⁸She carried it back to town, where her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. Ruth took some out and gave her what was left over after eating her fill.

¹⁹Her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you glean today? Where did you work? May the one who noticed you be blessed!"

She told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and she said, "The name of the man for whom I worked is Boaz."

²⁰So Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by *ADONAI* who has not stopped his kindness to the living or to the dead." Then Naomi said to her, "This man is closely related to us, one of our kinsmen-redeemers." †

²¹Then Ruth the Moabitess said, "He even said to me, 'Stay close to my workers until they have finished the entire harvest.'"

²²Naomi answered her daughter-in-law Ruth, "It is good, my daughter-in-law, that you go out with his female workers, so that you will not be harmed in another field."

²³So she stayed close to Boaz's female workers, gleaning until both the barley harvest and the wheat harvest were completed. Meanwhile she lived with her mother-in-law.

Naomi the Matchmaker

3 Naomi her mother-in-law said to her "My daughter, should I not be seeking a resting place for you, so it may go well for you? ²Now, is Boaz, with whose female workers you have been, not our relative? Look, he will be winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. ³So bathe and perfume yourself, put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor. But do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴Let it be that when he lies down and you know the place where he lies down, go uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do."

⁵Ruth answered her, "I will do everything you say." ⁶So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law had said.

⁷After Boaz ate, drank, and was in a good mood, he went to lie down at the far side of the grain pile. So she came to the grain pile quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. ⁸Now in the middle of the night, the man was startled and pulled back—and to his surprise, a woman was lying at his feet!

⁹"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Ruth, your handmaid," she answered. "Spread the corner of your garment over your handmaid, for you are a *goel*."

¹⁰"May you be blessed by *ADONAI*, my daughter!" he replied. "You have made the latter act of loyalty greater than the first, by not running after the young men, whether rich or poor. ¹¹Now my daughter, do not be afraid! Everything you propose, I will do for you, for everyone in town knows that you are a woman of valor. ¹²Although it is true that I am a *goel*, there is one who is a closer *goel* than me. ¹³Stay here tonight, and in the morning, if he will be your *goel*—good! Let him do so. But if he is not willing to be your *goel*, then I will be your *goel* myself, as surely as *ADONAI* lives. Lie down until morning."

¹⁴So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before one person could be distinguished from another, for he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵Then he said, "Bring the cloak you are wearing and hold it out." She held it out and he poured six measures of barley into it and put it on her. Then he returned to town.

¹⁶When Ruth came back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?"

So Ruth told her all that the man had done for her. ¹⁷She said "He gave me six measures of barley, for he said, 'You shouldn't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'"

¹⁸"Wait, my daughter," Naomi said, "until you find out how the matter turns out, for he will not rest until he has settled the matter today."

Who Will Redeem?

4 Meanwhile Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And all of a sudden, the *goel* about whom Boaz had spoken passed by. "Come over," he called, "and sit down here, my friend." So he came over and sat down.

²Then Boaz took ten of the town's elders and said, "Sit down here," so they sat down. ³Then he said to the *goel*, "Naomi, who has returned from the region of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belongs to our brother Elimelech. ⁴I thought I should inform you saying, 'Buy it in the presence of the people sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you want to redeem it, redeem it. But if it will not be redeemed, then tell me, so that I can know, because there is no one else in line to redeem it. I am after you.'"

"I will redeem it," he said.

⁵Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from Naomi's hand, you will also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased over his inheritance."

⁶The kinsman said, "Then I cannot redeem it for myself, or else I might endanger my own inheritance.

† Hebrew *Goel*

You, take my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

⁷ Now in the past in Israel, one removed his sandal and gave it to another, in order to finalize the redemption and transfer of a matter. This was a legal transaction in Israel.

⁸ So the kinsman said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” then took off his shoe.

⁹ Boaz announced to 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 Mahlon. ¹⁰ Moreover, I have acquired Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon to be my wife in order to raise up the name of the deceased over his inheritance, so that the name of the deceased will not be cut off from his brothers or from the gate of his town. You are witnesses today.”

¹¹ All the people at the gate and the elders said, “We are witnesses. May *ADONAI* make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and like Leah, who both built up the house of Israel. May you prosper in Ephrath and be renowned in Beth-Lehem. ¹² May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to

Judah, † through the seed that *ADONAI* will give you by this young woman.”

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. When he went to her, *ADONAI* enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be *ADONAI*, who has not left you without a *goel* today. May his name be famous throughout Israel. ¹⁵ Moreover, he will be to you a renewer of life and a sustainer of your old age, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.”

¹⁶ Naomi took the child and held it to her bosom, and took care of him. ¹⁷ The neighboring women gave him a name saying “A son has been born to Naomi!” So they called him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

¹⁸ These are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, ¹⁹ Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, ²⁰ Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, ²¹ Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, ²² Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

† cf. Gen. 38:29; 46:12; Ruth 4:18.

1 Samuel

1 Samuel Introduction

The book of Samuel, or , is named for the text's primary character. Samuel was a prophet and judge over Israel. Until the 15th century, the Hebrew text of Samuel was presented as a single book, inclusive of what we call 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel; but from the time of the Septuagint, it was bifurcated in other Bibles into the two books. The authorship of 1 Samuel is uncertain. Some believe the writing is from the hand of officials within the royal courts of David or Solomon. Though reasonable conjecture exists, much of the first twenty-four chapters could be attributed directly to Samuel himself, as these chapters plainly describe his life and work.

1 Samuel spans the time preceding the birth of Samuel, near the middle of the 12th century BCE, through Saul's death. Birth and death bookmark the approximate 140 years of its storyline.

Like that of several other notables in Scripture, Samuel's story began with a "miracle" birth. Samuel's formerly barren mother, Hannah, thus dedicated the lad to God. He was subsequently nurtured by Eli the High Priest. Eli's progeny were unworthy to judge Israel. In stark contrast to Eli's ungodly sons, Samuel exhibited godly character. Samuel's unblemished career bridged the era from when judges ruled Israel until the people demanded a king. Samuel served at the hinge of this transitory period in Israel's history. He moderated the chaotic array of the Jewish tribes that became an amalgamated nation under a centralized monarchy.

1 Samuel details much of our core knowledge about three of the most important figures in biblical history: Samuel, Saul, and David. The Prophet Samuel is rare, insofar as he may be the only biblical figure, other than , whose biography is declared from before his birth, throughout his career, and is even extended beyond his death. And, like , Samuel's birth narrative contains supernatural elements worthy of a divine call. Within 1 Samuel, students of Scripture learn of the error of King Saul's prideful leadership, which is aptly compared to the humble servant leadership of King David.

Prone to blame, and dissatisfied with corporate, ecclesiastical, or even national leadership, we do well to listen to Samuel's warning. This is what Samuel spoke to a nation that had initially revered God but later rejected Him as their king: "If you fear and worship Him, and listen to His voice and do not rebel against the command of , then both you as well as the king who reigns over you will be following your God. But if you do not listen to the voice of and rebel against the command of , then the hand of will be against you and against your fathers" (1Sam. 12:14-15). Perhaps it is unwise to blame our leaders or rail against the government excessively. Rather, Samuel would have us look inside and identify any resident ungodly attitudes. Seek God; obey God. Samuel suggests that in so doing, both you and the king will turn around and follow God.

1 Samuel Headings

- A Barren Woman's Petition is Granted
- Hannah's Prayer of Exultation
- Eli's Sons Sin against
- Calling of Samuel
- Defeat and Loss of the Ark
- The Ark Afflicts the Philistines
- Philistines Send the Ark Back
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- Israel Demands a King
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Saul Spares Agag of Amalek
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 Saul Consults a Medium
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 Raid on Amalek
 Saul Killed on Mt. Gilboa

A Barren Woman's Petition is Granted

1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-Zophim, of the hill country of Ephraim—his name was Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. ² He had two wives: the name of the one was Hannah and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless.

³ Now this man used to go up from his town every year to worship and to sacrifice to *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* in Shiloh. † (The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were *kohanim* of *ADONAI* there.) ⁴ Then on the designated day Elkanah would sacrifice and give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters, ⁵ but to Hannah he would give only one portion—even though he loved Hannah—for *ADONAI* had closed her womb. ⁶ Her rival would taunt her bitterly to provoke her, because *ADONAI* had closed her womb. ⁷ So it was year after year, whenever she went up to the House of *ADONAI*, that she would provoke her; so she wept and would not eat.

⁸ Then her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you crying? Why won't you eat? Why is your heart so sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

⁹ After eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah got up. Now Eli the *kohen* was sitting on his seat by the doorpost of the Temple of *ADONAI*. ¹⁰ While her soul was bitter, she prayed to *ADONAI* and wept. ¹¹ So she made a vow and said, " *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your handmaid, remember me and not forget Your handmaid, but grant Your

† cf. Luke 2:41.

handmaid a son, then I will give him to *ADONAI* all the days of his life and no razor will ever touch his head."

¹² It came to pass, as she prayed long before *ADONAI*, that Eli was watching her mouth. ¹³ Now Hannah was praying in her heart—only her lips were moving, but her voice could not be heard. So Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴ Then Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Get rid of your wine!"

¹⁵ But in response Hannah said, "No, my lord, I am a woman with an oppressed spirit! I haven't been drinking wine or beer. Instead I've been pouring out my soul before *ADONAI*. ¹⁶ Don't consider your handmaid a wicked woman. For out of my great anguish and grief I've been praying until now."

¹⁷ Then Eli responded, "Go in *shalom*, and may the God of Israel grant your petition that you asked of Him." ††

¹⁸ "May your maidservant find favor in your eyes," she said. So the woman went her way; she ate, and her countenance was no longer dejected.

¹⁹ They rose up early in the morning and worshiped before *ADONAI*, then went back to their home to Ramah. Then Elkanah was intimate with his wife Hannah, and *ADONAI* remembered her. ²⁰ So it came to pass at the turn of the year that Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She called his name Samuel, "because I have asked *ADONAI* for him."

²¹ When the man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer the annual sacrifice to *ADONAI* and to fulfill his vow offering, ²² Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "When the child is weaned, I will bring him, so he may appear before *ADONAI* and stay there forever."

†† cf. Acts 15:33.

²³ So her husband Elkanah said to her, “Do what seems best to you. Stay until you have weaned him—only may *ADONAI* establish His word.” So the woman stayed home and nursed her son until she weaned him. ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a jar of wine, and brought him to the House of *ADONAI* in Shiloh, while the child was still young.

²⁵ After they slaughtered the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. ²⁶ “It’s me, my lord!” she said. “As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman that stood by you here, praying to *ADONAI*. ²⁷ For this boy I prayed, and *ADONAI* has granted me my petition that I asked of Him. ²⁸ So I in turn dedicate him to *ADONAI*—as long as he lives he is dedicated to *ADONAI*.” Then he bowed in worship there before *ADONAI*.

Hannah’s Prayer of Exultation

2 Then Hannah prayed and said, †
 “My heart exults in *ADONAI*,
 my horn is lifted high in *ADONAI*.
 I smile wide over my enemies,
 for I rejoice in Your salvation.
² There is none holy as *ADONAI*,
 for there is none besides You,
 nor is there any rock like our God.
³ Boast no more so proudly—
 insolence comes out of your mouth.
 For *ADONAI* is the all-knowing God,
 and by Him deeds are weighed.
⁴ The bows of the mighty are broken,
 but the stumbling are girded with strength.
⁵ Those full hire themselves for bread,
 but those starving hunger no more.
 Even the barren gives birth to seven,
 but she with many sons languishes.
⁶ *ADONAI* causes death and makes alive,
 He brings down to *Sheol* and raises up.
⁷ *ADONAI* makes poor and makes rich,
 He brings low and also lifts up.
⁸ He raises the helpless from the dust.
 He lifts the needy from the dunghill,
 to make them sit with nobles,
 granting them a seat of honor.
 For the earth’s pillars are *ADONAI*’s,
 and He has set the world on them.
⁹ He guards the steps of His godly ones,
 but the wicked are silenced in darkness.
 For one does not prevail by might.
¹⁰ Those who oppose *ADONAI* will be shattered.
 He thunders against them in heaven.
 He judges the ends of the earth.
 He gives strength to His king,
 exalting the horn of His anointed one.” ††

† cf. Luke 1:46-55. †† cf. Luke 1:69.

Eli’s Sons Sin against *ADONAI*

¹¹ Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, while the boy served *ADONAI* before Eli the *kohen*.

¹² Now Eli’s sons were worthless men ‡; they did not acknowledge *ADONAI*. ¹³ Now this was the custom of the *kohanim* with the people: whenever any man offered a sacrifice, the *kohen*’s servant would come along, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, ¹⁴ and he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up, the *kohen* would take for himself. This is how they dealt with all the Israelites who came there to Shiloh. ¹⁵ Even before they burned the fat, the *kohen*’s servant would come and say to the one offering sacrifice, “Give the *kohen* meat for roasting, since he will not accept boiled meat from you—only raw.”

¹⁶ If the man said to him, “Let them first burn the fat up as smoke, and then take as much as you desire,” he would reply, “No! But you must give it now—otherwise, I will take it by force.” ¹⁷ Thus the sin of the young men was very great before *ADONAI*, for the men despised the offering of *ADONAI*.

¹⁸ But Samuel was ministering before *ADONAI*, as a boy girded with a linen ephod. ¹⁹ Moreover, his mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him from year to year when she would come up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, “May *ADONAI* give you offspring from this woman instead of the one she requested from *ADONAI*.” Then they would return to their place. ²¹ So *ADONAI* visited Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the child Samuel grew before *ADONAI*.

²² Now Eli had grown very old. He heard all that his sons did to all Israel, and how they slept with the women who served at the doorway of the Tent of Meeting. ²³ So he said to them, “Why do you do such things? For I hear evil reports from all these people concerning you. ²⁴ No, my sons! For this is not a good report that I hear *ADONAI*’s people spreading around. ²⁵ If a man sins against another, God may pardon him; but if a man sins against *ADONAI*, who will intercede for him?” But they did not listen to the voice of their father, because *ADONAI* desired to put them to death. ²⁶ Meanwhile, the child Samuel kept growing and increasing in favor both with *ADONAI* and also with men. ††

²⁷ Now there came a man of God to Eli and said to him, “Thus says *ADONAI*: Did I not reveal Myself clearly to the house of your father when they were in Egypt belonging to Pharaoh’s palace? ²⁸ Also did I not choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My *kohanim*, to officiate at My altar, to burn incense and to wear an ephod before Me? Did I not give to the house of your father all the fire offerings of *Bnei-Yisrael*? ²⁹ Why do

‡ lit. sons of Belial †† cf. Luke 1:80; 2:40.

you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me, by fattening yourselves with the choicest of every offering of Israel My people? ³⁰ Therefore *ADONAI* God of Israel declares, I indeed said that your house and your father's house should walk before Me forever. But now declares *ADONAI*, far be it from Me! For I will honor those who honor Me, but those who despise Me will be disdained. ³¹ Behold, the days are coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that no one in your household will reach old age. ³² Moreover, you will behold the distress of My dwelling, despite all that is good that has been done to Israel. So no one in your household will reach old age, forever. ³³ Any man of yours that I did not cut off from My altar would make your eyes weep and your soul grieve. So all the increase of your household will die as young men. ³⁴ Now this will be the sign to you that will come on your two sons—Hophni and Phinehas—on the same day both of them will die.

³⁵ "Yet I will raise up for Myself a faithful *kohen* who will do according to what is in My heart and My mind. Then I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before My anointed one all the time. ³⁶ Anyone left in your household will come and bow low to him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and will say: 'Please, assign me to one of the priestly offices so that I may eat a morsel of bread.'"

Calling of Samuel

3 Now the boy Samuel was in the service of *ADONAI* under Eli. In those days the word of *ADONAI* was rare—there were no visions breaking through. ² One day, Eli was lying down in his place—now his eyes had grown dim so that he could not see, ³ and the lamp of God had not yet gone out. Samuel was lying down in *ADONAI*'s Temple, where the ark of God was. ⁴ Then *ADONAI* called, "Samuel!" So he answered, "Here I am." ⁵ Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me."

But he replied, "I didn't call—go back to sleep." So he went back and lay down.

⁶ Then *ADONAI* called Samuel yet again. So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me."

But he answered, "I didn't call, my son—go back to sleep." ⁷ Now Samuel had not experienced *ADONAI* yet, since the word of *ADONAI* had not yet been revealed to him.

⁸ *ADONAI* called Samuel again for the third time. So he got up and went to Eli, and said "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that *ADONAI* was calling the boy.

⁹ So Eli said to Samuel, "Go back to sleep, and if He calls you, say: 'Speak, *ADONAI*, for Your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went back and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ Then *ADONAI* came and stood and called as at

the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for Your servant is listening."

¹¹ Then *ADONAI* said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone that hears it will tingle. ¹² In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity that he knew about, because his sons brought a curse on themselves yet he did not rebuke them. ¹⁴ Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering."

¹⁵ Then Samuel lay down until the morning, when he opened the doors of the House of *ADONAI*. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. ¹⁶ Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son."

"Here I am," he replied.

¹⁷ "What is the word that He has spoken to you?" he said. "Please don't hide it from me. May God do so to you and even more if you hide anything at all from me that He spoke to you." ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing. Then Eli said, "He is *ADONAI*. May He do what is good in His eyes."

¹⁹ So Samuel grew up and *ADONAI* was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰ Then all Israel from Dan to Beer-Sheba knew that Samuel was entrusted as a prophet of *ADONAI*. ²¹ *ADONAI* started to appear once more in Shiloh, for *ADONAI* revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of *ADONAI*.

Defeat and Loss of the Ark

4 So it was that the word of Samuel went forth to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines in battle. They camped at Eben-Ezer while the Philistines camped in Aphek. ² The Philistines drew up in battle array to meet Israel, and when the battle was fought, Israel was defeated before the Philistines, who killed 4,000 men on the battlefield.

³ When the people came back to the camp, the elders of Israel asked, "Why did *ADONAI* bring defeat on us today before the Philistines? Let's fetch the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* from Shiloh that He may come among us and deliver us from the hand of our enemies." ⁴ So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* who sits above the *cheruvim*. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. ⁵ Now when the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* entered the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the ground resounded.

⁶ When the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they wondered, "What's this noise of a great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" When they realized that the ark of *ADONAI* had come into the camp, ⁷ the Philistines were afraid, for they said, "God has come into the camp." So they said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has ever happened before. ⁸ Woe to us! Who will deliver us from the hand of this mighty God? This

is the God that struck down the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. ⁹ Be strong, and conduct yourselves like men, O Philistines, or else you will become enslaved to the Hebrews as they have been to you. Be like men and fight!"

¹⁰ So the Philistines did fight and Israel was defeated—they fled every man to his tent. The slaughter was very great, as 30,000 of Israel's foot soldiers fell.

¹¹ Moreover, the ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons Hophni and Phinehas died.

¹² Now that same day a man of Benjamin ran from the battlefield and came to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head. ¹³ When he arrived, behold, Eli was sitting on his seat by the wayside watching, for his heart was trembling for the ark of God. When the man arrived to announce it in the town, the entire town cried out. ¹⁴ And when Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he asked, "What's this noisy commotion?" So the man rushed and came and told Eli.

¹⁵ Now Eli was 98 years old, and his eyes were fixed in a blind stare. ¹⁶ Then the man said to Eli, "I am one coming from the battlefield—I escaped from the battlefield today."

"What is happening, my son?" he asked.

¹⁷ And the messenger answered and said, "Israel fled before the Philistines and there has also been a great slaughter among the people. Also your two sons died—Hophni and Phinehas—and the ark of God was captured." ¹⁸ As soon as he mentioned of the ark of God, Eli fell backward from his seat beside the town gate. His neck broke and he died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel 40 years.

¹⁹ Now his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child and about to deliver. When she heard the report that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she crouched down and gave birth because she was seized with her labor pains. ²⁰ As she was dying, the women attending her said to her, "Don't be afraid, for you have brought forth a son!" But she did not respond or take it to heart. ²¹ Then she named the child Ichabod † saying, "The glory has departed from Israel"—because of the capture of the ark of God, and because of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² So she said, "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been taken!"

The Ark Afflicts the Philistines

5 Now the Philistines had taken the ark of God and they brought it from Eben-Ezer to Ashdod. ² The Philistines took the ark of God and brought it to the temple of Dagon, and placed it beside Dagon. ³ But when the Ashdodites arose early next morning, to everyone's surprise, Dagon had fallen to his face on the ground before the ark of *ADONAI*. So they took Dagon up and put him back in his place. ⁴ But when they arose early the following morning, surprisingly,

† Hebrew *Ey-ka-vod*

no glory

Dagon had fallen to his face on the ground before the ark of *ADONAI*, and the head of Dagon and both palms of his hands were cut off on the threshold; only Dagon's trunk was left on him. ⁵ That is why to this day neither the priests of Dagon nor any who enter Dagon's house will tread on Dagon's threshold in Ashdod.

⁶ Then the hand of *ADONAI* was heavy upon the Ashdodites, ravaging them and afflicting Ashdod and its vicinity with tumors. 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 dealt harshly against us as well as against our god Dagon."

⁸ So they sent word and gathered all the lords of the Philistines to them and asked, "What will we do with the ark of the God of Israel?"

They replied, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried over to Gath." So they carried the ark of the God of Israel over. ⁹ But it came about, that after they had carried it around, that the hand of *ADONAI* was against the city causing very great panic, as He struck the people of the city, from the youngest to the oldest, so that tumors broke out on them.

¹⁰ So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. But it came about as the ark of God came to Ekron that the Ekronites cried out saying, "They've brought around the ark of the God of Israel to us to kill us and our people!"

¹¹ So they sent word and gathered all the lords of the Philistines and said, "Send the ark of the God of Israel away—let it go back to its own place, so it won't kill us and our people!" For a panic of death was throughout the entire city, as God's hand was very heavy there.

¹² The people who did not die were afflicted with tumors, so that the outcry of the city went up to heaven.

Philistines Send the Ark Back

6 After the ark of *ADONAI* had been in the country of the Philistines seven months, ² the Philistines summoned the priests and the diviners saying, "What should we do with the ark of *ADONAI*? Tell us how we should send it back to its place."

³ So they said, "If you are going to send the ark of the God of Israel back, do not send it empty. For you must surely return it with a guilt offering. Then you will be healed and it will be revealed to you why His hand has not been removed from you."

⁴ "What guilt offering should we return to Him?" they asked.

So they said, "Five golden tumors and five golden mice—according to the number of the lords of the Philistines, for one plague was on each of you and on your lords. ⁵ So you will make images of your tumors and images of your mice that mar the land, and you must give glory to the God of Israel. Perhaps He will lighten His hand off of you, your gods and your land. ⁶ Why harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When He afflicted them, didn't they send them away so they left? ⁷ Now

therefore get a new cart ready, two milk cows on which there has never been a yoke, hitch the cows to the cart, and return their calves home, away from them. ⁸ Then take the ark of *ADONAI* and place it on the cart; also put the golden objects that you return to Him as a guilt offering in a box by its side. Then send it off so it may go. ⁹ Then watch—if it goes up by the way of its own territory to Beth-Shemesh, then it was He who inflicted on us this great harm. But if not, then we will know that it was not His hand that struck us; it just happened to us by chance.”

¹⁰ So the people did so—they took two milk cows and hitched them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. ¹¹ Then they placed the ark of *ADONAI* on the cart together with the box, the golden mice, and the models of their tumors. ¹² So the cows took the way straight toward Beth-Shemesh—they kept along the same highway, lowing as they went, and turned aside neither to the right nor to the left. The lords of the Philistines followed them to the border of Beth-Shemesh.

¹³ Now the people of Beth-Shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley. When they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, they rejoiced to see it.

¹⁴ The cart came to the field of Joshua of Beth-Shemesh and stopped there, where there was a large stone. Then they chopped the wood of the cart and offered up the cows as a burnt offering to *ADONAI*. ¹⁵ The Levites took down the ark of *ADONAI* and the box that was with it that contained the gold objects, and placed them on the large stone. Then the people of Beth-Shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrifices to *ADONAI* that day.

¹⁶ Now when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron that same day. ¹⁷ So these are the golden tumors that the Philistines returned as a guilt offering to *ADONAI*: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron.

¹⁸ The golden mice also corresponded to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords—both the fortified cities and their country villages—as far as the large stone on which they had set down the ark of *ADONAI*. It remains to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-Shemesh.

¹⁹ Then He struck down some of the men of Beth-Shemesh because they had gazed into the ark of *ADONAI*. He struck down the people—70 out of 50,000 men—the people mourned because *ADONAI* had struck the people a great slaughter. ²⁰ So the men of Beth-Shemesh asked, “Who is able to stand before *ADONAI*—this holy God? To whom should it go up from us?”

²¹ So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-Jearim, saying, “The Philistines have brought back the ark of *ADONAI*. Come down—bring it up to you.”

Samuel's Victory at Mizpah

⁷ Then the men of Kiriath-Jearim came and fetched up the ark of *ADONAI*, brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill, and consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of *ADONAI*. ² From the day the ark rested in Kiriath-Jearim it was a long time, 20 years, and the whole house of Israel yearned after *ADONAI*. ³ Then Samuel spoke to the whole house of Israel saying, “If you are returning to *ADONAI* with all your heart, then remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you, direct your hearts to *ADONAI* and serve Him only. Then He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.” ⁴ So *Bnei-Yisrael* removed the Baalim [†] and the Ashtaroth, and served *ADONAI* alone.

⁵ Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel to Mizpah and I will pray to *ADONAI* for you.” ⁶ So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water and poured it out before *ADONAI*. They fasted on that day and said there, “We have sinned against *ADONAI*.” Then Samuel was judging *Bnei-Yisrael* at Mizpah.

⁷ Now when the Philistines heard that *Bnei-Yisrael* had assembled at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines marched against Israel. When *Bnei-Yisrael* heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. ⁸ So *Bnei-Yisrael* said to Samuel, “Don't stop crying out to *ADONAI* our God for us, so He may save us from the hand of the Philistines!”

⁹ Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to *ADONAI*. Then Samuel cried out to *ADONAI* for Israel and *ADONAI* answered him.

¹⁰ As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But *ADONAI* thundered with loud thunder on that day against the Philistines and confused them so that they were defeated before Israel. ¹¹ Then the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and struck them down all the way to below Beth-Car.

¹² Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it Eben-Ezer ^{††} saying, “Thus far *ADONAI* has helped us.” ¹³ So the Philistines were subdued and they did not invade the border of Israel anymore. The hand of *ADONAI* was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. ¹⁴ The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel, from Ekron to Gath, were restored to Israel, and Israel recovered its territory from the hand of the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites.

¹⁵ Now Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

¹⁶ He used to go annually on a circuit to Beth-El and Gilgal and Mizpah, and would judge over Israel in all those places. ¹⁷ Then his return was to Ramah, because his home was there, and from there he would judge Israel. So he built an altar to *ADONAI* there.

[†] lit. multiple gods ^{††} Meaning Stone of Help

Israel Demands a King

8 Now when Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges over Israel. ² The name of his first-born was Joel and the name of his second Abijah—they were judges in Beer-Sheba. ³ His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain—they took bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, ⁵ and said to him, “Behold, you have grown old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us—like all the nations.” ⁶ But the matter was displeasing in Samuel’s eyes when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” So Samuel prayed to *ADONAI*.

⁷ Then *ADONAI* said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you. For they have not rejected you, rather they have rejected Me from being king over them. ⁸ Like all the deeds that they have done since the day I brought them out of Egypt to this day—forsaking Me and worshiping other gods—so they are doing to you also. ⁹ So now, listen to their voice. However, you must earnestly forewarn them, and declare to them the rulings of the king who will reign over them.”

¹⁰ Now Samuel reported all the words of *ADONAI* to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹ “This will be the practice of the king that will reign over you,” he said. “He will draft your sons and assign them as his charioteers and horsemen, and they will run before his chariots. ¹² He will appoint them as commanders of thousands and captains of fifties, also some to plow his fields, reap his harvest, make his weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots. ¹³ Also he will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks and bakers. ¹⁴ He will seize the best of your fields, vineyards, and olive groves, and give them to his courtiers. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage and give it to his officials and slaves. ¹⁶ He will also take your male and female servants, your best young men and your donkeys and make them do his work. ¹⁷ He will also take the tenth of your flocks. Then you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When the day comes and you cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, *ADONAI* will not answer you on that day.”

¹⁹ But the people refused to listen to Samuel, and they said, “No! But a king should be over us!” ²⁰ So we may become like all the nations—having our king who will judge us, go out before us, and fight our battles.”

²¹ After Samuel heard all the words of the people, he reported them back in the hearing of *ADONAI*. ²² *ADONAI* said to Samuel, “Listen to their voice and appoint a king to reign for them.” So Samuel said to the men of Israel, “Go, each one to his town.”

Saul Meets Samuel

9 Now there was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Becorath son of Aphiah son of a Benjamite. He was a mighty man of valor ¹² and he had a son whose name was Saul—young and handsome—there was no one among *Bnei-Yisrael* better than him. From his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people.

³ Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul’s father, were lost. So Kish said to his son Saul, “Take now one of the servants with you, get up and look for the donkeys.” ⁴ So he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he passed through the land of Benjamin, but still did not find them. ⁵ When they arrived in the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant with him, “Come, let’s go back—otherwise my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and start worrying about us.”

⁶ Then his servant said to him, “Behold now, there is a man of God in this town, and he is a man held in honor—everything he says is sure to come true. Now, let’s go there. Perhaps he’ll tell us the way we should go.”

⁷ Then said Saul to his servant, “But look, if we go, what would we bring the man? For the bread is gone from our sacks, and there is nothing to bring to the man of God as a present. What do we have?”

⁸ The servant answered Saul again and said, “Behold, I have in my hand a quarter of a shekel of silver. I will give it to the man of God and he will tell us our way.” ⁹ (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, “Come, let’s go to the seer”—for today’s prophet was formerly called a seer.)

¹⁰ Then Saul said to his servant, “Well said. Come, let’s go!” So they went to the town where the man of God was. ¹¹ As they went up the hill to the town, they found some girls going out to draw water, and they asked them, “Is the seer here?” ¹² They answered them and said, “He is there, ahead of you. Hurry now, for he has come today to the town because people have a sacrifice at the high place today. ¹³ As soon as you enter the town, you’ll find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he must first bless the sacrifice—afterward the guests can eat. So now, get up, for you will find him at once.” ¹⁴ So they went up to the town. As they were entering the town, behold, Samuel was coming out toward them to go up to the high place.

¹⁵ One day before Saul came, *ADONAI* had revealed to Samuel saying: ¹⁶ “Tomorrow about this time, I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you will anoint him ruler over My people Israel. He will deliver My people from the hand of the Philistines. I have

† Or *wealth substance*

observed My people, because their cry has come to Me."

¹⁷ When Samuel saw Saul, *ADONAI* spoke to him, "Behold, this is the man I told you about. This one will govern My people." ¹⁸ Then Saul approached Samuel inside the gate and asked, "Tell me, please, where the seer's house is?"

¹⁹ Samuel answered Saul by saying, "I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place. For today you will eat with me. In the morning when I send you off, I will tell you everything that is in your heart. ²⁰ As for the donkeys that you lost three days ago, don't set your heart on them, for they have been found. Now, for whom is all that is desirable in Israel? Is it not for you and for all your father's household?"

²¹ Saul answered by saying, "Am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my clan is the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? So why do you say such things to me?"

²² Then Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them into the hall, and gave them a place at the head of the guests, who numbered about 30 people. ²³ Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion that I gave you and told you to set aside." ²⁴ So the cook took up the thigh, raised it, and set it before Saul. Then he said, "Here is what has been reserved! Set it before you and eat, because it has been kept until this appointed time for you, since I said, 'I have invited the people.'" So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

²⁵ When they came down from the high place to the town, he spoke with Saul on the roof. ²⁶ They rose early, and at daybreak Samuel called to Saul on the roof saying, "Get up, so I may send you off." So Saul got up, and both of them, he and Samuel, went outside. ²⁷ As they were going down toward the edge of town, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell your servant to go ahead of us and pass on, but as for you, stand still awhile, so that I may proclaim to you the word of God."

Saul Anointed King

10 Then Samuel took the vial of oil and poured it on his head. Then he kissed him and said, "Has *ADONAI* not anointed you ruler over His inheritance? ² When you leave me today, you will find two men near the tomb of Rachel in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you: 'The donkeys you set out to look for have been found—behold, your father has dropped the matter about the donkeys and is worried about you saying, 'What should I do about my son?'" ³ Then you will go on from there until you reach the terebinth of Tabor, and there three men going up to God at Beth-El will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and the other carrying a jug of wine. ⁴ Then they will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you will receive from their hand. ⁵ After that, you will arrive at the hill of God, where the garrison of the Philistines is. It will come about, as soon as you enter the town,

that you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place, preceded by a harp, a tambourine, and a flute, and they will be prophesying.

⁶ Then the *Ruach* of *ADONAI* will seize you and you will prophesy with them—you will turn into another man. ⁷ Now when these signs happen to you, do for yourself what the occasion requires, for God is with you. ⁸ Afterward, you are to go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice fellowship offerings. Seven days you will wait, until I come to you and instruct you what you should do."

⁹ Then it happened, as Saul turned his back to leave Samuel, that God transformed his heart, and all those signs came to pass that day. ¹⁰ When they arrived there, at the hill, behold, a band of prophets did meet him, and suddenly, the *Ruach* of God overtook him, and subsequently, he prophesied among them. ¹¹ So when all who knew him formerly saw him prophesying with the prophets, they said one to another, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" ¹² (Someone there asked, "Who is their father?") Therefore it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" ¹³ When he finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

¹⁴ Now Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where did you go?" And he said, "To look for the donkeys. But when we saw that they could not be found, we went to Samuel."

¹⁵ Saul's uncle said, "Tell me now, what did Samuel say to you?"

¹⁶ "He assured us that the donkeys had been found," Saul said to his uncle. But concerning the matter of kingship about which Samuel spoke, he told him nothing.

¹⁷ Then Samuel summoned the people to *ADONAI* at Mizpah. ¹⁸ He said to *Bnei-Yisrael*, "Thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel: I brought Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you. ¹⁹ But today you have spurned your God, who is your deliverer from all your calamities and your distresses. For you said to Him: 'No! Rather set a king over us.' Now therefore present yourselves before *ADONAI* by your tribes and by your thousands."

²⁰ So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. ²¹ Then he brought forward the tribe of Benjamin by its clans, and the clan of the Matrites was chosen. Finally, Saul son of Kish was chosen. But when they looked for him, he could not be found. ²² Therefore, they inquired of *ADONAI* further, "Has the man come here yet?" *ADONAI* answered, "He has just hidden himself among the baggage." ²³ So they ran and brought him from there. When he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders up.

²⁴ Then Samuel announced to all the people, “Do you see the one *ADONAI* has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people!”

Then all the people shouted and said, “Long live the king!” ²⁵ Then Samuel explained to the people the rules of kingship, wrote them in a scroll and placed it before *ADONAI*. Then Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. ²⁶ Saul also went home to Gibeah, accompanied by men of valor whose hearts God had touched. ²⁷ But certain worthless men said, “How can this one save us?” So they despised him and brought him no present. But he kept silent.

Saul's First Victory

11 Now Nahash the Ammonite marched up and encamped against Jabesh-Gilead. Then all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, “Make a treaty with us, and we will serve you.”

² But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, “Only on this condition will I make a treaty with you—by gouging out the right eye of every one of you, thus I will bring disgrace on all Israel.”

³ So the elders of Jabesh said to him, “Give us seven days’ respite, so we may send messengers throughout all the territory of Israel. If no one comes to deliver us, we will surrender to you.”

⁴ When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and spoke these words in the hearing of the people, all the people lifted up their voice and wept. ⁵ Now behold, Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen, so Saul asked, “Why are the people weeping?” Then they told him the words of the men of Jabesh. ⁶ Then the *Ruach* of God suddenly rushed upon Saul when he heard those words, and his anger blazed. ⁷ So he took a pair of oxen, cut them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hand of messengers saying, “Whoever does not come out after Saul and after Samuel, so will it be done to his oxen.” So the dread of *ADONAI* fell on the people, and they came out as one man. ⁸ He numbered them in Bezek, and *Bnei-Yisrael* were 300,000 and the men of Judah 30,000.

⁹ So they said to the messengers who came, “Thus will you say to the men of Jabesh-Gilead: Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you will have deliverance.” The messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, and they were glad.

¹⁰ Then the men of Jabesh said, “Tomorrow we will surrender to you and you can do to us whatever seems good to you.” ¹¹ So it was on the following day that Saul divided the people into three columns; they penetrated into the midst of the camp at the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites until the heat of day. It came about that the survivors were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

¹² Then the people said to Samuel, “Who was it who said, ‘Should Saul reign over us?’ Bring the men, so we may put them to death.” †

¹³ But Saul replied, “No man will be put to death this day, for today *ADONAI* has brought deliverance to Israel.” ¹⁴ Then Samuel said to the people, “Come, let’s go to Gilgal and reaffirm the kingdom there.” ¹⁵ So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before *ADONAI* in Gilgal. There they sacrificed fellowship offerings before *ADONAI*, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

Samuel Rebukes Israel

12 Then Samuel said to all Israel, “Behold, I have listened to your voice in all you said to me, and have set a king over you. ² Now here is the king who will go before you, while I am old and gray. Also here are my sons with you. I have gone before you from my youth to this day. ³ Here I am. Witness against me before *ADONAI* and before His anointed. Whose ox have I taken or whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I defrauded or whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe to look the other way? I will restore it to you.”

⁴ They replied, “You haven’t defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from anyone’s hand.”

⁵ Then he said to them, “*ADONAI* is then a witness against you, and His anointed is a witness this day that you have not found anything in my hand.”

“He is a witness,” they replied.

⁶ Then Samuel said to the people, “It is *ADONAI* who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt. ⁷ So now, stand still, so that I may plead with you before *ADONAI* concerning all the righteous acts of *ADONAI*, which He did for you and your fathers. ⁸ When Jacob entered Egypt and your fathers cried out to *ADONAI*, then *ADONAI* sent Moses and Aaron who brought your fathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place. ⁹ But they forgot *ADONAI* their God, so He gave them over into the hand of Sisera, captain of the army of Hazor, into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab, who fought against them. ¹⁰ So they cried out to *ADONAI* and said, ‘We have sinned because we have forsaken *ADONAI* and have worshiped the Baalim and the Ashtaroth. But now deliver us from the hand of our enemies and we will worship You.’ ¹¹ Then *ADONAI* sent Jerubbaal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you from the hand of your enemies on every side, so that you might live securely. ¹² But when you saw Nahash king of the Ammonites marching against you, you said to me, ‘No! But a king must reign over us!’—even though *ADONAI* your God is your king.

¹³ “Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have asked for, and behold, *ADONAI* has set him as king over you. ¹⁴ If you fear *ADONAI* and worship Him, and listen to His voice and do not rebel against the command of *ADONAI*, then both you as well as the king who reigns over you will be following *ADONAI* your God. ¹⁵ But if you do not lis-

† cf. Luke 19:27.

ten to the voice of *ADONAI* and rebel against the command of *ADONAI*, then the hand of *ADONAI* will be against you and against your fathers. ¹⁶ Now stand by and see this great thing that *ADONAI* will do before your eyes. ¹⁷ Is it not wheat harvest season today? I will call to *ADONAI*, that He may send thunder and rain. Then you will know and see that your wickedness is great which you have done in the sight of *ADONAI* by asking for yourselves a king."

¹⁸ So Samuel prayed to *ADONAI*, and *ADONAI* sent thunder and rain that day. Then all the people greatly feared *ADONAI* and Samuel, ¹⁹ and all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to *ADONAI* your God, that we would not die, for we have added to all our sins this evil by asking for ourselves a king."

²⁰ Samuel said to the people, "Fear not! Indeed you have done all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following *ADONAI*, but worship *ADONAI* with all your heart. ²¹ Do not turn aside to go after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are futile. ²² For *ADONAI* will not forsake His people for His great Name's sake, † because it has pleased *ADONAI* to make you a people to Himself. ²³ Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against *ADONAI* by ceasing to pray for you! Yet I will keep instructing you in the good and straight way. ²⁴ Only fear *ADONAI* and worship Him in truth with all your heart, considering how magnificently He has dealt with you. ²⁵ But if you persist in acting wickedly, you will be swept away, both you and your king."

Saul's Misguided Sacrifice

13 Saul was 30 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for 42 years over Israel. ² Now Saul chose for himself 3,000 men of Israel, of which 2,000 were with Saul in Michmas and in the hill country of Beth-El, and 1,000 were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the troops he sent away, each one to his tent.

³ Now Jonathan struck down the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba, and the Philistines heard of it. So Saul blew the *shofar* throughout the country, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." ⁴ All Israel heard the news, "Saul had struck down the garrison of the Philistines, so Israel has become a stench to the Philistines." Then the people were summoned to Saul at Gilgal. ⁵ Meanwhile the Philistines assembled themselves to fight with Israel: 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They marched up and camped in Michmas, east of Beth-Aven.

⁶ When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble, because the people were hard-pressed, they hid in caves, thickets, cliffs, crevices and pits. ⁷ Some of the Hebrews even crossed over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. But as for Saul, he was still in Gilgal, but all the people following him were trembling.

† cf. Rom. 11:1.

⁸ So he waited seven days—the time set by Samuel—but Samuel had not come to Gilgal so the people began to scatter from him. ⁹ Then Saul said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings," so he offered the burnt offering. ¹⁰ But as soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, behold Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet and greet him. ¹¹ But Samuel asked, "What have you done?"

Saul replied, "Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you had not come within the appointed days, and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmas, ¹² I thought: 'Now the Philistines are about to advance against me at Gilgal, but I have not yet entreated *ADONAI*.' So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering."

¹³ Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly by not keeping the commandment of *ADONAI* your God which He commanded you. For now, *ADONAI* would have established your kingship over Israel forever. ¹⁴ But now your kingship will not last. *ADONAI* has sought for Himself a man after His own heart. So *ADONAI* will appoint him as ruler over His people—because you have not guarded what *ADONAI* commanded you." ¹⁵ Samuel then departed and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.

Then Saul numbered the troops that were with him, about 600 men. ¹⁶ Now Saul and his son Jonathan and the people that were present with them were staying in Gibeah of Benjamin, while the Philistines encamped in Michmas. ¹⁷ Raiders started to come out from the camp of the Philistines in three detachments: one detachment turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual, ¹⁸ another detachment turned toward Beth-Horon, and the third detachment turned toward the border road overlooking the Zeboim Wadi toward the wilderness.

¹⁹ Now no blacksmith could be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Otherwise the Hebrews will make swords or spears!" ²⁰ So all the Israelites had to go down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plowshare, his sickle, his axe, or his hoe. ²¹ The price of sharpening was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares, the sickles, the three-pronged forks, or the axes, or to set the oxgoads. ²² So it came about on the day of battle, there was no sword or spear to be found in the hand of any of the troops that were with Saul and Jonathan—only Saul and his son Jonathan had them. ²³ Then the garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Michmas.

Jonathan's Daring Valor

14 One day Jonathan son of Saul said to the young man carrying his armor, "Come, let's cross over to the Philistines' garrison that's on the other side." But he did not tell his father. ² Now Saul was sitting on the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that is in Migron, and the troops with him were about 600 men. ³ Ahijah son of Ahitub, the brother of Ichabod son of Phinehas son of Eli, the *kohen* of *ADONAI* in

Shiloh, was wearing an ephod. But the troops did not know that Jonathan was gone. ⁴ Between the crossings by which Jonathan sought to cross over to the Philistines' garrison, there was a rocky crag on one side and another rocky crag on the other side—one was called Bozez and the other Seneh. ⁵ One crag was to the north near Michmas, and the other to the south near Geba.

⁶ Then Jonathan said to the young man carrying his armor, "Come, let's cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised ones. Perhaps *ADONAI* will work for us, for nothing restrains *ADONAI* from delivering whether by many or by few." ⁷ His armor-bearer answered him, "Do whatever is in your heart; go ahead—I'm with you whatever your heart decides."

⁸ Then Jonathan said, "Here, we'll cross over to the men, then let them see us. ⁹ If they say to us: 'Wait till we come to you,' then we'll stand still in our place and will not go up to them. ¹⁰ But if they say, 'Come up to us!' then we will go up, for *ADONAI* has delivered them into our hand—that will be our sign."

¹¹ So they both let themselves be seen by the Philistine garrison. "Look, some Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they were hiding," the Philistines said. ¹² So the men of the garrison shouted down to Jonathan and his armor-bearer saying, "Come up to us and we'll teach you a lesson!"

Then Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Follow me, for *ADONAI* has handed them over to Israel!" ¹³ So Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor-bearer behind him. Then they fell before Jonathan, his armor-bearer behind him finishing them off. ¹⁴ That first assault that Jonathan and his armor-bearer made struck down about 20 men within about half a furrow in an acre of land. ¹⁵ Terror then spread through the camp, in the field, and among all the troops. Even the outposts and the raiders also trembled, when the earth quaked—it was a trembling from God.

¹⁶ Now Saul's watchmen in Gibeah of Benjamin saw the throng scattering away in every direction. ¹⁷ So Saul said to the people who were with him, "Call the roll now and see who went from us." When they called the roll, behold Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there.

¹⁸ Then Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here." For the ark of God at that time was with *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁹ But while Saul was talking to the *kohen*, the commotion in the Philistine camp kept increasing, so Saul said to the *kohen*, "Withdraw your hand." ²⁰ Then Saul and all the people with him rallied and rushed into the battle. Behold, every man's sword was against his fellow in utter confusion! ²¹ Now there were Hebrews who had defected to the Philistines previously and had gone up with them to their camp round about—even they joined the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan. ²² Also when all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of

Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled, they also chased after them in the battle. ²³ So *ADONAI* delivered Israel that day. The battle spread as far as Beth-Aven.

Saul's Rash Vow

²⁴ Now the men of Israel were hard-pressed that day, for Saul put the people under oath saying, "Cursed be the man that eats any food before evening, until I have avenged myself on my enemies!" So none of the people tasted food. ²⁵ But when all the people of the land entered the forest, there was honey on the ground. ²⁶ When the people entered the forest, indeed, there was a flow of honey, but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. ²⁷ But Jonathan had not heard when his father made the people swear the oath. So he put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it into the honeycomb, put his hand to his mouth—and his eyes brightened. ²⁸ Then, one of the soldiers told him, "Your father strictly put the people under oath saying: 'Cursed be the man that eats food today.' But the troops are exhausted."

²⁹ Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the people. Just look how my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of this honey. ³⁰ How much more, if only the troops had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies that they found? Wouldn't the slaughter among the Philistines have then been greater?"

³¹ That day they struck down the Philistines from Michmas to Aijalon, though the people were so weary. ³² Then the people rushed greedily upon the plunder, took sheep, oxen, and calves, butchered them on the ground, and the people ate them with the blood. ³³ Then they reported to Saul saying, "Behold, the people are sinning against *ADONAI* by eating with the blood."

"You have acted faithlessly," he said. "Roll a great stone towards me at once." ³⁴ Then Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people and tell them: 'Each one of you bring me his ox or his sheep, and butcher them here and eat. Don't sin against *ADONAI* by eating with the blood.'" So all the people each brought his ox with him that night and butchered it there. ³⁵ Then Saul built an altar to *ADONAI*; it was the first altar that he built to *ADONAI*.

³⁶ Then Saul said, "Let's go down after the Philistines by night and plunder them until the morning light, we won't leave any survivors among them."

"Do whatever seems good in your eyes," they replied.

Then the *kohen* said, "Let us draw near to God here."

³⁷ So Saul inquired of God, "Should I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into the hand of Israel?" But He did not answer him that day. ³⁸ Then Saul said, "Draw near here, all you chiefs of the people; investigate and see how this sin was committed today. ³⁹ For as *ADONAI*—Israel's deliverer—lives, even

if it was by my son Jonathan, he will surely die." But not one among all the people answered him.

⁴⁰ So he said to all Israel, "You stand on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will stand on the other side."

"Do what seems good in your eyes," said the people to Saul.

⁴¹ So Saul said to *ADONAI*, "God of Israel, grant a perfect lot." Jonathan and Saul were chosen, but the people were cleared. ⁴² Then Saul said, "Cast the lots between me and my son Jonathan," and Jonathan was taken. ⁴³ Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you've done."

Jonathan told him saying, "I certainly did taste a little honey—with the end of the rod that was in my hand. Here I am—I must die!"

⁴⁴ "May God do so to me and even more," Saul said. "You must surely die, Jonathan."

⁴⁵ But the people said to Saul, "Must Jonathan die? It was he who brought about this great deliverance in Israel! Far be it! As *ADONAI* lives, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground! For he has worked with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan and he did not die.

⁴⁶ Then Saul broke off pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own country. ⁴⁷ After Saul had secured his kingship over Israel, he waged war against all his enemies on every side—against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he punished them. ⁴⁸ He did so with valor, defeating the Amalekites and delivering Israel from the hands of those who had plundered them.

⁴⁹ Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-Shua; and the names of his two daughters were: the name of the firstborn Merab and the name of the younger Michal. ⁵⁰ The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the commander of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle. ⁵¹ Kish was Saul's father, and Abner's father was Ner son of Abiel.

⁵² Now there was bitter war against the Philistines all the days of Saul. So whenever Saul saw any mighty man or any son of valor, he would gather him to himself.

Saul Spares Agag of Amalek

15 Then Samuel said to Saul, "*ADONAI* sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, listen to the voice of the words of *ADONAI*! ² Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*: 'I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. ³ Now go and strike down Amalek and put all he has under the ban of destruction—so have no pity on him; but kill both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and sheep, camels and donkeys.'"

⁴ So Saul summoned the troops and numbered them in Telaim: 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Ju-

dah. ⁵ Saul advanced to the city of Amalek and lay in wait in the valley. ⁶ Then Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, depart, get down from among the Amalekites, or else I may destroy you with them—for you showed kindness to all *Bnei-Yisrael* when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites withdrew from among the Amalekites.

⁷ Then Saul struck down the Amalekites from Havilah until you come to Shur, which is close to Egypt. ⁸ He captured King Agag of Amalek alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

⁹ But Saul and the people spared Agag as well as the best of the sheep, the cattle, even the fatlings and the lambs, and all that was good, since they were not willing to utterly destroy them; everything that was worthless and feeble, they destroyed completely.

¹⁰ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Samuel saying:

¹¹ "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands." So Samuel was troubled and cried out to *ADONAI* all night long. ¹² Then Samuel rose early in the morning to confront Saul. But it was reported to Samuel saying, "Saul went to Carmel—for some reason, he erected a monument for himself. Then he turned and went down to Gilgal."

¹³ Now when Samuel reached Saul, Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of *ADONAI*! I have carried out *ADONAI*'s command."

¹⁴ But Samuel said, "Then what is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?"

¹⁵ "They brought them from the Amalekites," Saul replied, "for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice to *ADONAI* your God—but the rest we have utterly destroyed."

¹⁶ "Stop!" Samuel said to Saul. "Let me tell you what *ADONAI* said to me last night."

"Say on," he said.

¹⁷ Then Samuel said, "Isn't it true, though you were insignificant in your own eyes, that you were made head of the tribes of Israel? *ADONAI* anointed you king over Israel! ¹⁸ Then *ADONAI* sent you on a mission and said: 'Go and utterly destroy the Amalekites, the sinners, and wage war against them until you annihilate them.' ¹⁹ Why then did you not obey the voice of *ADONAI*, but rushed greedily onto the spoil—doing what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes?"

²⁰ "But I did obey the voice of *ADONAI*," Saul said to Samuel. "I went on the mission on which *ADONAI* sent me, and brought back Agag the king of Amalek—and utterly destroyed the Amalekites. ²¹ But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen—the best of what was under the ban of destruction—to sacrifice to *ADONAI* your God in Gilgal."

²² Samuel said:

"Does *ADONAI* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of *ADONAI*? †

† cf. Mark 12:33; Heb. 10:6-9.

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to pay heed than the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry.

Since you have rejected *ADONAI*'s word, He has also rejected you as king."

²⁴ Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned! For I have transgressed against the word of *ADONAI* and your words—because I feared the people and listened to their voice. ^{†25} So now, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship *ADONAI*."

²⁶ But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of *ADONAI*, and *ADONAI* has rejected you as king over Israel."

²⁷ As Samuel turned about to go, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. ²⁸ Then Samuel said to him, "*ADONAI* has torn the kingship over Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you. ²⁹ Moreover, the Eternal Glory of Israel does not lie or change His mind. ^{††} For He is not human that He should change His mind."

³⁰ Then Saul said, "I have sinned! But please, honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me until I bow in worship to *ADONAI* your God." ³¹ So Samuel returned after Saul, and Saul bowed in worship to *ADONAI*.

³² Then Samuel said, "Bring me Agag the king of Amalek." Agag approached him in chains, thinking, "Surely bitter death has turned back." ³³ Then Samuel said, "As your sword has made women childless, so will your mother be childless among women." Then Samuel cut Agag into pieces before *ADONAI* in Gilgal.

³⁴ Samuel then went to Ramah, while Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ Samuel never did see Saul again until the day of his death. Yet Samuel mourned over Saul, while *ADONAI* regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

Samuel Anoints David

16 Now *ADONAI* said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse the Beth-Lehemite, for I have selected for Myself a king among his sons."

² But Samuel replied, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me."

ADONAI said, "Take a heifer with you and say: 'I have come to sacrifice to *ADONAI*.' ³ Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will let you know what you are to do. You will anoint for Me whom I tell you."

⁴ So Samuel did what *ADONAI* said and went to Beth-Lehem. The elders of the town came out to meet him trembling, and asked, "Do you come in *shalom*?"

⁵ "In *shalom*," he said. "I have come to sacrifice to *ADONAI*. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." He also consecrated Jesse and his sons

and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶ Upon their arrival, he saw Eliab and thought, "Surely, *ADONAI*'s anointed one is before Him."

⁷ But *ADONAI* said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or his stature, because I have already refused him. For He does not see a man as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but *ADONAI* looks into the heart."

⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. But he said, "Neither has *ADONAI* chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by and again he said, "Neither has *ADONAI* chosen this one."

¹⁰ Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "*ADONAI* has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Then Samuel asked Jesse, "Are these all the boys you have?"

"There's still the youngest," he replied. "But right now, he's tending the sheep."

"Send and bring him," Samuel said to Jesse, "for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² So he sent word and had him come. Now he was ruddy-cheeked, with beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance.

Then *ADONAI* said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is the one." ¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. From that day on *Ruach ADONAI* came mightily upon David. Then Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

David Soothes Saul's Torment

¹⁴ Now the *Ruach ADONAI* had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from *ADONAI* terrified him. ¹⁵ So Saul's courtiers said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. ¹⁶ Let our lord now command your courtiers in your service to search for a man who is a skillful player on the harp. Then whenever the evil spirit from God comes on you, he will play with his instrument and you will feel better."

¹⁷ So Saul said to his courtiers, "Find me someone who can play well and bring him to me."

¹⁸ One of the young men answered and said, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-Lehemite who is skillful in playing music. He is a mighty man of valor, a warrior, prudent in speech, a handsome man, and *ADONAI* is with him."

¹⁹ So Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the flock." ²⁰ So Jesse took a donkey, loaded it with bread, a bottle of wine, and a young goat, and sent them with his son David to Saul. ²¹ Then David came to Saul and became one of his attendants. Saul loved him greatly, so David became his armor-bearer. ²² Then Saul sent word to Jesse saying, "Let David now keep attending me, for he has found favor in my eyes." ²³ It came to pass, whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take the harp and play it with his hand. So Saul would find relief and feel better, as the evil spirit departed from him.

† cf. Luke 12:4-5; John 12:42-43. †† cf. Titus 1:2.

David Slays Goliath with Sling and Stone

17 Now the Philistines assembled their armies to battle. They were gathered at Socoh of Judah, and camped in Ephes-Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah. ² Saul and the men of Israel gathered and camped in the valley of Elah, then lined up in battle array against the Philistines. ³ The Philistines were standing on the mountain on one side, and Israel was standing on the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them. ⁴ Then a champion stepped out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. ⁵ He had a bronze helmet on his head and a breastplate of scale armor; the weight of the bronze breastplate was 5,000 shekels. ⁶ He also had bronze shin-guards on his legs and a bronze javelin slung between his shoulders. ⁷ The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed 600 shekels † of iron; and his shield-bearer was marching ahead of him.

⁸ Then he stood and shouted out to the ranks of Israel saying to them, "Why come out to line up in battle array? Am I not the Philistine and aren't you Saul's servants? Choose for yourselves a man and let him come down to me. ⁹ If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then will we become your slaves; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then will you become our slaves and serve us." ¹⁰ The Philistine added, "Today I defy the ranks of Israel—give me a man, so we may fight together!"

¹¹ But when Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and very terrified.

¹² Now David was son of a certain Ephrathite man of Beth-Lehem of Judah, whose name was Jesse. He had eight sons and during the days of Saul the man was old, advanced in years among men. ¹³ Now the three oldest sons of Jesse had already left and gone after Saul to the battle; the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. ¹⁴ David was the youngest. So the three oldest followed Saul. ¹⁵ Now David would go back and forth from Saul to tending his father's sheep by Beth-Lehem.

¹⁶ For forty days that Philistine would come out every morning and evening to present himself. ¹⁷ Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take now, for your brothers, an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers. ¹⁸ Also take these ten slices of cheese to the captain of their thousand—and check out the welfare of your brothers and bring back some token from them. ¹⁹ They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines."

²⁰ So David rose up early in the morning, left the flock with a keeper, took the provisions and went as Jesse had commanded him. When he reached the

camp, the army was going out to the battle line shouting the war cry. ²¹ Israel and the Philistines drew up their battle lines, army against army. ²² Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered to check out his brothers' welfare. ²³ But as he was talking with them, behold the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the ranks of the Philistines, and he spoke these same words; and David heard them.

²⁴ Upon seeing him, all the men of Israel fled from him in great fear. ²⁵ All the men of Israel were saying, "Have you seen this man who keeps coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel! The man who kills him, the king will enrich him with great riches, give him his daughter in marriage, and make his father's house tax-free in Israel!"

²⁶ Then David asked the men who were standing by him saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the ranks of the living God?"

²⁷ The people answered him with the same speech saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who strikes him down." ²⁸ Now when Eliab his oldest brother heard him speaking to the men, Eliab's anger was kindled against David. "Why have you come down here?" he asked. "So with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart! For you've come down here to watch the battle."

²⁹ "What have I done now?" David said. "It was only a question!" ³⁰ Then he turned away from him toward someone else and asked the same question. So the people gave him the same answer as before.

³¹ The words that David said were overheard and reported before Saul. So he was taken to him. ³² David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

³³ Then Saul said to David, "You can't go fight this Philistine—for you're just a youth, and he's been a warrior since his youth."

³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a lamb out of the flock, ³⁵ I went out after it, struck it down, and rescued the lamb out of its mouth. If it rose up against me, I grabbed him by its fur, struck it and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear, so this uncircumcised Philistine will become like one of them—since he has defied the ranks of the living God." ³⁷ Then David said, "ADONAI, who has delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

"Go!" said Saul to David, "and may ADONAI be with you."

³⁸ Then Saul clothed David with his own garb, put a bronze helmet on his head, and clothed him in armor.

† Equals 125 pounds. †† Equals 15 pounds.

³⁹ David strapped his sword on his garment and tried to walk, but he was not used to it. So David said to Saul, "I cannot walk in these, for I am not used to them." So David took them off. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the valley, put them in the pocket of the shepherd's bag that he had, and with his sling in his hand, he approached the Philistine.

⁴¹ Meanwhile, the Philistine drew nearer and approached David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. ⁴² Now when the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was just a ruddy boy with a handsome appearance. ⁴³ Then the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" Then the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, so I may give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field."

⁴⁵ Then David said to 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 *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This very day *ADONAI* will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and take your head off you, and I will give the carcasses of the Philistines' camp today to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth. Then all the earth will know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷ and so all this assembly will know that *ADONAI* delivers not with sword and spear—for the battle belongs to *ADONAI*—and He will give you into our hands."

⁴⁸ Then when the Philistine rose and began to advance, drawing near to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ David put his hand in his bag, took from it a stone and slung it, striking the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground.

⁵⁰ So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, struck the Philistine down, and killed him. Since there was no sword in David's hand, ⁵¹ David ran, stood over the Philistine, picked up his sword, drew it from its sheath, slew him, and cut off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. ⁵² Then the men of Israel and Judah rose up, shouted, and pursued the Philistines all the way to the valley up to the gates of Ekron. The slain Philistines fell down along the way to Shaaraim, even up to Gath and Ekron.

⁵³ When *Bnei-Yisrael* returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp. ⁵⁴ David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his own tent. ⁵⁵ Now when Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he asked Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this boy?"

Abner said, "As your soul lives, your majesty, I don't know."

⁵⁶ So the king said, "Then, find out whose son this young man is." ⁵⁷ So when David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.

⁵⁸ "Whose son are you, young man?" Saul said to him. David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Beth-Lehemite."

Jonathan's Covenant Love for David

18 Now it came to pass, when David had finished speaking to Saul, Jonathan's soul was knit to David's soul, and Jonathan loved him as himself. ² Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. ³ Then Jonathan cut a covenant with David, because he loved him as himself. ⁴ Jonathan stripped off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, along with his armor: his sword, bow, and belt.

Saul's Jealousy

⁵ So David went out wherever Saul sent him and had success, so Saul set him over the men of war. It was pleasing in the eyes of all the people as well as in the eyes of Saul's courtiers. ⁶ Upon their coming back, upon David's return from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing in circles to greet King Saul, with timbrels, with joy and with three-stringed instruments. ⁷ So the women sang one to another, as they were dancing saying,

"Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his ten thousands!"

⁸ Then Saul became very angry—this saying was evil in his eyes—and he commented, "They've ascribed to David ten thousands and to me they've ascribed thousands. Now what more does he lack but the kingdom?" ⁹ So Saul eyed David from that day on.

¹⁰ It came about the next day that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, so that he was raving within the palace. While David was playing music with his hand, as he did day by day, Saul had his spear in his hand, ¹¹ and Saul hurled the spear, thinking, "I'll pin David to the wall!" But David eluded him—twice.

¹² Now Saul became afraid of David, because *ADONAI* was with him but had departed from Saul. ¹³ Therefore Saul removed him from his entourage by appointing him as a captain of a thousand. So David went out and came in before the troops. ¹⁴ David had success in all his undertakings, since *ADONAI* was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul saw that he had great success, he dreaded him. ¹⁶ But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them.

¹⁷ Then Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab—I give her to you as a wife. Only continue to be my son of valor and fight *ADONAI*'s battles." For Saul thought, "My hand needn't be against him—let the hand of the Philistines be against him."

¹⁸ But David replied to Saul, “Who am I, and what is my life or my father’s family in Israel, that I should become the king’s son-in-law?” ¹⁹ But when it was time to give Saul’s daughter Merab to David in marriage, she was given as wife to Adriel the Meholathite instead.

Michal’s Love for David

²⁰ Now Saul’s daughter Michal loved David. When they told Saul, the matter pleased him. ²¹ Saul thought, “I will give her to him, so that she may become a snare to him—and the hand of the Philistines will be against him.” So Saul said to David, “You can still become my son-in-law, even today, with the second one.”

²² Then Saul commanded his courtiers, “Speak with David privately and say, ‘Behold, the king delights in you and all his courtiers love you. So now, become the king’s son-in-law!’” ²³ So Saul’s courtiers whispered these words in David’s ears.

But David said, “Is it a light thing to you becoming the king’s son-in-law, considering that I am a poor man and of little account?” ²⁴ Saul’s courtiers reported back to him what David had said.

²⁵ Then Saul said, “Thus you will say to David, ‘The king desires no bridal dowry except 100 foreskins of the Philistines—to take vengeance on the king’s enemies.’” So Saul schemed to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

²⁶ When his courtiers told David these words, the word seemed right in David’s eyes to become the king’s son-in-law. Before the days were fulfilled, ²⁷ David had risen, gone with his men and killed 200 Philistine men. Then David brought their foreskins and gave them in full number to the king—to become the king’s son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter as a wife. ²⁸ When Saul saw and realized that *ADONAI* was with David and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him, ²⁹ Saul grew even more afraid of David. Thus Saul became David’s enemy for all days.

³⁰ When the chiefs of the Philistines marched out, as often as they came out, David proved more successful than all of Saul’s officers. So his name became highly esteemed.

Saul Tries to Kill David

19 Now Saul told his son Jonathan and all his courtiers to kill David. But Saul’s son Jonathan delighted much in David. ² So Jonathan informed David saying, “My father Saul is seeking to kill you. So now, please be on guard in the morning, and stay in a secret place and hide yourself. ³ I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you will be, and I will speak with my father about you. If I notice anything, I will tell you.” ⁴ So Jonathan spoke well of David to his father Saul and said to him, “May the king not sin against his servant David, since he has not sinned against you, and since his deeds have been very beneficial for you; ⁵ For he put his life in his hand and killed

the Philistine, and *ADONAI* won a great victory for all Israel—you saw it and rejoiced. So why would you sin against innocent blood by killing David without a cause?”

⁶ Saul listened to the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, “As *ADONAI* lives, he will not be put to death.”

⁷ So Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul and in his presence as before.

⁸ Once again war broke out, and David marched out and fought the Philistines, and inflicted a great slaughter on them and they fled before him. ⁹ Yet once again an evil spirit from *ADONAI* came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand, as David was playing music with his hand. ¹⁰ Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul’s face, so that he drove the spear into the wall. That night David fled and got away.

¹¹ Then Saul sent agents to David’s house to watch him, in order to kill him in the morning. But David’s wife Michal warned him saying, “If you don’t escape for your life tonight, tomorrow you will be dead!” ¹² So Michal lowered David down through the window, and thus he went, fled and escaped. ¹³ Then Michal took a household idol, laid it in the bed, put a quilt of goats’ hair at the head and covered it with a cloth. ¹⁴ When Saul sent messengers to arrest David, she said, “He’s sick.”

¹⁵ So Saul sent the agents back to see David, saying, “Bring him up to me in the bed so I may put him to death.” ¹⁶ When the messengers came in, behold, the household idol was in the bed with the quilt of goats’ hair at its head. ¹⁷ Saul then said to Michal, “Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy get away, so that he escaped?”

Michal answered Saul, “He said to me, ‘Let me go or I’ll kill you!’”

¹⁸ So David fled and escaped, went to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth. ¹⁹ Saul was told, “Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah.” ²⁰ So Saul sent agents to seize David, but they saw a band of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing and presiding over them. Then the *Ruach* of God came upon Saul’s agents and they too prophesied. ²¹ When Saul was told, he sent other agents and they too prophesied. Then Saul sent a third group of messengers, and they too prophesied. ²² Then he himself went to Ramah, and when he arrived at the great cistern in Secu, he asked, “Where are Samuel and David?”

Someone answered, “Look, they are at Naioth at Ramah.” ²³ So he proceeded there, to Naioth at Ramah, and the *Ruach* of God came upon him as well, and he prophesied as he kept walking until he arrived to Naioth at Ramah. ²⁴ Then he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. That is why people were saying, “Is Saul too among the prophets?”

Reaffirming Covenant Loyalty

20 Then David fled from Naioth at Ramah, came before Jonathan and said, "What have I done? What is my crime? What is my sin against your father that he should be seeking my life?"

2 "Never!" he said to him. "You will not die! Behold, my father does nothing great or small without disclosing it to me. So why should my father hide this matter from me? It cannot be."

3 Then David swore again saying, "Your father knows very well that I have found favor in your eyes. So he must have thought, 'Let's not let Jonathan know about this, else he will be grieved.' But truly as *ADONAI* lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death."

4 Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you!"

5 So David said to Jonathan, "Look, tomorrow is the New Moon, when I am supposed to sit down with the king to eat. Instead, let me go hide myself in the countryside until the third evening. 6 If your father misses me at all, then say: 'David earnestly asked my permission to run to Beth-Lehem, his town, for it is the annual sacrifice there for the whole family.' 7 If he says thus, 'Very well,' then your servant is safe; but if he becomes very angry, then know that he is determined to harm me. 8 Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a covenant of *ADONAI* with you. But if there is any iniquity in me, then kill me yourself! Why should you bring me to your father?"

9 Jonathan replied, "Far be it from you! For if I know for sure that my father has determined evil to come on you, then wouldn't I tell you about it?"

10 Then David asked Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?"

11 Jonathan said to David, "Come, let's go out to the field." So they both went out to the field. 12 Then Jonathan said to David, "By *ADONAI*, God of Israel, I will sound out my father about this time tomorrow or the day after. Look, if it is good toward David, wouldn't I then send word to you and disclose it to you? 13 May *ADONAI* do so to Jonathan and even worse, should my father intend to do you evil, if I don't disclose it to you and send you away, that you may go in *shalom*. So may *ADONAI* be with you as He has been with my father.

14 "Now if I am still alive, wouldn't you show me the loyal love of *ADONAI* so I wouldn't die? 15 Yet also, don't cut off your loyal love from my household ever—not even when *ADONAI* cuts off all of David's enemies from the face of the earth." 16 So Jonathan cut a covenant with the house of David, "So may *ADONAI* requite David's enemies." 17 Jonathan made David swear again because of the love he had for him, for he loved him as he loved himself.

18 Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the New Moon. You'll be missed because your seat will be emp-

ty. 19 On the third day, you must go down quickly and come to the place where you hid as you did on that day, and remain close to the stone Ezel. 20 I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. 21 Now look, I will send a lad saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I specifically say to the lad, 'See, the arrows are on this side of you—get them,' then come; for it is safe for you and no danger, as *ADONAI* lives. 22 But if I say to the boy: 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then go your way, for *ADONAI* has released you. 23 But as for the matter which I and you have spoken about, behold, *ADONAI* is between me and you forever."

24 So David hid himself in the field, and when the New Moon came, the king sat down to eat a meal. 25 So the king sat on his seat—as usual, the seat by the wall—Jonathan stood up and Abner sat down by Saul's side, but David's place was empty. 26 Nevertheless, Saul said nothing that day, for he thought, "It must be an accident; he must be ceremonially unclean—yes, that's it, he's unclean."

27 Yet it came to pass on the day following the New Moon, the second day, that David's place was still empty. So Saul asked his son Jonathan, "Why didn't Jesse's son come to the meal yesterday or today?"

28 Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Beth-Lehem, 29 as he said, 'Please let me go, for we are going to have a family feast in the town, and my brother has commanded me. So now, if I have found favor in your eyes, let me go, please, to see my brothers. That's why he hasn't come to the king's table.'"

30 Then Saul's rage blazed against Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have chosen the son of Jesse—to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31 For as long as the son of Jesse lives on earth, neither you nor your kingship will be secure. Now, send word and bring him to me, for he is a son of death!"

32 But Jonathan answered his father Saul, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

33 Then Saul hurled his spear at him to strike him down. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. 34 So Jonathan rose up from the table in fierce anger, and did not eat food the second day of the new month, for he was grieved over David, because his father had dishonored him.

35 It came to pass in the morning that Jonathan went out to the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad was with him. 36 He said to his lad, "Run, find now the arrows that I am about to shoot." Now as the lad was running, he shot an arrow past him. 37 When the lad reached the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "Isn't the arrow beyond you?" 38 Then Jonathan called out after the lad, "Quick, hurry! Don't stand there!" So Jonathan's lad picked up the arrow and came to his

master.³⁹ But the lad knew nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement.⁴⁰ Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad and said to him, "Go, take them back to the town."

⁴¹ As soon as the lad was gone, David emerged from the south side and fell on his face to the ground and bowed down three times. Then they kissed each other and wept together, though David wept more.⁴² (42a) Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in the *shalom* that we both have sworn to each other in the Name of *ADONAI* saying: 'May *ADONAI* be between me and you, and between my offspring and your offspring, forever.'"

Eating Consecrated Bread

21 (20:42b) Then David got up and left, while Jonathan returned to the town.² (1) David went to Nob to Ahimelech the *kohen*. Ahimelech was afraid to meet David, so he said to him, "Why are you alone and no one with you?"

³ (2) David said to Ahimelech the *kohen*, "The king has commissioned me with a matter, and told me: 'Let no one know anything about the mission on which I am sending you, or with what I have commissioned you.' So, I have directed the young men to such and such a place."⁴ (3) So now, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread or whatever can be found."

⁵ (4) The *kohen* answered David saying, "There is no common bread on hand, but there is consecrated bread †—so long as the young men have kept themselves from women."

⁶ (5) "Of course women have been kept from us, as on previous campaigns," David answered the *kohen*. "So the young men's vessels were holy, though it was an ordinary mission—how much more so will their vessels be holy today!"⁷ (6) So the *kohen* gave him consecrated bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence, which was taken out from the presence of *ADONAI* in order to replace it with hot bread on the day it was taken away.^{††}

⁸ (7) Now one of Saul's servants was there that day, detained before *ADONAI*. His name was Doeg the Edomite, chief of Saul's shepherds.

⁹ (8) Then David said to Ahimelech, "Isn't there a spear or sword on hand? For I did not take my sword or my weapons with me, because the king's mission was urgent."

¹⁰ (9) The *kohen* said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine whom you killed in the valley of Elah—it's here, wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want to take it for yourself, take it. For there's nothing else here."

"There's nothing like it!" David said. "Give it to me."

David Pretends Insanity

¹¹ (10) Then David got up and fled that day from Saul, and went to Achish, king of Gath.¹² (11) But Achish's courtiers said to him, "Isn't this David king of the land? Isn't he the one they sing about in their dances saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?'"

¹³ (12) David took these words to heart, and he became so afraid of King Achish of Gath¹⁴ (13) that he changed his demeanor before them and acted like a mad man while in their hands—scribbling on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard.¹⁵ (14) Then Achish said to his courtiers, "Look, you can see the man is insane. Why did you bring him to me?"¹⁶ (15) Do I have a shortage of crazy people that you've brought this fellow to go crazy on me? Is this one going to come into my house?"

Flight to a Cave and to Moab

22 So David walked from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his father's house heard about it, they went down there to him.² Anyone who was in distress, anyone in debt, and anyone embittered rallied around him, and he became their leader. There were about 400 men with him.

³ Then David left from there to Mizpah of Moab, and he said to the king of Moab, "Please, let my father and my mother come and stay with you until I know what God will do for me."⁴ Then he brought them to the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold.

⁵ But the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." So David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

⁶ Then Saul heard that David and the men with him were located. Saul was in Gibeah, sitting under the tamarisk tree on the height, spear in his hand, and all his courtiers were attending him.⁷ Saul said to his courtiers standing about him, "Listen now, Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you captains of thousands and captains of hundreds?"⁸ Yet all of you have conspired against me, and there was nobody disclosing 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 ambush—as is the case today?"

⁹ Then Doeg the Edomite, who was standing among Saul's courtiers, answered and said, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob—to Ahimelech son of Ahitub—and he inquired of *ADONAI* for him, gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

¹¹ Then the king sent word to summon the *kohen* Ahimelech son of Ahitub and all the *kohanim* of his fa-

† cf. Matt. 12:3-4. †† cf. Luke 6:3-4.

ther's house who were in Nob. So they all came to the king. ¹² "Listen now, son of Ahitub," Saul said.

"Here I am, my lord," he said.

¹³ Then Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me—you and the son of Jesse—by giving him bread and a sword, and by inquiring of God for him, that he should rise against me by lying in ambush, as is the case today?"

¹⁴ Then Ahimelech answered the king saying, "Who among all your servants is as trusted as David, the king's son-in-law, a captain of the royal guard, and honored in your house? ¹⁵ Just today I began to inquire of God for him? Far be it from the king to accuse his servant or to anyone of my father's house. For your servant knows nothing of all this, whether little or much."

¹⁶ But the king said, "You will surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house." ¹⁷ Then the king ordered the guards attending him, "Turn around and kill the *kohanim* of *ADONAI*, for they are in cahoots with David, for they knew that he was running away but did not inform me." But the servants of the king were not willing to raise their hand to assault the *kohanim* of *ADONAI*. ¹⁸ So the king said to Doeg, "You, turn around and kill the *kohanim*!" So Doeg the Edomite turned and fell upon the *kohanim* and on that day killed 85 men who wore the linen ephod. ¹⁹ Nob, the town of the *kohanim*, he struck with the edge of the sword: men and women, children and infants, oxen, asses, and sheep with the edge of the sword.

²⁰ Yet one of the sons of Ahimelech son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to David. ²¹ Abiathar told David that Saul had slain *ADONAI*'s *kohanim*.

²² Then David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have brought about the death of all the people of your father's house. ²³ Stay with me, and fear not; for the one who is seeking my life is seeking your life too—but with me you will be safe."

David Hides and Saul Seeks

23 Then they reported to David saying, "Look, the Philistines are raiding Keilah and they are plundering the threshing floors." ² So David inquired of *ADONAI* saying, "Shall I go and attack those Philistines?"

ADONAI said to David, "Go, attack the Philistines and deliver Keilah."

³ But David's fellow men said to him, "Look, we're afraid here in Judah; how much more so if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces?"

⁴ Once again David inquired of *ADONAI*, and *ADONAI* answered him saying, "Arise! Go to Keilah, for I am going to deliver the Philistines into your hand." ⁵ So David and his fellow men went to Keilah and fought against the Philistines, drove off their livestock, and inflicted a great slaughter on them. Thus David rescued the inhabitants of Keilah. ⁶ It came about, when Abi-

athar son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, he came down with an ephod in his hand.

⁷ Now when Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah, Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hand! For he shut himself in by entering a town with barred gates." ⁸ So Saul summoned all the troops for battle, to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his fellow men.

⁹ Now David knew that Saul was plotting evil against him, so he said to Abiathar the *kohen*, "Bring the ephod." ¹⁰ Then David said, " *ADONAI*, God of Israel, Your servant has heard for certain that Saul intends to come to Keilah to destroy the town because of me.

¹¹ Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as Your servant has heard? *ADONAI* God of Israel, I pray, tell Your servant."

"He will come down," *ADONAI* said.

¹² Then David asked, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my fellow men into the hand of Saul?"

"They will surrender," *ADONAI* said.

¹³ Then David and his fellow men, about 600, got up and left Keilah, and went wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he stopped the pursuit. ¹⁴ So David stayed in the strongholds of the wilderness, remaining in the hill country in the wilderness of Ziph. Saul searched for him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.

¹⁵ By now David was aware that Saul would come out to seek his life while David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Choresh. ¹⁶ Then Saul's son Jonathan arose and went to David at Choresh and strengthened him in God. ¹⁷ "Don't be afraid," he said to him, "because my father Saul will never find you. You will be king over Israel and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul recognizes that." ¹⁸ Again they cut a covenant before *ADONAI*. David remained at Choresh, but Jonathan went home.

¹⁹ Then some of the Ziphites went up to Saul in Gibeah, saying, "Isn't David hiding with us in the strongholds at Choresh, in the hill of Hachilah which is south of Jeshimon? ²⁰ Now therefore, O king, come down whenever it is a desire of your soul to come down—our part will be to deliver him into the king's hand."

²¹ "May you be blessed of *ADONAI*," Saul said, "for you have taken pity on me. ²² Go now, make more sure, investigate and scout out his place where he usually goes and who has seen him there. For I have been told that he is very cunning. ²³ Look around and see in which of all the hiding places he has been hiding, and return to me with certainty, and I will go with you. If he is in the area, I will search him out among all the clans of Judah." ²⁴ Then they got up and went to Ziph ahead of Saul.

But David and his men were then in the wilderness of Maon in the Arabah, to the south of Jeshimon. ²⁵ So when Saul and his men began the search, David was

informed. Then he went down to the rocky area and stayed in the wilderness of Maon. On hearing this, Saul pursued David in the wilderness of Maon. ²⁶ Then, while Saul was advancing on one side of the mountain, David and his men were on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to elude Saul. Meanwhile Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to seize them. ²⁷ But a messenger came to Saul saying, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land!" ²⁸ So Saul had to return from chasing after David, and go to engage the Philistines. Therefore they called that place the Rock of Separation.

David Spares Saul at En-Gedi

24 (23:29) From there David went up and stayed in the strongholds of En-Gedi. ² (1) Now when Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, they told him saying, "Look, David is in the wilderness of En-Gedi." ³ (2) So Saul took 3,000 chosen men from all Israel and went to search for David and his men near the rocks of the mountain goats. ⁴ (3) When he came across the sheepfolds along the way where there was a cave, Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were already sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. ⁵ (4) So David's men said to him, "Look, it's the day ADONAI spoke to you about, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, so you may do to him as seems good in your eyes.'" Then David crept and cut off the corner of Saul's robe stealthily.

⁶ (5) But afterward, David's conscience bothered him for cutting off the edge of Saul's robe. ⁷ (6) So he said to his fellow men, "ADONAI forbid that I should do such a thing to my lord, ADONAI's anointed, stretching out my hand against him—for he is ADONAI's anointed." ⁸ (7) So David persuaded his fellow men with these words and did not let them rise against Saul. Then Saul left the cave and went on his way.

⁹ (8) David also rose afterward, went out of the cave, and called out after Saul saying, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and prostrated himself. ¹⁰ (9) Then David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to men's words saying: 'Look, David intends you harm?' ¹¹ (10) Look, today your own eyes should see how ADONAI delivered you today into my hand, in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but my eye had pity on you, and I said: 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he is ADONAI's anointed.' ¹² (11) Moreover, my father, see! Yes, look at the corner of your robe in my hand! For in cutting off the corner of your robe, yet not killing you, you should know and realize that there is no evil or rebellion in my hand. I haven't sinned against you, even though you are lying in wait for my life, to take it. ¹³ (12) May ADONAI judge between me and you, and may ADONAI avenge me of you, but my hand will not be against you. ¹⁴ (13) As the old proverb goes, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness'—but my hand will

never be on you. ¹⁵ (14) Whom has the king of Israel come after? Who are you chasing? A dead dog? A single flea? ¹⁶ (15) May ADONAI be judge and decide between me and you! And may He see and plead my cause and vindicate me against you."

¹⁷ (16) Now when David finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son, David?" Then Saul lifted up his voice and wept aloud. ¹⁸ (17) Then he said to David, "You are more righteous than I, for you have done good to me, while I have done evil to you. ¹⁹ (18) You've told today how well you've dealt with me, for ADONAI had delivered me up into your hand, yet you did not kill me. ²⁰ (19) For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go away on a good road? May ADONAI reward you with good in return for what you have done to me today. ²¹ (20) Now behold, I know for certain that you will be king, and that the kingdom of Israel will rise in your hand. ²² (21) Swear now to me by ADONAI that you won't cut off my descendants after me, and that you won't wipe out my name from my father's house." ²³ (22) So David swore to Saul. Then Saul went to his home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Abigail and Foolish Nabal

25 Then Samuel died, and all Israel gathered and lamented him, and buried him at his house in Ramah. David then arose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

² Now there was a man in Maon, whose business was in Carmel, and the man was so wealthy, he had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. At that time he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. ³ The man's name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. The woman was intelligent and beautiful, but the man, a Calebite, was harsh and evil in his dealings. ⁴ While David was in the wilderness, he heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep. ⁵ So David dispatched ten young men, and said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, and when you reach Nabal, greet him in my name. ⁶ Thus you will say: 'Long life! And *shalom* to you, *shalom* to your house, and *shalom* to all that is yours. ⁷ Now I hear that you have shearers. When your shepherds were with us, we did them no harm and nothing of theirs was missing all the time they were in Carmel. ⁸ Ask your young men and they will tell you. Therefore, let the young men find favor in your eyes, for we have come on a festive day. So please, give to your servants and to your son David, whatever you find at hand.'" ⁹ David's young men went and told Nabal all those words in David's name, and waited. ¹⁰ But Nabal answered David's servants by saying, "Who is David? And who is Jesse's son? Nowadays there are many slaves each running away from his master. ¹¹ So should I take my bread, my water, and my meat that I have cooked for my shearers, and give it to men whom I don't know where they come from?"

⁹ David's young men went and told Nabal all those words in David's name, and waited. ¹⁰ But Nabal answered David's servants by saying, "Who is David? And who is Jesse's son? Nowadays there are many slaves each running away from his master. ¹¹ So should I take my bread, my water, and my meat that I have cooked for my shearers, and give it to men whom I don't know where they come from?"

¹² So David's young men turned around and went back. When they came and reported to him all these words, ¹³ David said to his men, "Everyone buckle on your sword!" So each man buckled on his sword and David also buckled on his sword. About 400 men went up following David, while 200 stayed with the baggage.

¹⁴ But one of the young men told Nabal's wife Abigail saying, "Look, David had sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master, but he spurned them.

¹⁵ Yet the men were very good to us. We were not harmed, nor were we missing anything as long as we went about with them while we were in the fields.

¹⁶ They were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the time that we were with them tending the sheep.

¹⁷ Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for evil is determined against our master and against all his household. But he is such a worthless fellow that no one can speak to him."

¹⁸ Then Abigail hurried and took 200 loaves, 2 bottles of wine, 5 dressed sheep, 5 measures of roasted corn, 100 cakes of raisins, and 200 cakes of figs, and put them on donkeys. ¹⁹ Then she said to her young men, "Go on ahead of me—see, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. ²⁰ As she was riding on the donkey and going down by the hidden pass of the mountain, behold, David and his men were coming down towards her, so she met them.

²¹ Now David had been saying, "Surely in vain I've guarded all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missing of all that belonged to him—yet he has returned me evil for good. ²² May God do so and even more to David's enemies if by the morning I leave even one male of all who belong to him!"

²³ When Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted from her donkey, fell before David on her face, and bowed down to the ground. ²⁴ As she fell at his feet, she pleaded, "On me, only me, my lord, be the punishment! But please, let your maidservant speak in your ears, and listen to the words of your maidservant.

²⁵ Please my lord, pay no attention to this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he—Nabal † is his name and disgraceful folly is with him. But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent.

²⁶ "So now my lord, as *ADONAI* lives and as your soul lives, since *ADONAI* has restrained you from shedding blood and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now therefore let your enemies and those who are seeking to harm my lord be as Nabal. ²⁷ Now let this blessing, which your maidservant has brought to my lord, be given to the young men who are accompanying my lord. ²⁸ Please, forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For *ADONAI* will certainly make an enduring house for my lord ††, because my lord is fighting the battles of *ADONAI*. So let no wrongdoing be found

in you all your days. ²⁹ If anyone rises to pursue you and seek your life, then let my lord's life be bound up in the bundle of the living—with *ADONAI* your God. But let the soul of your enemies be hurled away as from the hollow of a sling.

³⁰ "So when *ADONAI* has fulfilled for my lord all the good things that He had spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, ³¹ then this will not be a stumbling block for you, or offense of heart to my lord, or needless bloodshed by my lord avenging himself. So when *ADONAI* has dealt graciously with my lord, then remember your handmaid."

³² Then David said to Abigail, "Blessed be *ADONAI* God of Israel, who sent you to meet me this day! ³³ Blessed be your discernment, and may you be blessed for keeping me this day from shedding blood, from avenging myself with my own hand. ³⁴ Yet as *ADONAI* God of Israel lives, who restrained me from harming you, unless you had come quickly to meet me, surely not one male of Nabal's line would have been left alive by the morning light!" ³⁵ So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in *shalom* to your house. Look, I have listened to your plea and have granted your request."

³⁶ Then Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was holding a banquet in his house like that of a king—Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was quite drunk. So she told him nothing at all until daybreak. ³⁷ It came to pass in the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, and his wife told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he was paralyzed like a stone. ³⁸ About ten days later, *ADONAI* struck Nabal and he died.

³⁹ When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be *ADONAI* who took the case of my insult from the hand of Nabal, yet has restrained His servant from evil! *ADONAI* has returned Nabal's vileness on his own head." Then David sent word and proposed to Abigail to take her as his wife. ⁴⁰ When David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they told her, "David has sent us to you, to take you as his wife."

⁴¹ So she rose, bowed down with her face to the ground and said, "Behold, your handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." ⁴² Then Abigail rose quickly and mounted a donkey, with five of her maidens following her, following David's messengers, and she became his wife.

⁴³ David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and the two of them were his wives. ⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

David Again Spares Saul

26 Now the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah saying, "Isn't David hiding on the hill of Hachilah which faces Jeshimon?" ² So Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, 3,000 chosen men of Israel with him, to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

† Meaning disgraceful folly †† cf. Luke 1:32-33.

³ Saul camped in the hill of Hachilah which faces Jeshimon, by the road. But David was staying in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul had come after him into the wilderness. ⁴ So David sent out spies and realized that Saul had already arrived. ⁵ Then David got up and went to the place where Saul had camped. David detected the spot where Saul lay asleep, as well as Abner son of Ner his army commander. Saul was lying inside the barricade and the troops were camped around him.

⁶ Then David spoke and asked Ahimelech the Hittite and Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruah, saying, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?"

"I will go down with you," Abishai answered.

⁷ So David and Abishai approached the troops by night. Behold, Saul was lying asleep within the barricade with his spear stuck in the ground at his head, and Abner and the troops were sleeping around him. ⁸ Then Abishai said to David, "God has delivered your enemy into your hand today. Now let me pin him to the ground with a single thrust of the spear. I will not have to strike him twice."

⁹ But David said to Abishai, "Don't destroy him! For who can lay his hand on *ADONAI*'s anointed and be guiltless?" ¹⁰ David added, "As *ADONAI* lives, either *ADONAI* will strike him down, or his day will come to die, or he will go down to battle and be swept away. ¹¹ *ADONAI* forbid that I should lay my hand on *ADONAI*'s anointed! Now, just take the spear that is at his head and the water jar and let's go." ¹² So David took the spear and the water jar from beside Saul's head. They got away—and no one saw it, or knew it, or woke up—for all were asleep, for a deep sleep from *ADONAI* had fallen upon them.

¹³ Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on the top of a distant hill with a wide space between them. ¹⁴ David shouted to the troops and to Abner son of Ner saying, "Aren't you going to answer, Abner?"

Then Abner answered saying, "Who are you, who called out to the king?"

¹⁵ "Aren't you a man?" David said to Abner. "Indeed, who is like you in Israel? So, why didn't you guard your lord the king? For one of the troops came in to kill the king your lord. ¹⁶ This thing that you've done is no good. As *ADONAI* lives, all of you deserve to die, because you have not kept watching over your lord, *ADONAI*'s anointed. So now, look around, where are the king's spear and the water jar that were at his head?"

¹⁷ Saul then recognized David's voice and said, "Is this your voice, David my son?"

"It is my voice, my lord the king," David said, ¹⁸ then added, "yet why is my lord pursuing his servant? What have I done? What evil is in my hand? ¹⁹ Now please, let my lord the king listen to the words of his servant. If *ADONAI* has stirred you up against me, let Him accept an offering. But if men have done so, then cursed are

they before *ADONAI*, because they have now driven me out that I would not cling to *ADONAI*'s inheritance, saying: 'Go, worship other gods.' ²⁰ So now, let not my blood fall to the ground, away from the presence of *ADONAI*. For the king of Israel has come out to search for but a single flea, just as one hunts for a partridge in the mountains."

²¹ Then Saul replied, "I have sinned! Return, David my son, for I will no longer do you harm, since my life was precious in your eyes this day. Behold, I've played the fool and erred so seriously."

²² David then answered and said, "There is the king's spear! Let one of the young men cross over and take it. ²³ *ADONAI* will repay everyone his righteousness and his faithfulness. For *ADONAI* gave you into my hand today, but I refused to lay my hand on *ADONAI*'s anointed. ²⁴ See, just as your life was highly valued in my eyes today, so let my life be highly valued in *ADONAI*'s eyes, and may He deliver me from all trouble."

²⁵ Then Saul said to David, "Blessed are you, David my son! You will both do mightily and will surely prevail." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

David Settles in Ziklag

27 Then David said in his heart, "One day I'll be swept away by the hand of Saul. There's nothing better for me than to escape immediately to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me in all the territories of Israel, so I'll escape from his hand." ² So David rose and crossed over, he and the 600 men that were with him, to Achish son of Maach, king of Gath. ³ David stayed with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, and David with his two wives—Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow. ⁴ So when Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.

⁵ Then David said to Achish, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, let me be given a place in one of the country towns, so I may live there. Why should your servant stay in the royal city with you?" ⁶ So Achish granted him Ziklag that day. Thus Ziklag came to belong to the kings of Judah to this day. ⁷ The number of days that David stayed in the country of the Philistines was a year and four months.

⁸ Now David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Gizrites, and the Amalekites, for those were inhabitants of the region from ancient times, as you go all the way from Shur and as far as the land of Egypt. ⁹ David attacked the region and was leaving not a man or woman alive, and took away sheep, oxen, donkeys, camels, and clothing. When he returned and came to Achish, ¹⁰ Achish would ask, "Where have you raided today?"

So David would reply, "Against the Negev of Judah, against the Negev of the Jerahmeelite, and against the Negev of the Kenites." ¹¹ David left no man or woman alive to bring to Gath, thinking, "Unless they should

tell about us, saying: 'So did David.'" So was his practice all the time he stayed in the country of the Philistines. ¹² Then Achish trusted David, saying, "He has certainly made himself abhorrent to his people Israel; therefore, he will be my vassal forever."

Saul Consults a Medium

28 At that time, the Philistines gathered their armed forces to fight against Israel. Achish said to David, "You surely know that you and your men must march out with me in the army."

² David said to Achish, "Well then, you know what your servant will do."

"Well then, I appoint you my bodyguard for life," Achish said to David.

³ Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented him and buried him in Ramah, his hometown. Saul had removed from the land those who were mediums and spiritists.

⁴ So the Philistines mustered and came and camped in Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together and they camped at Gilboa. ⁵ Now when Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly. ⁶ When Saul inquired of *ADONAI*, *ADONAI* did not answer, neither by dreams nor by Urim or prophets.

⁷ Then Saul said to his courtiers, "Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go to her and inquire through her." So his courtiers said to him, "Behold, there is a woman that is a medium at En-Dor." ⁸ So Saul disguised himself, put on other clothes, and went with two other men, and they reached the woman by night. Then he said, "Please conjure up for me a ghost—bring up for me the one I will name to you."

⁹ "Look, you know what Saul has done," she said, "how he has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. So why then are you setting a trap for my life to get me killed?"

¹⁰ Saul vowed to her by *ADONAI* saying, "As *ADONAI* lives, no punishment will come on you for this thing."

¹¹ "Whom will I bring up for you?" the woman asked. "Bring me up Samuel," he said.

¹² But when the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud shriek. Then the woman spoke to Saul saying, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!"

¹³ "Don't be afraid!" the king said to her. "What do you see?"

The woman said to Saul, "I see a godlike being coming up from the earth."

¹⁴ "What does he look like?" he asked her.

"An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped with a robe," she said.

Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, so he bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. ¹⁵ Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"

"I'm in great distress," Saul answered. "The Philistines are waging war against me, and God has

turned away from me—He doesn't answer me anymore, whether by prophets or by dreams. So I called you up to tell me what I should do."

¹⁶ Samuel said, "So why ask me, since *ADONAI* has turned away from you and become your adversary?"

¹⁷ Now *ADONAI* has done for Himself just as He foretold through me—*ADONAI* has torn the kingship out of your hand and has given it to another fellow, to David.

¹⁸ Since you did not obey the voice of *ADONAI* and did not execute His fierce wrath on Amalek, so *ADONAI* has done this to you today. ¹⁹ Moreover, *ADONAI* will also give the Israelites who are with you into the hand of the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me! Yes, *ADONAI* will give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

²⁰ Then Saul immediately fell full length upon the ground, and became so terrified because of the words of Samuel that there was absolutely no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night.

²¹ Then the woman came to Saul and saw that he was so agitated, so she told him, "Behold, your maidservant obeyed you; I put my life in my hand by listening to your words, which you spoke to me. ²² Please, you too listen to the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a morsel of bread before you, so you can eat and have strength to go on your way."

²³ But he refused and said, "I won't eat." But when his courtiers and the woman urged him, he listened to them. So he got up from the ground and sat on the bed. ²⁴ The woman had a fatted calf in the house, so she hurried and butchered it, and took flour, kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread from it. ²⁵ She brought it before Saul and his courtiers, and they ate. Then they arose and went away that night.

David Sent Back from Battle

29 Now the Philistines mustered all their armies at Aphek, while the Israelites were camping by the spring in Jezreel. ² As the Philistine lords were proceeding ahead of their hundreds and thousands, David and his men were bringing up the rear with Achish. ³ Then the Philistine commanders said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?"

Achish said to the Philistine commanders, "No! That's David, servant of Israel's King Saul—he's been with me today for over a year, and I've not found any fault in him since the day he defected to me until now."

⁴ But the Philistine commanders got angry with him, and the Philistine commanders said to him, "Make this man go back—back to his place you assigned him. He must not go down with us to the battle, or in the battle he might become our adversary. For how would this fellow appease his lord? Wouldn't it be with the heads of our men? ⁵ Isn't this one David, about whom they were singing in dances saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?'"

⁶ So Achish called David and said to him, "As *ADONAI* lives, you have been upright and your going out and

your coming in with me in the army are pleasing in my eyes. For I never found fault with you since the day of your coming to me up to this day. However, the other lords do not approve of you. ⁷ So now, turn around and go back in peace, and you won't be doing anything to displease the Philistine lords."

⁸ "But what have I done?" David said to Achish. "What have you found in your servant from the day I have been before you to this day, that I shouldn't go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"

⁹ "I know," Achish answered saying to David. "You are as pleasing in my eyes as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the Philistine commanders have said, 'He must not go up with us to the battle.' ¹⁰ So now, rise up early in the morning, you and the servants of your lord that came with you, and as soon you rise, early in the morning, once there is light, leave." ¹¹ So David rose up early, he and his men, leaving in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. Meanwhile, the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

Raid on Amalek

30 Now it came to pass, when David and his men returned to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire; ² taking the women in it captive, young and old, without killing anyone, but carried them off as they went their way. ³ So when David and his men came to the town, behold, it was burned with fire—and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captives. ⁴ Then David and the troops with him lifted up their voice and wept until there was no more strength in them to weep. ⁵ Even David's two wives were taken captive—Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow.

⁶ So David was in a serious bind, for the troops were calling for his stoning, for all the troops were bitter of soul, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in *ADONAI* his God. ⁷ Then David said to Abiathar the *kohen* son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. ⁸ David inquired of *ADONAI* saying, "Should I pursue after this raiding band? Shall I overtake them?"

He answered him, "Pursue! For you will surely overtake and you will surely rescue!" ⁹ So David went, he and the 600 men with him, and came to the Wadi Besor, where those left behind remained— ¹⁰ for 200 men stayed behind because they were too exhausted to cross Wadi Besor. Yet David pursued, he and the other 400 men.

¹¹ Then they found an Egyptian in the open field and brought him to David, gave him bread to eat and water to drink, ¹² and they also gave him a piece of fig cake and two cakes of raisins. When he had eaten, his spirit came back to him, for he had eaten no bread and drunk no water for three days and three nights.

¹³ Then David asked him, "To whom do you belong? Where are you from?"

"I am a young Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite," he said. "My master abandoned me three days ago because I fell sick. ¹⁴ We made a raid in the Negev of the Cherethites, and on Judah, and on the Negev of Caleb; also we burned Ziklag with fire."

¹⁵ Then David asked him, "Will you lead me to this raiding band?"

"Swear to me by God that you won't kill me or deliver me into my master's hands," he said, "and I will lead you to this marauding band." ¹⁶ So he led him down, and behold, they were scattered over all the area, eating, drinking, and feasting because of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. ¹⁷ David attacked them from the twilight until the evening of the next day. None of them escaped, except 400 young men who rode on camels and fled.

¹⁸ So David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and rescued his two wives. ¹⁹ There was nothing of theirs missing, whether young or old, sons or daughters, spoils, or anything else that had been carried off—David recovered everything. ²⁰ David took all the flocks and the herd that they had driven ahead of the other cattle, so they said, "This is David's spoil."

²¹ When David reached the 200 men—who had been too exhausted to follow David and were left at Wadi Besor—they came out to meet David and to meet the men with him, so David approached these people and greeted them. ²² But all the wicked men and worthless fellows among those who accompanied David said, "Because they did not accompany us, we shouldn't give them any of the spoil that we've recovered, except every man may take his wife and his children and leave."

²³ "You must not do so, my brothers, with what *ADONAI* has given us," David said. "It is He who has protected us and gave into our hands the raiding band that attacked us. ²⁴ Who would listen to you in this matter? The share of him who went down to the battle is to be the same as that of him who remained by the baggage. They will share alike." ²⁵ So it has been from that day forward—he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

²⁶ When David arrived at Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Look, a blessing for you from the spoil of the enemies of *ADONAI*," ²⁷ to those in Beth-El, Ramoth-Negev, Jattir, ²⁸ Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, ²⁹ Racal, to those in the towns of the Jerahmeelites, to those in the towns of the Kenites, ³⁰ Hormah, Bor-Ashan, Athach, ³¹ Hebron, and to all the places where David and his men had roamed.

Saul Killed on Mt. Gilboa

31 Now the Philistines were fighting against Israel. Israel's men fled before the Philistines and many

fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines pressed hard after Saul and his sons, and the Philistines struck down Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul. ³When the battle intensified against Saul, the archers hit him, so he was severely wounded by the archers. ⁴Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it, or else these uncircumcised will come and thrust me through after torturing me." But his armor-bearer refused, for he was too afraid. So Saul took the sword and fell on it. ⁵When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell on his sword and died with him. ⁶So Saul, his three sons, his armor-bearer, and all his men died together that same day.

⁷When 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 the towns and fled. Then the Philistines came and occupied them.

⁸It was the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹So they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent them throughout the land of the Philistines, to spread the good news to the house of their idols and to the people. ¹⁰Then they put his armor in the house of the Ashtaroth and fastened his body to the wall of Beth-Shan.

¹¹Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹²all their valiant men set out and walked all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-Shan, then went to Jabesh and burned them there. ¹³They took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh and fasted for seven days.

2 Samuel

2 Samuel Introduction

See the introduction to 1 Samuel for name, authorship and dating. For its part, 2 Samuel begins near the end of the 11th century BC with David's ascension to power following the protracted struggle with Saul, which ended in his death. The transition to a monarchical form of government, with David at its head, is chronicled in 2 Samuel in a manner that underscores how David came to power honorably and not stealthily. He emerged as king in Hebron at God's direction; later, over the entire country.

The narrative informs that Saul had been mortally wounded by the Philistines. Fearing abuse, he attempted a botched suicide; then, begged a wandering Amalekite to end his agony. The foreigner euthanized Saul and brought Saul's crown to David who was not happy to celebrate Saul's demise. Though David came to power honorably, sadly, he didn't always manage it as honorably.

David's administration experienced intrigue, internal struggles, and a bitter rebellion launched by his son Absalom—no doubt chagrined that Solomon, son from an affair that began with adultery, was getting the upper hand in the family system. Supernatural deliverance, however, often came to David and God's people through the king's servant leadership. Despite occasional slip-ups, David's reign was marked by a determined pursuit to find and follow God's will, thereby bringing Israel under God's sovereign direction—most of the time. David's dependence on God was monumental. His sporadic abuse of power and betrayal of trust was equally monumental. His affair with Bathsheba, coupled with the conspiracy to cover it up and murder of her husband Uriah, ranks among the worst sins reported in Scripture. Nevertheless, many theologians rightly identify David as a "type" of messiah.

David's reign set a standard of godly leadership. His humble submission to God set a standard of faith.

Through David, we learn that a nation's blessings are often dependent on its leader's decision to obey God. We also learn that because David failed to lead his own family properly, chaos was never far removed from his later years. David's failure to correct his children led to rape, murder, and rebellion that nearly toppled his administration.

Another lesson of 2 Samuel is that bitterness and unforgiveness can last indefinitely and destroy all hope for restoration. When Absalom launched a revolution, his chief advisor was Ahithophel. Ahithophel had formerly been David's trusted friend and counselor. What led to this horrific betrayal of trust? Uriah was not the only man hurt by David's adulterous indiscretion. Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather (see 2 Sam. 11:3 and 23:34). He never forgave David. Ahithophel's bitterness and unforgiveness festered until it manifested in betrayal. It ended in suicide after his support of Absalom's wicked rebellion failed to dethrone David. The pain of David's betrayal was aptly described in Psalms 41:9 and 55:12-13. Therein the betrayal of by his friend Judas was also prophesied. Rejoice in the truth that our deepest pain and darkest sins can be resolved through our Messiah!

2 Samuel Headings

- David Mourns Saul and Jonathan
- Judah Anoints David King
- Forces of Abner and Joab Battle
- Betrayal of Abner
- Assassination of Ish-bosheth
- All Israel Anoints David King
- Securing Jerusalem
- Master of Breakthroughs
- Ark Comes Into Jerusalem
- Promise to David
- David's Kingdom Expands
- Covenant Loyalty to Mephibosheth

Aram Vanquished
 David Commits Adultery and Murder
 Nathan Confronts David
 Amnon Attacks Tamar and Absalom's Wrath
 Joab Brings Absalom to Jerusalem
 Absalom's Revolt
 David's Exodus from Jerusalem
 Counselors Divided
 Absalom's Demise
 David Weeps Over Absalom
 David's Restoration and Grace
 Joab the Terminator
 Justice for the Gibeonites
 David's Songs of Valor and Last Words
 David's Mighty Men
 David's Unauthorized Census

David Mourns Saul and Jonathan

1 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul—when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites—that David stayed two days in Ziklag. **2** On the third day, behold, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dust on his head. Now when he approached David, he fell to the ground and prostrated himself.

3 Then David asked him, "Where are you coming from?"

"I've escaped from the camp of Israel," he answered.

4 "How did things go?" David asked him. "Please, tell me."

He answered, "The troops fled the battlefield—also many of the troops fell and died. And even Saul and his son Jonathan are dead."

5 David asked the young man informing him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

6 The young man informing him answered, "I happened by chance to be on Mount Gilboa, and look, Saul was leaning on his spear, while the chariots and the horsemen were closing in on him. **7** When he turned around and saw me, he called me. So I answered, 'Here I am.' **8** Then he asked me, 'Who are you?'"

"So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' **9** So he said to me, 'Stand now over me and kill me! For I'm in agony, yet I'm still alive.' **10** So I stood over him and killed him, because I knew he couldn't survive after he had fallen. Then I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and brought them here—to my lord."

11 Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men that were with him, **12** and they mourned, wept and fasted until evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, for the troops of *ADONAI* and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword.

13 Then David said to the young man who informed him, "Where are you from?"

"I am a son of an Amalekite outsider," he replied.

14 Then David said to him, "How is it that you were not afraid to stretch out your hand to destroy *ADONAI*'s anointed one?" **15** Then David called one of the young men and said, "Come and strike him down." And he struck him down and he died. **16** David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your mouth testified against you saying, 'I killed *ADONAI*'s anointed.'"

17 Then David chanted this lament over Saul and his son Jonathan, **18** and ordered that the sons of Judah be taught the "Song of the Bow." (Behold, it is written in the Book of Jashar):

19 "Your glory, O Israel, is slain on your high places!
 How the mighty have fallen!"

20 Tell it not in Gath,
 proclaim it not in Ashkelon's streets,
 lest Philistine daughters rejoice,
 lest daughters of the uncircumcised gloat!

21 Hills of Gilboa, let no dew or rain
 be on you, nor on bountiful fields,
 for there the shield of the mighty ones
 lay defiled—Saul's shield will
 no longer be anointed with oil.

22 From the blood of the slain,
 from the fat of the mighty,

Jonathan's bow never turned back,
 Saul's sword never returned empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan, loved and delightful,
 parted neither in life nor death.
 They were swifter than eagles,
 stronger than lions.

24 Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
 who clothed you in scarlet and finery,
 who put ornaments of gold on your clothes.

25 How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan on your heights is slain!

²⁶ I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan!
Very pleasing were you to me.
Wonderful was your love to me
more than the love of women.
²⁷ How the mighty have fallen,
and the weapons of war destroyed!

Judah Anoints David King

2 Now it came to pass after this that David inquired of *ADONAI* saying, "Should I go up to one of the towns of Judah?"

ADONAI said to him, "Go up."

"Where shall I go up?" David asked.

"To Hebron," He said.

² So David went up there, along with his two wives—Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. ³ David also brought up his men that were with him, each with his household, and they settled in the towns of Hebron. ⁴ Then the men of Judah came and there anointed David king over the house of Judah.

Then they told David saying, "It was the men of Jabesh-Gilead who buried Saul."

⁵ So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-Gilead and said to them, "Blessed are you of *ADONAI* for showing this kindness to Saul your lord, by burying him. ⁶ So now may *ADONAI* show you kindness and faithfulness; and I also will show you goodness because you have done this thing. ⁷ Now therefore, be strong and brave, for Saul your lord is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

Forces of Abner and Joab Battle

⁸ Now Abner son of Ner, Saul's army commander, had taken Saul's son Ish-bosheth, and brought him over to Mahanaim. ⁹ Then he made him king over Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin—over all Israel. ¹⁰ Saul's son Ish-bosheth was 40 years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned for two years. But the house of Judah followed David. ¹¹ The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

¹² Once Abner son of Ner and the troops of Saul's son Ish-bosheth went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.

¹³ Meanwhile, Joab son of Zeruijah and the troops of David went out—they met each other by the pool of Gibeon, so they sat down, one group on one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool.

¹⁴ Then Abner said to Joab, "Now let the young men get up and compete before us."

"Let them get up," Joab replied. ¹⁵ Then they got up and came forward by number—12 for Benjamin and for Saul's son Ish-bosheth and 12 from David's servants. ¹⁶ Then each grasped his opponent by the head and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they all fell down together. Therefore, that place was called Helkath-Hazzurim †, which is in Gibeon. ¹⁷ The battle

was very fierce that day, and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated before David's servants.

¹⁸ Now the three sons of Zeruijah were Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel was as swift-footed as one of the gazelles of the field. ¹⁹ Asahel pursued Abner, not swerving to the right or to the left from pursuing Abner. ²⁰ Then Abner looked behind him and asked, "Is it you, Asahel?"

"It is I," he answered.

²¹ So Abner said to him, "Turn away to your right or to your left, seize one of the young men and take his armor for yourself." But Asahel would not turn away from following him. ²² Once again Abner warned Asahel, "Turn away from pursuing me! Why should I strike you to the ground? How would I ever look your brother Joab in the face?" ²³ But he refused to turn aside, so Abner struck him with the butt end of the spear in the groin, so that the spear came out through his back, and he fell down there and died on the spot. When all who came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, they stood still. ²⁴ But Joab and Abishai continued pursuing Abner. As the sun was setting, they reached the hill of Ammah, which faces Giah on the road to the wilderness of Gibeon.

²⁵ Then the sons of Benjamin rallied to Abner and became one group, taking their stand on top of one of the hills. ²⁶ Then Abner called out to Joab and said, "Must the sword devour forever? Don't you realize how bitter it will be in the end? How long until you order the people to stop pursuing their kinsmen?"

²⁷ "As God lives," Joab replied, "if you had not spoken, then surely the people would have gone up until the morning, everyone after his kinsman." ²⁸ So Joab blew the *shofar*, and all the soldiers halted, and pursued Israel no more, nor did they continue to fight any longer. ²⁹ So Abner and his men marched all that night through the Arabah, then they crossed over the Jordan, and marched through all morning until they reached Mahanaim. ³⁰ Joab returned from pursuing Abner, and when he had gathered all the troops, 19 of David's soldiers besides Asahel were missing. ³¹ But David's soldiers had struck down many of Benjamin and Abner's men, so that 360 men died. ³² Then they took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb, which was in Beth-Lehem. Joab and his men marched all night, until the day dawned on them at Hebron.

Betrayal of Abner

3 Now the war between the house of Saul and the house of David lasted a long time. While David grew steadily stronger, the house of Saul grew steadily weaker. ² Sons were born to David in Hebron: his first-born was Amnon by Ahinoam of Jezreel; ³ his second was Chileab by Abigail, the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; the third was Absalom son of Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; ⁴ the fourth was Adonijah son of Haggith; the fifth was Shephatiah son

† Meaning, Field of Blades

of Abital; ⁵ and the sixth, Ithream, by David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

⁶ During the war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner strengthened his position in the house of Saul. ⁷ Now Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah daughter of Aiah; and Ish-bosheth said to Abner, "Why have you slept with my father's concubine?"

⁸ But Abner became very angry over Ish-bosheth's words and said, "Am I a dog's head from Judah? To this day I've been loyal to the house of Saul your father, to his kinsmen, and to his friends, and I haven't handed you over to David—yet today you are accusing me of wrongdoing with this woman. ⁹ May God do so to Abner and even more if, as *ADONAI* has sworn to David, I don't accomplish this for him— ¹⁰ to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and establish the throne of David over Israel and Judah, from Dan to Beer-Sheba!" ¹¹ But Ish-bosheth could not respond to Abner another word, because he was afraid of him.

¹² Then Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf saying, "Whose is the land? Make your covenant with me, and see, my hand will be with you to bring all Israel over to you."

¹³ "Good!" said David. "I will cut a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you: you will not see my face unless you first bring Saul's daughter Michal when you come to see my face."

¹⁴ Then David sent messengers to Saul's son Ish-bosheth demanding, "Give me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for 100 Philistine foreskins." ¹⁵ So Ish-bosheth sent and took her from her husband, Paltiel son of Laish. ¹⁶ But her husband accompanied her, weeping as he went, and followed her as far as Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Go, return!" So he returned.

¹⁷ Now Abner had a word with the elders of Israel saying, "In times past you wanted David to be king over you. ¹⁸ So now do it! For *ADONAI* has spoken of David saying, 'By the hand of My servant David I will deliver My people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.'"

¹⁹ Abner also spoke in the hearing of Benjamin. Then Abner went to Hebron to speak in the hearing of David about all that was agreeable to Israel and to the whole house of Benjamin.

²⁰ When Abner came to David in Hebron along with 20 other men, David held a banquet for Abner and the men with him. ²¹ Abner said to David, "Let me get up and go rally all Israel to my lord the king, so that they may cut a covenant with you, and you may reign over all that your soul desires." So David sent Abner away, and he departed in *shalom*.

²² Just then, David's soldiers and Joab came from a raid, bringing with them much spoil. By then Abner was no longer with David in Hebron, for he had sent him away, and he departed in *shalom*. ²³ When Joab and all the soldiers with him arrived, they told Joab,

saying, "Abner son of Ner came to the king, and he has sent him away, and he has gone in *shalom*."

²⁴ Then Joab came to the king and said, "What have you done? Look here, Abner came to you—why did you send him away? Now he is getting away! ²⁵ You know Abner son of Ner—surely he came to deceive you, to spy on your goings and comings, and to find out all that you are doing."

²⁶ When Joab left David, he sent messengers after Abner, so they brought him back from the well of Sirah, though David knew nothing about it. ²⁷ Now when Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside within the gate to speak with him privately, and there stabbed him in the groin, so that he died—on account of the blood of his brother Asahel. ²⁸ When David heard about it afterward, he said, "I and my kingdom are innocent before *ADONAI* forever from the blood of Abner son of Ner. ²⁹ May it whirl on Joab's head and on all his father's house. May the house of Joab never be without someone with discharge or *tzara'at*, lame or one fallen by the sword or one who lacks food." ³⁰ So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in battle.

³¹ Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, "Rend your clothes, gird with sackcloth, and lament before Abner." King David walked behind the platform. ³² When they buried Abner in Hebron, the king lifted up his voice and wept aloud at Abner's grave, and all the people wept. ³³ Then the king chanted a lament for Abner and said, "Should Abner die like a senseless fool?"

³⁴ Your hands were not bound,
your feet were never put in fetters.
As one falls
before the children of iniquity,
so did you fall."

Then all the people wept again over him. ³⁵ Then all the people came to urge David to eat some food while it was still day, but David vowed saying, "May God do so to me and even more if I taste food or anything else before the sun sets." ³⁶ All the people took note of it and it pleased them, just as everything the king did pleased all the people. ³⁷ So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not the king's will to kill Abner son of Ner. ³⁸ Then the king said to his soldiers, "Don't you realize that a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel today? ³⁹ So today I am vulnerable, even though anointed king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too hard for me to handle. May *ADONAI* reward the evildoer according to his wickedness."

Assassination of Ish-bosheth

4 Now when Saul's son heard that Abner had died in Hebron, his courage sank, and all the Israelites were disturbed. ² Saul's son had two men who were commanders of raiding bands: the name of one was Baanah and the name of the other Rechab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite of the sons of Benjamin (for

Beeroth is also considered part of Benjamin,³ though the Beerothites had fled to Gittaim and live there as outsiders to this day).

⁴ (Saul's son Jonathan had a son whose legs were crippled. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse picked him up and fled. It came about, as she was hurrying to flee, that he fell and was crippled. His name was Mephibosheth.)

⁵ Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out and came to the house of Ishbosheth at the heat of the day, as he was taking his midday nap. ⁶ When they came within the house, as though to get wheat, they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped. ⁷ When they had gotten within the house, he was lying on his bed in his bedroom, they stabbed him and killed him, then beheaded him and took his head, and traveled by the way of the Arabah all night. ⁸ Then they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David in Hebron, and said to the king, "Here is the head of Saul's son Ishbosheth, your enemy, who sought your life. Today *ADONAI* has avenged my lord the king of Saul and his offspring."

⁹ Then David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, saying to them, "As *ADONAI* lives, who redeemed my soul out of all distress, ¹⁰ when someone informed me saying, 'Look, Saul is dead!' thinking he was a bearer of good news, I seized him and killed him in Ziklag, instead of rewarding him for his news. ¹¹ How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous person in his own house and on his bed! Should I not now require his blood from your hands and rid the earth of you?"

¹² Then David commanded the young men, and they slew them, cut off their hands and their legs, and hung them up beside the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it in the grave of Abner in Hebron.

All Israel Anoints David King

5 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and spoke saying, "Here we are, your own flesh and blood. ² Even before, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led Israel out and back. Also *ADONAI* said to you, 'You will shepherd My people Israel and be ruler over Israel.'" ³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David cut a covenant with them at Hebron before *ADONAI*. Then they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴ David was 30 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 40 years. ⁵ In Hebron he reigned over Judah 7 years and 6 months, and in Jerusalem he reigned 33 years over all Israel and Judah.

Securing Jerusalem

⁶ Now the king and his soldiers marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the region. But they said to David, "You'll never get in here! Even the blind and the lame could ward you off," thinking, "David can't get in here." ⁷ Nevertheless, David did capture the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). ⁸ On that day David said, "Whoever would conquer the Jebusites must strike through the water shaft to those 'lame and blind' whom David's soul despises." That is why they used to say, "The blind or lame couldn't get into the house." ⁹ So David occupied the stronghold and renamed it the City of David. Then David fortified it all round from the Millo inward.

¹⁰ David continued to grow stronger, for *ADONAI Elohim* - *Tzva'ot* was with him.

¹¹ Then King Hiram of Tyre sent envoys to David with cedar logs, carpenters and masons; and they built a palace for David. ¹² David then realized that *ADONAI* had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

¹³ Then David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴ Now these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵ Ibhahar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶ Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

Master of Breakthroughs

¹⁷ Now when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines marched up searching for David. When David heard about it, he went down to the stronghold. ¹⁸ The Philistines came and spread out in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁹ Then David inquired of *ADONAI* saying, "Should I go up against the Philistines? Will You give them over into my hand?"

ADONAI answered David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines over into your hand."

²⁰ So David came to Baal-Perazim † and David struck them down there. So he said, " *ADONAI* has broken through my enemies before me like the breakthrough of waters!" That is why he named that place Baal-Perazim. ²¹ They abandoned their idols there, so David and his men removed them.

²² But the Philistines marched up and spread out in the valley of Rephaim again. ²³ When David inquired of *ADONAI*, He said, "Do not go up; instead circle around behind them and attack them in front of the balsam trees. ²⁴ Now it will be when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you must act, for then *ADONAI* will have gone out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines. ²⁵ David did

† Meaning, Master of breakthroughs

just as *ADONAI* had commanded him, and he struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.

Ark Comes Into Jerusalem

6 Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000. ² Then David and all the people who were with him arose and set out from Baale-Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name, [†] the very Name of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* who is enthroned between the *cheruvim*. ³ So they loaded the ark of God on a new cart and carried it out of the house of Abinadab that was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, drove the new cart ⁴ as they brought it from the house of Abinadab (which was on the hill) with the ark of God, and Ahio was walking in front of the ark.

⁵ Meanwhile, David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating before *ADONAI* with all kinds of instruments made of cypress wood, with harps, lyres, tambourines, three-stringed instruments, and cymbals ^{††}. ⁶ But when they reached the threshing floor of Nahon, Uzzah reached out to the ark of God and grasped it, for the oxen had stumbled. ⁷ Then the anger of *ADONAI* was kindled against Uzzah. God struck him down there for his irreverence, so that he died there beside the ark of God. ⁸ David was upset because of *ADONAI*'s outburst against Uzzah. That place is called Perez-Uzzah [‡] to this day.

⁹ So David was frightened of *ADONAI* that day. Then he said, "How can the ark of *ADONAI* come to me?"

¹⁰ David was unwilling to move the ark of *ADONAI* to him, to the City of David; instead, David diverted it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. ¹¹ So the ark of *ADONAI* remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; meanwhile *ADONAI* blessed Obed-edom and his entire household.

¹² Then it was reported to King David saying, " *ADONAI* has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought the ark of God up from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with joy. ¹³ Now when the bearers of the ark of *ADONAI* had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. ¹⁴ Meanwhile, David was dancing before *ADONAI* with all his might while he was wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁵ So David and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of *ADONAI* with shouting and with the sound of the *shofar*. ¹⁶ But as the ark of *ADONAI* entered the city of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before *ADONAI*, so she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷ They brought in the ark of *ADONAI* and set it in its place in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before *ADONAI*. ¹⁸ When David had fin-

ished offering the burnt offering and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the Name of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*. ¹⁹ Then he distributed to all the people—to the whole multitude of Israel, men and women alike—to everyone a loaf of bread, a cake made in a pan and a raisin cake. Then all the people departed, each to his home.

²⁰ David returned to bless his own household. But Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel distinguished himself today, when he uncovered himself today in the eyes of the slave girls of his subjects, as any vulgar fellow would shamelessly uncover himself!"

²¹ "It was before *ADONAI*," David said to Michal, "who chose me instead of your father and all his household, appointing me ruler over the people of *ADONAI*, over Israel! So I danced Before *ADONAI*, ²² and will dishonor myself even more than this, and will be low in my own eyes. Yet in the eyes of the slave girls whom you mentioned, I will be honored." ²³ So Saul's daughter Michal had no children to the day of her death.

ADONAI's Promise to David

7 Now it came about when the king lived in his palace and *ADONAI* had granted him rest from all his enemies around him, ² that the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, yet the ark of God remains within curtains."

³ "Go, do all that is in your heart," Nathan said to the king, "for *ADONAI* is with you."

⁴ But it came to pass the same night that the word of *ADONAI* came to Nathan saying: ⁵ "Go, tell My servant David: Thus says *ADONAI*: Are you to build Me a house for Me to dwell in? ⁶ Since the day that I brought up the children of Israel from Egypt to this day I have not dwelt in a house, but have been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle. ⁷ In all My journeying among all the children of Israel, did I ever speak a word to any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?' ⁸ So now, thus you shall say to My servant David: Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make your name as great as the greatest on earth. ¹⁰ I will also set up a place for My people Israel and will plant them, so they may dwell in their own place and not be disturbed again. Nor will the children of wickedness afflict them anymore as in the past, ¹¹ since the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel. So I will give you rest from all your enemies.

"Moreover, *ADONAI* declares to you that *ADONAI* will make a house for you. ¹² When your days are done and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed, who will come forth from you after you, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He will build a house for My

[†] Meaning, the unspeakable name of God, see *ADONAI*

^{††} Hebrew related to three; triangle three-barred sistrum [‡] Meaning, outburst of Uzzah

Name, and I will establish his royal throne forever. ¹⁴I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me. ¹⁵If he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and with the strokes from sons of men. ¹⁶Yet My lovingkindness will not be withdrawn from him as I withdrew it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁷So your house and your kingship will be secure forever before you; your throne will be established forever." ¹⁸Just so Nathan spoke all these words and all this vision to David.

¹⁹Then King David went in and sat before *ADONAI* and said, "Who am I, my Lord *ADONAI*, and what is my family, that You have brought me this far? ²⁰Yet this was a small thing in Your eyes, my Lord *ADONAI*—for You have spoken also of Your servant's house for the distant future. This is a revelation ²¹for humanity, my Lord *ADONAI*. ²²What more can David add in speaking to You? For You already know Your servant, my Lord *ADONAI*. ²³For the sake of Your word and according to Your own heart, You have done everything great, revealing this to Your servant. ²⁴Therefore You are great, my Lord *ADONAI*! For there is none like You, and there is no other God besides You, as we all have heard with our ears. ²⁵What one nation on earth is like Your people, like Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a Name, to do for You a great thing and awesome deeds for Your land, before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt—driving out nations and their gods? ²⁶So You established for Yourself Your people Israel as Your very own people forever, and You, *ADONAI*, have become their God.

²⁷"So now, my Lord *ADONAI*, confirm the word that You have spoken concerning Your servant and his house forever, and do as You have promised. ²⁸Let Your Name be magnified forever by saying, '*ADONAI -Tzva'ot* is God over Israel!' May the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁹For You, *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* God of Israel, have made a revelation to Your servant saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore Your servant has found his heart to pray this prayer to You. ³⁰So now, my Lord *ADONAI*, You alone are God, and Your words are truth, and You have promised Your servant this good thing. ³¹So now let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, to continue forever before You. For You, my Lord *ADONAI*, have spoken, and with Your blessing Your servant's house will be blessed forever."

David's Kingdom Expands

8 Now afterward David attacked the Philistines and subdued them, and took Metheg-Ammah ¹from the hand of the Philistines. ²He also defeated Moab. He made them lie down on the ground and measured them with a cord. Every two measures of them were

† cf. Luke 1:32-33. †† cf. Heb. 1:5. ‡ cf. Rev. 11:15. †† Or, instruction law Torah †† Or, the bridle of the mother city

put to death, and the third measure was kept alive. So the Moabites became vassals to David, bringing tribute.

³David also defeated King Hadadezer, son of Rehob of Zobah, as he went to restore his dominion along the River ⁴. ⁵David captured from him 1700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers, and David hamstringed all the chariot horses, while reserving 100 of them for chariots. ⁶When the Arameans of Damascus came to the aid of King Hadadezer of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 Aramean men. ⁷Then David stationed garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became vassals to David, bringing tribute. So *ADONAI* gave victory to David wherever he went. ⁸David also took the golden shields of Hadadezer's officers and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁹From Bethah and Berothai, towns of Hadadezer, King David took a vast amount of bronze.

¹⁰Now when King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of Hadadezer, ¹¹Toi sent his son Joram to King David to greet him and congratulate him on his victory in battle over Hadadezer—for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi. Joram brought with him articles of silver, gold, and bronze. ¹²These too King David consecrated to *ADONAI*, along with the silver and gold that he had consecrated from all the nations that he had subdued: ¹³from Aram, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

¹⁴Then David made a name for himself when he returned from striking 18,000 down from Edom in the Valley of Salt. ¹⁵Then he stationed garrisons in Edom. Throughout all Edom he stationed garrisons, so that all the Edomites became vassals to David. So *ADONAI* gave victory to David wherever he went.

¹⁶David reigned over all Israel, and David executed justice and righteousness for all his people. ¹⁷Joab son of Zeruiah was commander over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; ¹⁸Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were *kohanim*; Seraiah was scribe; ¹⁹Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were chief ministers.

Covenant Loyalty to Mephibosheth

9 Then David inquired, "Is there anyone still left from the house of Saul, so that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" ²Now there was a servant from Saul's house whose name was Ziba, so they summoned him to David. The king asked him, "Are you Ziba?"

"Your servant," he said.

³The king asked him, "Is there still anyone from the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?"

"There is still a son of Jonathan," Ziba said to the king, "with crippled legs."

††† i.e., Euphrates River

⁴“Where is he?” the king said to him.

Ziba said to the king, “He’s there, in the house of Machir son of Ammiel, in Lo-Debar.” ⁵ So King David sent word and brought him from the house of Machir son of Ammiel, from Lo-Debar.

⁶ Then Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan son of Saul, came to David, fell on his face and prostrated himself. “Mephibosheth!” David said.

“Behold your servant!” he answered.

“Don’t be afraid,” ⁷ David said to him, “for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat bread at my table.”

⁸ Then he bowed down and said, “What is your servant, that you should turn to look at such a dead dog like me?”

⁹ Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul’s servant, and said to him, “All that belonged to Saul and to all his household I have given to your master’s son. ¹⁰ So you, you and your sons and your servants will till the land for him, and you will bring in the yield so that your master’s son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master’s son will always eat bread at my table.” Now Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants. ¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, “According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do.” Thus, Mephibosheth used to eat at the table just like one of the king’s sons. ¹² Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. All the members of Ziba’s household were servants to Mephibosheth. ¹³ But Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate at the king’s table regularly, though he was crippled in both his legs.

Aram Vanquished

10 It came about after this that the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son Hanun reigned in his place. ² Then David thought, “Let me show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me.” So David sent word by the hand of his servants to comfort him concerning his father. But when David’s servants arrived at the land of the children of Ammon, ³ the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun their lord, “Do you think that David is really honoring your father because he has sent consolers to you? Has not David sent his servants to you in order to explore the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it?” ⁴ So Hanun seized David’s servants, shaved off one side of their beards, cut off their garments in the middle at their buttocks, and sent them away.

⁵ When they informed David, he sent word to meet them, for the men were greatly humiliated. The king said, “Stay in Jericho until your beards grow, then return.” ⁶ Now when the children of Ammon saw that they had become a stench to David, the children of Ammon sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-Rehob

and the Arameans of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, and the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, plus 12,000 men from Tob.

⁷ When David heard about it, he sent Joab and the whole army—the mighty warriors. ⁸ The children of Ammon came out and lined up in battle array at the entrance of the gate, while the Arameans of Zobah and Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the field. ⁹ When Joab saw that there was a battle line against him front and rear, he chose of all the best troops of Israel and arrayed them against the Arameans, ¹⁰ but the rest of the troops he committed to the command of his brother Abishai, and he arrayed them against the children of Ammon. ¹¹ Then he said, “If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you will help me, but if the children of Ammon are too strong for you, then I will come to help you. ¹² *Chazak!* And let us take courage for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God, and may *ADONAI* do what is good in His eyes.”

¹³ So Joab and the troops with him advanced to battle against the Arameans—and they fled before him. ¹⁴ When the children of Ammon saw that the Arameans had fled, they likewise fled before Abishai and withdrew into the city. Then Joab returned from assaulting the children of Ammon, and went to Jerusalem.

¹⁵ When the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they regrouped. ¹⁶ Hadadezer sent word and brought out the Arameans from across the River †, and they came to Helam, with Hadadezer’s army commander Shobach before them. ¹⁷ When David was told, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan and went to Helam. The Arameans arrayed their lines against David and fought him. ¹⁸ But the Arameans fled before Israel—David killed 700 charioteers of the Arameans and 40,000 horsemen, and struck down Shobach the commander of their army, so he died there.

¹⁹ When the vassal kings of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became servants to them. Then the Arameans were afraid to help the children of Ammon anymore.

David Commits Adultery and Murder

11 Now it came to pass at the turn of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his officials with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the children of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem. ² One evening David rose from his bed and strolled on the roof of the royal palace. Then from the roof he saw a woman washing—a very beautiful woman. ³ So David sent someone to inquire about the woman, and he reported, “Isn’t this Bath-sheba, daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

† Euphrates River

⁴ Then David sent messengers and took her when she came to him, and he lay with her. (She had purified herself from her uncleanness). Then she returned to her house. ⁵ The woman conceived and sent word to David saying, "I'm pregnant."

⁶ So David sent a message to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the troops fared, and how the war was going. ⁸ Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." When Uriah left the royal palace, a present from the king followed him. ⁹ But Uriah slept at the door of the royal palace with all his master's servants, and did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ When they informed David saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Haven't you come from a journey? Why didn't you go down to your house?"

¹¹ But Uriah answered David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my lord Joab and the officers of my lord are camping in the open field. Should I then go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As you live and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing."

¹² Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will send you off." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day. The next day, ¹³ David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk. But in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his master's servants, but did not go down to his house.

¹⁴ So in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by Uriah's hand. ¹⁵ In the letter he wrote, "Put Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle and withdraw from him so that he may be struck down and die." ¹⁶ So it came to pass, when Joab was besieging the city, that he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew that valiant men were. ¹⁷ Then the men of the city came out and attacked Joab, and some of the troops of David's officers fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died.

¹⁸ When Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war, ¹⁹ he charged the messenger saying, "When you finish reporting all the events of the war to the king, ²⁰ if it happens that the king's wrath flares up and he says to you, 'Why did you come so close to the city to fight? Didn't you know that they would shoot from the wall?' ²¹ Who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbesheth? Didn't a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you come so close to the wall?' Then you will say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead, too.'"

²² So the messenger went and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to report. ²³ The messenger said to David, "The men prevailed against us and came out against us in the open field, but we drove them back as far as the entrance of the gate. ²⁴ Then the archers shot at your troops from the wall, and some of

the king's officers fell dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite died, too."

²⁵ Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab, 'Don't let this matter upset you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Press your attack against the city and overthrow it!' So tell him, *chazak!*"

²⁶ Now when the wife of Uriah heard that her husband Uriah had died, she mourned over her husband. ²⁷ When the time of mourning was over, David sent someone who brought her to his palace. So she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done was evil in *ADONAI's* eyes.

Nathan Confronts David

12 Then *ADONAI* sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said to him, "There were two men in the same city—one was rich and the other poor. ² The rich man had an exceedingly huge flock and herd, ³ but the poor man had nothing at all, except one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished, and it grew up together with him and his children. It ate from his own morsel and drank from his own cup, and nestled in his bosom, and it was to him like a daughter. ⁴ Now a traveler came to the rich man, but he was unwilling to take one from his own flock or herd to prepare a meal for the wayfarer who had come to him. Rather, he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man that had come to him."

⁵ Then David's anger blazed hot against the man and he said to Nathan, "As *ADONAI* lives, the man that did this deserves to die! ⁶ So he must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did such a thing and showed no pity."

⁷ Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel: It is I who anointed you king over Israel, and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your bosom, and I gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. Now if that were too little, then I would have added to you so much more. ⁹ Why then have you despised the word of *ADONAI* by doing such evil in My eyes? Uriah the Hittite you have struck down with the sword, and his wife you have taken to be your wife, and him you have slain with the sword of the children of Ammon. ¹⁰ So now the sword will never depart from your house—because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

¹¹ "Thus says *ADONAI*: Behold, I am going to raise up evil against you from your own household, and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. ¹² Indeed, you have done it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and under the sun."

¹³ Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against *ADONAI*."

Nathan replied to David, “ADONAI also has made your sin pass away—you will not die. ¹⁴ However, because by this deed you have made the enemies of ADONAI greatly blaspheme, so even the child born to you will surely die.” ¹⁵ Then Nathan went to his house.

Then ADONAI struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David and he became very sick. ¹⁶ David, therefore, sought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in and lay all night on the floor. ¹⁷ The elders of his household stood beside him in order to get him up from the floor but he was unwilling and would not eat food with them. ¹⁸ Then it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died. But David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, “Behold, while the child was still alive, we spoke to him and he didn't listen to our voice. So how can we tell him that the child is dead? He might do something terrible!”

¹⁹ But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David perceived that the child was dead. So David asked his servants, “Is the child dead?” “He is dead,” they said.

²⁰ Then David got up from the floor, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes. Then he went to the House of ADONAI and worshiped. When he came back to his own palace, he asked for food, so they set food before him and he ate.

²¹ His servants asked him, “What is this thing you have done? You fasted and wept while the child was still alive, but as soon as the child died, you got up and ate food.”

²² He replied, “While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept, for I thought, ‘Who knows? ADONAI might be gracious to me and let the child live.’ ²³ But now that he has died, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? It is I who will be going to him, but he will never return to me.”

²⁴ Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba. He went to her and lay with her, and she bore a son and called his name Solomon. ADONAI loved him, ²⁵ and He sent word by the hand of the prophet Nathan. So he called his name Jedidiah †, for ADONAI's sake.

²⁶ Now Joab attacked Rabbah of the children of Ammon and captured the royal city. ²⁷ So Joab sent messengers to David and said, “I have attacked Rabbah and captured the city's water supply. ²⁸ So now gather the rest of the troops together, camp against the city and capture it. Otherwise, I will capture the city myself and it will be named after me.” ²⁹ So David gathered all the troops, went to Rabbah, attacked it, and captured it. ³⁰ Then he took the crown of their king from off his head—its weight was a talent of gold and in it was a precious stone—and then it was placed on David's head. He also brought a vast amount of spoils out of the city. ³¹ Then he brought out the people who were there and put them to work under saws, iron threshing boards and iron axes, and assigned them to brick

making; and thus he did to all the cities of the children of Ammon. Then David and all the troops returned to Jerusalem.

Amnon Attacks Tamar and Absalom's Wrath

13 It came to pass after this that Absalom son of David had a beautiful sister named Tamar, so Amnon, son of David, fell in love with her. ² But Amnon was so frustrated that he fell sick because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. ³ However, Amnon had a friend named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, and Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ So he said to him, “Why are you, the king's son, so miserable morning after morning? Won't you tell me?”

Amnon told him, “I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister.”

⁵ So Jonadab said to him, “Lie down on your bed and pretend you are sick. When your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some bread to eat. Let her prepare the food in my sight so I may see it and eat from her hand.’”

⁶ So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick, and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, “Please let my sister Tamar come and make me a couple of cakes in front of me so I may eat from her hand.”

⁷ Then David sent someone to the house for Tamar saying, “Go now to your brother Amnon's house and prepare bread for him.” ⁸ So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house while he was lying down. She took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in front of him, and baked the cakes. ⁹ Then she took the pan and poured them out in front of him but he refused to eat.

Then Amnon said, “Everyone, leave me!” So everyone left him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon said to Tamar, “Bring the bread into the bedroom that I may eat from your hand.” So Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon. ¹¹ But when she brought them close to him to eat, he grabbed her and said to her, “Come lie with me, my sister.”

¹² “No!” she said to him. “Don't, my brother! Don't rape me, for such a thing should never be done in Israel. Don't do this disgraceful deed! ¹³ I—where could I go with my shame? You—you will be as one of the disgraceful fools in Israel. Now, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you.”

¹⁴ But he was unwilling to listen to her voice, so he overpowered her, forced her, and lay with her. ¹⁵ Then Amnon loathed her with very intense revulsion—indeed, the hatred that he hated her with was greater than the love in which he had loved her. So Amnon said to her, “Get up, get out!”

¹⁶ But she said to him, “No! Sending me away is even a greater evil than the one you have already done to me!” But again he would not listen to her.

† Meaning, beloved of the Lord

¹⁷ Then he called his servant that attended him and said, "Get this woman away from me now and bolt the door after her."

¹⁸ Now she had on her a long-sleeved garment † for with such robes the king's virgin daughters used to be dressed. When his attendant took her outside and bolted the door after her, ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and rent her long-sleeved garment that was on her. She laid her hand on her head and was crying aloud as she went away.

²⁰ Then her brother Absalom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? So now, my sister, keep quiet. He is your brother—don't take this thing to heart." But Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

²¹ When King David heard about all these things, he was very angry. ²² Absalom did not say a word to Amnon, either good or bad, for Absalom hated Amnon because he had raped his sister Tamar.

²³ It came about, after two full years, that Absalom's sheepshearers were at Baal-Hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons.

²⁴ Then Absalom came to the king and said, "See now, your servant has sheepshearers. Please let the king and his servants come with your servant."

²⁵ But the king said to Absalom, "No, my son. Let's not all go—we don't want to be burdensome to you." Though he urged him, he would not go, though he blessed him.

²⁶ Then Absalom said, "If not, then please let my brother Amnon go with us."

"Why should he go with you?" the king said to him.

²⁷ But when Absalom pressed him, he let Amnon go with him, along with all the king's sons.

²⁸ Then Absalom commanded his young men saying, "Now watch Amnon until his heart is merry with wine. When I tell you, 'Strike Amnon!' then put him to death! Have no fear! Isn't it I who commanded you? Be strong! Be sons of valor!" ²⁹ So Absalom's young men did to Amnon as Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up, each mounted his mule and fled.

³⁰ While they were on the way, a report came to David saying, "Absalom has killed all the king's sons and not one of them is left!" ³¹ Then the king stood up, rent his clothes and lay on the ground, and all his courtiers were standing by with their clothes rent.

³² But Jonadab son of David's brother Shimeah said in response, "My lord must not think that they have killed all the young men, the king's sons! For only Amnon has died. For from Absalom's mouth this has been determined since the day he raped his sister Tamar. ³³ Now therefore, my lord the king must not take the report to his heart thinking that all the king's sons are dead—for only Amnon is dead."

³⁴ Meanwhile Absalom had fled. When the young watchman lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, there were many people coming down the road behind him

† Or, many-colored

on the hillside. ³⁵ Then Jonadab said to the king, "The king's sons have just arrived! It's just as your servant has said." ³⁶ As soon as he finished speaking, behold, the king's sons arrived. They lifted up their voices and wept, and also the king and all his courtiers wept very bitterly.

³⁷ But Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. David mourned for his son every day. ³⁸ So Absalom fled, went to Geshur, and remained there three years. ³⁹ Then King David's soul longed to go out to Absalom; for he was comforted about Amnon, since he was dead.

Joab Brings Absalom to Jerusalem

14 Now Joab son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was on Absalom. ² So Joab sent word to Tekoa and brought a wise woman from there. He said to her, "Please pretend to be a mourner and put on mourning clothes. Do not anoint yourself with oil but be like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead. ³ Then go to the king and speak to him these words." Then Joab put the words in her mouth.

⁴ When the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, bowed down and said, "Help, O king!"

⁵ "What's the matter with you?" the king said to her.

"Truly, I am a widow, my husband is dead," she said.

⁶ "Your handmaid had two sons, but the two of them fought with each other in the field, where there was no one to separate them. So one struck the other and killed him. ⁷ Now behold, the whole clan has risen against your handmaid and said, 'Hand over the one who struck down his brother so we may put him to death, for the life of his brother whom he slew.' So they will also destroy the heir and extinguish my one remaining ember, leaving to my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth!"

⁸ Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your home. I will issue an order concerning you."

⁹ The woman of Tekoa said to the king, "My lord the king, let the iniquity be on me and on my father's house but may the king and his throne be innocent."

¹⁰ "Whoever speaks to you," the king said, "bring him to me and he shall not touch you anymore."

¹¹ "Please, let the king remember *ADONAI* your God," she said, "so that the avenger of blood does not destroy any more, so they won't destroy my son."

"As *ADONAI* lives," he said, "not one hair of your son will fall to the ground."

¹² Then the woman said, "Please, let your handmaid speak a word to my lord the king."

"Say on," he said.

¹³ The woman said, "Why have you devised a situation just like this against God's people? For by speaking this word, the king is like the guilty one—by not bringing back the one he banished. ¹⁴ For we will all surely die and be like water spilt on the ground that

cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away life but rather, He devises plans so that a banished person may not remain an outcast from Him. ¹⁵ Now the reason I came to speak this word to my lord the king is because the people have made me afraid. So your handmaid thought, 'I must speak to the king—perhaps the king will fulfill the request of his maidservant. ¹⁶ Surely the king will hear, to deliver his maidservant from the hand of the one who would eliminate both me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.' ¹⁷ Then your handmaid also thought, 'Please let the word of my lord the king bring relief. For like an angel of God so is my lord the king to discern good and evil.' So may *ADONAI* your God be with you."

¹⁸ Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide anything from me concerning what I am about to ask you."

"Please let my lord the king speak," the woman said.

¹⁹ Then the king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?"

"As your soul lives, my lord the king," the woman answered, "no one can turn to the right or to the left from anything that my lord the king has spoken. Yes, your servant Joab was the one who commanded me and put all these words in the mouth of your handmaid. ²⁰ Your servant Joab did this thing in order to bring about a change in the situation. But my lord is wise—like the wisdom of an angel of God—to know all that goes on in the land."

²¹ Then the king said to Joab, "Behold now, I will do this thing. So go, bring the young man Absalom back."

²² Joab fell on his face to the ground, prostrated himself and blessed the king. Then Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, my lord the king, since the king has done the word of your servant." ²³ So Joab got up, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

²⁴ However, the king said, "He may go directly to his own house, but he may not see my face." So Absalom went directly to his own house and did not see the king's face.

²⁵ Now in all Israel there was none as handsome as Absalom—so highly praised. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. ²⁶ When he cut the hair of his head—at the end of every year he would cut it because the hair got so heavy on him that he had to cut it. The weight of the hair from his head was 200 shekels by the royal weight †. ²⁷ To Absalom were born three sons and one daughter, whose name was Tamar—she was a beautiful woman.

²⁸ Now Absalom had lived two full years in Jerusalem but he never saw the king's face. ²⁹ Then Absalom sent for Joab, in order to send him to the king, but he was unwilling to come to him. So he sent word again a second time, but he still would not come. ³⁰ So he said to

his servants, "See, 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 arose, came to Absalom at his house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"

³² "Look, I sent word to you," Absalom said to Joab, "saying, 'Come here, that I may send you to the king to say, 'Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there.''" So now, let me see the king's face and if there is iniquity in me, let him put me to death." ³³ So Joab went to the king and told him. When he summoned Absalom, he came to the king and bowed down on his face to the ground before the king, and then, the king kissed Absalom.

Absalom's Revolt

15 Now it came about after this that Absalom provided himself with a chariot, horses and 50 men as runners before him. ² Absalom used to rise up early and stand beside the road to the city gate. Whenever anyone had a suit to come to the king for justice, then Absalom would call to him and say, "What town are you from?" Should he answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel," ³ Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no one assigned to you by the king to hear you." ⁴ Moreover, Absalom would say, "If only I were appointed judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or case would come to me, and I would get him justice!" ⁵ Also, whenever anyone approached to bow to him, he would stretch his hand, take hold of him, and kiss him. ⁶ So Absalom kept doing this to everyone of Israel who came to the king for judgment. Thus, Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

⁷ At the end of 40 years Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron and pay my vow which I have vowed to *ADONAI*. ⁸ For your servant vowed a vow while I was still living at Geshur in Aram saying, 'If *ADONAI* will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve *ADONAI*.'"

⁹ So the king said to him, "Go in *shalom*."

Then he rose and went to Hebron. ¹⁰ But Absalom sent spies to all the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the *shofar*, then you are to say, 'Absalom has become king in Hebron!'" ¹¹ Now 200 men from Jerusalem went with Absalom, who were invited and were going innocently, knowing nothing of the situation. ¹² Also Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor from his town Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. So the conspiracy gained momentum, for the people following Absalom continued to increase.

¹³ Then a messenger came to David saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are following Absalom."

† About five pounds.

David's Exodus from Jerusalem

¹⁴ Then David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, "Arise, and let us flee, or else none of us will escape from Absalom. Leave in haste or else he will overtake us quickly and bring disaster down on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword."

¹⁵ Then the king's officials said to the king, "Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king chooses." ¹⁶ So the king set out, and his entire household followed him. But the king left behind ten concubines to take care of the palace. ¹⁷ As the king went out and all the people after him, they paused at the last house. ¹⁸ All his servants passed on beside him: all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites—600 men that had come after him from Gath—passed on before the king. ¹⁹ Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why should you also go with us? Go back and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile from your own place. ²⁰ Your arrival was only yesterday—should I make you wander around with us today, to go wherever I may go? Go back and take your kinsmen back with you. Kindness and truth be with you!"

²¹ But Ittai answered the king and said, "As *ADONAI* lives, and as my lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king will be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be." †

²² So David said to Ittai, "Go on and cross over." So Ittai the Gittite passed on, with all his men and all the little children who were with him. ²³ While all the country was weeping with a loud voice, all the people were crossing over as the king was crossing over Kidron Valley. So all the people crossed over toward the road of the wilderness.

²⁴ Then behold, Zadok also came and all the Levites with him, carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, then Abiathar came up, until all the people had passed by, out of the city.

²⁵ But the king said to Zadok, "Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in *ADONAI*'s eyes, He will bring me back, and let me see it and His dwelling. ²⁶ But if He says thus, 'I have no delight in you,' here I am, let Him do to me as seems good in His eyes." ²⁷ The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Do you not see? Return to the city in *shalom* with your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son and Jonathan son of Abiathar. ²⁸ See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness, until word comes from you to inform me." ²⁹ Therefore, Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

³⁰ Then David continued to go up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he ascended. He had his head covered and was walking barefoot. So all the people with him each covered his head as they went up, weeping as they ascended.

† cf. *John* 15:13.

³¹ Then someone told David saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, " *ADONAI*, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

³² Then David went on until he reached the summit—where God was worshiped—and behold, Hushai the Archite met him with his coat rent and dust on his head. ³³ David said to him, "If you pass on with me then you will be a burden to me, ³⁴ but if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king—I was your father's servant from then, but now I will be your servant,' then you can thwart Ahithophel's counsel for me. ³⁵ Won't you have with you Zadok and Abiathar the *kohanim* there? So whatever you hear from the royal palace, you should report it to Zadok and Abiathar the *kohanim*. ³⁶ See, they have their two sons with them there, Zadok's son Ahimaaz, and Abiathar's son Jonathan—by them you can send to me everything you hear." ³⁷ So David's friend Hushai reached the city just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

16 Now when David had passed a little beyond the summit, there was Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth to meet him with a pair of saddled donkeys, and on them 200 loaves of bread, 100 clusters of raisins, 100 fig cakes, and a bottle of wine. ² So the king asked Ziba, "What are you doing with these?"

Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and the figs are for the young men to eat, and the wine is for anyone who faints in the wilderness to drink."

³ Then the king asked, "And where is your master's son?"

"Well, he's staying in Jerusalem," Ziba said to the king, "for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore to me the kingdom of my father.'"

⁴ Then the king said to Ziba, "Behold, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours."

"I bow low," Ziba said. "Let me find favor in your eyes, my lord the king."

⁵ When King David arrived at Bahurim, behold, just coming out from there was a man of the family of the house of Saul—his name was Shimei son of Gera. As he came out, he kept on cursing ⁶ and flinging stones at David and at all King David's servants, while all the people and all the mighty men were at his right hand and on his left. ⁷ Thus, Shimei said as he cursed, "Get out, get out! The man of bloodshed, the good-for-nothing! ⁸ *ADONAI* has returned on you all the blood of Saul's house, in whose place you've reigned. *ADONAI* has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom—so see, your own evil has overtaken you, because you are a man of bloodshed."

⁹ Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why let this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over now and take off his head!"

¹⁰ But the king said, "What have I to do with you, sons of Zeruiah? If he curses, it's because *ADONAI* has

said to him, 'Curse David!' So who should say, 'Why did you do so?'" ¹¹ Then David said to Abishai and to all his officials, "Look, my son who came from my own body is seeking my life—how much more this Benjamite? Leave him alone and let him curse, since *ADONAI* has told him. ¹² Perhaps *ADONAI* will look on my affliction and return good to me for his cursing this day." ¹³ So David and his men continued on the way, while Shimei kept walking alongside the hill parallel with him, cursing as he walked, casting stones at him and throwing dirt.

¹⁴ Finally the king and all the people that were with him arrived weary, so he refreshed himself there.

Counselors Divided

¹⁵ Meanwhile Absalom and all the people of the men of Israel arrived in Jerusalem. Ahithophel was with him. ¹⁶ Now when David's friend Hushai the Archite came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

¹⁷ But Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?"

¹⁸ "No!" said Hushai to Absalom. "For the one whom *ADONAI* has chosen—as well as these people, all the men of Israel—his I will be and with him I will stay.

¹⁹ Besides, whom should I serve? Shouldn't I be in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, so I will be in your presence."

²⁰ Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give your counsel. What should we do?"

²¹ So Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go to your father's concubines whom he has left to take care of the palace. Then all Israel will hear that you have made yourself abhorrent to your father and the hands of all who are with you will also be strengthened."

²² So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom went to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. ²³ Now, in those days, the counsel that Ahithophel gave was like inquiring for the word of God—so was all of Ahithophel's counsel both with David and with Absalom.

17 Moreover, Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me now choose 12,000 men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight. ² I will attack him while he is weary and weak-handed, and terrify him so that all the people that are with him will flee. Then I will strike down the king when he is alone. ³ Then I will bring all the people back to you—when all will have returned except the man you are seeking, then all the people will be at peace."

⁴ Now the plan seemed right in the eyes of Absalom and all the elders of Israel. ⁵ Then Absalom said, "Call now Hushai the Archite also. Let's hear what he has to say as well." ⁶ When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom spoke to him saying, "This is what Ahithophel has advised. Should we follow his counsel? If not, you will speak."

⁷ So Hushai said to Absalom, "This time the counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good." ⁸ Hushai then added, "You know your father and his men. They are mighty men, and they are embittered in their souls like a bear robbed of her cubs in the wild. Your father is an expert in warfare, and won't spend the night with the troops. ⁹ Even now, he must be hiding in one of the caves or in some other place. So if he were to fall on them at first, whoever hears of it would say, 'There's a slaughter among the people following Absalom!'"

¹⁰ Then, even one who is valiant, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will utterly melt away—for all Israel knows that your father is a mighty warrior and those who are with him are valiant men. ¹¹ Instead, I counsel that all Israel be gathered altogether to you—from Dan to Beer-Sheba, as abundant as the sand by the sea—and that you personally go into the battle.

¹² Then we will come upon him in one of the places where he can be found and we'll fall upon him as dew falls on the ground. None will be left of all the men who are with him—not even one. ¹³ Moreover, if he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city and drag it into the valley until not even one small stone will be found there."

¹⁴ Then Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For *ADONAI* had ordained to thwart Ahithophel's good counsel, so that *ADONAI* might bring evil upon Absalom.

¹⁵ Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the *kohanim*, "This and that is what Ahithophel counseled Absalom and the elders of Israel, and this and that is what I advised. ¹⁶ Now, therefore, send word quickly and tell David saying, 'Don't spend the night at the fords in the wilderness but by all means, cross over or else the king and all the people with him may be swallowed up.'" ¹⁷ Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En-Rogel, and a maidservant used to go and pass information along to them. Then they would go and inform King David for they could not be seen entering the city.

¹⁸ But a lad did see them and informed Absalom. So the two of them left quickly and arrived at the house of a man in Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard; so they went down into it. ¹⁹ Then the woman took the cover and spread it over the well's mouth and scattered grain on top of it so that nothing was noticeable. ²⁰ When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house and said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" the woman said to them, "They crossed over the brook of water." When they had searched and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ After they had departed, they came up from the well, then went and informed King David, telling David, "Get up and cross over the water immediately, for thus has Ahithophel counseled against you."

²² Then David arose, and all the people who were with him, and they crossed over the Jordan. By morning

light, not even one of them was left who had not crossed the Jordan.

²³ Now when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey, arose, went to his home in his hometown, set his house in order, and hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's tomb.

²⁴ David had reached Mahanaim by the time Absalom crossed the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. ²⁵ Now Absalom had set Amasa over the army instead of Joab. (Now Amasa was son of a man whose name was Ithra the Israelite †, who had gone to Abigail daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah Joab's mother.) ²⁶ Israel and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead.

²⁷ Now when David reached Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, Machir son of Ammiel of Lo-Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim ²⁸ brought beds, basins, clay pots, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, parched seeds, ²⁹ honey, curd, sheep, and cheese from the herd for David and for the people who were with him to eat. For they said, "The people must be hungry, weary, and thirsty in the wilderness."

Absalom's Demise

18 Then David mustered the people who were with him and set commanders of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. ² Then David sent out the troops, one third under the command of Joab, one third under the command of Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and one third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the troops, "I must certainly go out with you also."

³ But the troops said, "You must not go out! For if we were to flee, they would not care about us, even if half of us die, they still wouldn't care about us—but you are worth 10,000 of us. Therefore now, it is better that you be ready to support us from the city."

⁴ Then the king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." So the king stood beside the gate and all the troops went out by their hundreds and thousands. ⁵ Then the king charged Joab, Abishai, and Ittai saying, "Deal gently with the young man Absalom for my sake." Now all the troops heard the king's charge to all the commanders concerning Absalom.

⁶ Then the troops went out to the field to confront Israel but the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷ The people of Israel were defeated there before the followers of David, and the slaughter that day was great—20,000 men. ⁸ For the battle there was spread over the face of the entire countryside and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.

† *1 Chron. 2:17 says Jether was an "Ishmaelite," while 2 Sam. 17:25 states he was an "Israelite." The "Ishmaelite" reading is preferred. 2 Sam. makes a point of his being grafted into the Israelite community, thus the reference.*

⁹ Now Absalom encountered some of David's servants. When Absalom was riding on his mule, the mule went under the thick branches of the great oak, and his head got caught in the oak, so that he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. ¹⁰ Then a certain man saw it and told Joab saying, "Look, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak."

¹¹ Then Joab said to his informant, "Look here, you saw him, so why didn't you strike him there to the ground? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt!"

¹² But the man said to Joab, "Even if I had 1,000 pieces of silver in my hand, I would not raise my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king charged you, Abishai, and Ittai saying, 'Watch over the young man Absalom for me.' ¹³ Otherwise, I would have betrayed his soul—and nothing stays hidden from the king—and you yourself would have stood aloof."

¹⁴ "I won't wait for you!" Joab said. So he took three darts in his hand and thrust them through Absalom's heart while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.

¹⁵ Then ten young men who were Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom, struck, and finished him off.

¹⁶ Then Joab blew the *shofar* and the troops returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab held back the troops.

¹⁷ They took Absalom and threw him into a deep pit in the forest and piled over him a very large heap of stones. Then all Israel fled, everyone to his tent.

¹⁸ (Now Absalom, in his lifetime, had taken and set up for himself a pillar, which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to preserve the memory of my name." So he called the pillar by his name and it has been called Absalom's Monument to this day.)

¹⁹ Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me now run and bring the king news that *ADONAI* has vindicated him against the hand of his enemies."

²⁰ But Joab said to him, "You are not to be the bearer of news today. You may do it another day, but today you shall bear no news—for the king's son is dead."

²¹ Then Joab said to the Cushite, "Go tell the king what you have seen." So the Cushite bowed to Joab and took off running.

²² But Ahimaaz son of Zadok once again said to Joab, "Whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite."

"Why should you run, my son," Joab said, "since you would have no news worth telling?"

²³ "Whatever may come of it, I want to run!"

So he said to him, "Run!" Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and so passed the Cushite.

²⁴ Now David was sitting between the two gates. When the watchman on the roof over the gate walked over to the wall, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and all of a sudden, he saw a man running alone. ²⁵ The watchman cried out and told the king. The king said,

"If he is alone, there is good news in his mouth." So he came closer and closer.

²⁶ Then the watchman saw another man running, so the watchman called out to the gatekeeper and said, "Look, another man is running alone."

The king said, "He too is bringing good news."

²⁷ Then the watchman said, "I can see that the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok."

"This is a good man and he comes with good news," the king replied.

²⁸ Then Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "*Shalom*." Then he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Blessed be *ADONAI* your God, who has given over the men who lifted up their hand against my lord the king."

²⁹ Then the king asked, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?"

Ahimaaz answered, "I saw a great tumult when the king's servant Joab sent me, your servant, but I did not know what it was about."

³⁰ "Step aside and stand here," the king said. So he stepped aside and stood still.

³¹ Then the Cushite arrived and said, "Let my lord the king receive good news, for *ADONAI* has vindicated you today against all who rose up against you."

³² Then the king asked the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?"

The Cushite answered, "Let the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be as that young man!"

David Weeps Over Absalom

19 (18:33) The king was shaken. So he went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. As he walked he cried, "My son Absalom! O my son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! Absalom, my son, my son!"

² (1) Then Joab was told, "Look, the king is weeping and mourning over Absalom!" ³ (2) So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the troops, for the troops heard it said that day, "The king is grieving over his son." ⁴ (3) So the troops entered into the city stealthily that day, like troops who are ashamed after running away in battle.

⁵ (4) The king covered his face and cried with a loud voice, "My son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

⁶ (5) Then Joab came into the house to the king and said, "Today you have humiliated all your servants—who this day have saved your life, the lives of your sons and daughters, and the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines— ⁷ (6) by loving those who hate you, and hating those who love you! For you have shown today that officers and officials are nothing to you. For today I realize that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead, then it would have pleased you well. ⁸ (7) So now arise, go out, and speak to the heart of your servants! For I swear by *ADONAI*

that if you do not go out, not a single man will stay with you tonight, and that would be worse for you than all the evil that has befallen you from your youth until now."

⁹ (8) So the king arose and sat in the gate. When they told all the troops saying, "See, the king is sitting at the gate," all the troops presented themselves before the king.

David's Restoration and Grace

Meanwhile, Israel had fled each man to his tent. ¹⁰ (9) All the people throughout all the tribes of Israel were at strife saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies and he saved us from the hand of the Philistines. Yet now he had to flee from the land because of Absalom, ¹¹ (10) but Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. So why are we silent about restoring the king?"

¹² (11) Then King David sent word to Zadok and Abiathar the *kohanim* saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah saying, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his palace? The talk of all Israel had reached the king at his residence. ¹³ (12) 'You are my kinsmen, my bone and my flesh! Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?'

¹⁴ (13) 'Also say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? May God do so to me and even more if you do not become my army commander before me continually, in place of Joab!'"

¹⁵ (14) Thus he turned the hearts of all the men of Judah as one man, and then they sent word to the king, "Come back, you and all your servants." ¹⁶ (15) So the king returned and reached the Jordan. Meanwhile, Judah came to Gilgal in order to meet the king, to escort the king over the Jordan.

¹⁷ (16) Then Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite who was from Bahurim, hurried and came down with the men of Judah to meet King David ¹⁸ (17) accompanied by 1,000 men of Benjamin. Also Ziba the servant of Saul's household, with his 15 sons and 20 slaves, rushed to the Jordan ahead of the king. ¹⁹ (18) They ferried across the ford to bring the king's household and they did whatever seemed good in his eyes. Now, Shimei son of Gera fell down before the king when he was crossing over the Jordan, ²⁰ (19) so he implored the king, "Let my lord not hold me guilty, and not remember the iniquity that your servant committed on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. Let the king not take it to his heart. ²¹ (20) For your servant knows that I have sinned. So behold, I have come today, the first of all the house of Joseph, to go down to meet my lord the king."

²² (21) But Abishai son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Shouldn't Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed *ADONAI* 's anointed?"

²³ (22) But David said, "What have I to do with you sons of Zeruiah that you should be my adversary † to-

† Hebrew *satan*

day? Should any man be put to death in Israel this day? Don't I know that today I am king over Israel?"²⁴ (23) Then the king said to Shimei, "You shall not die," and the king swore it to him.

²⁵ (24) Then Mephibosheth son of Saul came down to meet the king. Now he had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes from the day the king departed until the day he came home in *shalom*.²⁶ (25) Now it came to pass when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king asked him, "Why did you not go with me Mephibosheth?"

²⁷ (26) "My lord the king, my own servant deceived me," he answered. "For your servant had said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself, ride on it, and go with the king,' because your servant is lame."²⁸ (27) However, he has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is like an angel of God. So do what is good in your eyes.²⁹ (28) For all my father's household deserved only death at the hand of my lord the king; yet you set your servant among those eating at your own table! What right do I have yet to cry to the king?"

³⁰ (29) Then the king said to him, "Why do you still speak of your affairs? I have decreed, 'You and Ziba shall divide the land.'"

³¹ (30) "So let him take all," Mephibosheth replied to the king, "as long as my lord the king has come back to his own home in *shalom*."

³² (31) Then Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and he approached the Jordan with the king to escort him over the Jordan.³³ (32) Now Barzillai was a very aged man—80 years old—and he had provided for the king during his residence at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man.³⁴ (33) The king said to Barzillai, "Cross over with me, and I will provide for you with me in Jerusalem."³⁵ (34) But Barzillai said to the king, "How many years are left of my life that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?"³⁶ (35) I am now 80 years old. Can I distinguish between good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I listen any more to the voice of singing men and women? Why then should your servant be yet a burden to my lord the king?³⁷ (36) Your servant would merely cross over the Jordan with the king. But why should the king reward me with such a reward?³⁸ (37) Please let your servant go back, and let me die in my own hometown, near the grave of my father and my mother. But look, here is your servant Chimham—let him cross over with my lord the king, and do for him what seems good in your eyes."

³⁹ (38) The king answered, "Chimham will cross over with me, and I will do for him what seems good in your eyes. Whatever you ask of me, I will do for you."

⁴⁰ (39) When all the people had crossed over the Jordan and as the king was about to cross over, the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, so he returned to his own place.

⁴¹ (40) Then the king crossed over to Gilgal, and Chimham and all the people of Judah crossed over

with him, and also half the people of Israel escorted the king over.⁴² (41) Then all the men of Israel came to the king and said to him, "Why did our brothers, the men of Judah, steal you away by escorting the king and his household over the Jordan, along with all David's men that were with him?"

⁴³ (42) Then all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "Because the king is our close relative. So why are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's cost? Or has he given us any gifts?"

⁴⁴ (43) Then the men of Israel answered the men of Judah and said, "We have ten shares in the king, so in David we have even more than you. Why then did you despise us? Weren't we the first to speak of restoring our king?" Yet the words of the men of Judah were harsher than the words of the men of Israel.

Joab the Terminator

20 Now a worthless fellow happened to be there, a Benjamite named Sheba son of Bichri. He blew the *shofar* and said, "We have no portion in David, no inheritance in the son of Jesse! Every man to his tents, O Israel!"² So all the men of Israel withdrew from following David and followed Sheba son of Bichri, but the men of Judah kept close to their king from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

³ Now when David arrived at his palace in Jerusalem, the king took the ten women, the concubines whom he had left to take care of the palace, and put them in a guarded house. He provided for them but he did not cohabit with them. So they were confined until the day they died, living in widowhood.

⁴ Then the king said to Amasa, "Summon to me the men of Judah within three days and be here yourself."⁵ So Amasa went to summon Judah but he took longer than the set time that he had allotted him.

⁶ Then David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom. So take your lord's servants and pursue him lest he find for himself fortified cities and escape from our sight."⁷ So Joab's men went after him, along with the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and all the mighty men, and set out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba son of Bichri.⁸ When they were at the great stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Now Joab was dressed in his military uniform, and over it was a belt with a sword in its sheath fastened on his waist; and as he stepped forward, it fell out.⁹ Then Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you my brother?" With his right hand Joab took Amasa by the beard to kiss him.¹⁰ But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's other hand. So he stabbed him with it in the groin and poured out his entrails to the ground, and did not strike him again, for he died.

Then Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba son of Bichri.¹¹ Meanwhile, one of Joab's young men stood over Amasa and said, "Whoever favors Joab and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab!"¹² Yet Amasa

lay wallowing in his blood in the midst of the highway. So when the man saw that all the people stood still, he dragged Amasa from the highway into the field and threw a garment over him because he saw that everyone passing by him paused. ¹³ Once he removed him from the highway, everyone passed on, following Joab to pursue Sheba son of Bichri.

¹⁴ Now he went through all the tribes of Israel, to Abel and Beth-Maacah. All the Berites gathered together and indeed followed him. ¹⁵ They came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-Maacah and cast up a siege ramp against the city. It stood against the outer fortification and all the people with Joab battered the wall in order to topple it.

¹⁶ Then a wise woman cried out from the city, "Listen! Listen! Please tell Joab to come over here that I may speak with him." ¹⁷ When he approached her, the woman asked, "Are you Joab?"

"I am," he answered.

Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of your handmaid."

"I'm listening," he answered.

¹⁸ Then she spoke up saying, "They used to say in old time, 'They shall surely seek counsel at Abel' and that's how they settled any dispute. ¹⁹ I am of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel. Are you seeking to destroy a mother city in Israel? Why would you devour *ADONAI's* inheritance?"

²⁰ Joab replied saying, "Never! Far be it from me that I would devour up or ruin. ²¹ The matter is not so; but a fellow from the hill country of Ephraim, Sheba son of Bichri his name, has lifted up his hand against King David. Give him up alone and I will withdraw from the city."

So the woman replied to Joab, "Look here, his head will be thrown to you over the wall." ²² Then the woman approached all the people wisely. So they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri and threw it over to Joab. He then blew the *shofar*, and they were dismissed from the city, each to his tent. Then Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

²³ Now Joab remained over all the army of Israel; Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; ²⁴ Adoram was over the forced labor; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder; ²⁵ Sheba was scribe; Zadok and Abiathar were *kohanim*; ²⁶ and Ira the Jairite also was a *kohen* to David.

Justice for the Gibeonites

21 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year, so David sought the face of *ADONAI*. *ADONAI* replied, "It is because of Saul and his bloody house, for he put the Gibeonites to death." ² So the king summoned the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not of *Bnei-Yisrael* but a remnant of the Amorites; however, *Bnei-Yisrael* had sworn a covenant with them. Yet Saul had tried to eradicate them in his zeal for *Bnei-Yisrael* and

Judah.) ³ David asked the Gibeonites, "What should I do for you? How may I make atonement so that you would bless the inheritance of *ADONAI*?"

⁴ The Gibeonites said to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his house; nor is it our right to put any man to death in Israel."

"Whatever you say, I will do for you," he said.

⁵ Then they said to the king, "The man who consumed us and plotted against us to annihilate us from remaining in any of Israel's territory, ⁶ let seven men of his sons be given over to us and we will hang them up before *ADONAI* at Gibeah of Saul, *ADONAI's* chosen."

"I will give them over," the king said. ⁷ Now the king spared Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan son of Saul, because of *ADONAI's* oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul. ⁸ But the king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul—Armoni and Mephibosheth; also the five sons of Michal † daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite, ⁹ and he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites. So they hanged them on the hill before *ADONAI*, so that all seven fell together. They were put to death during the days of harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest.

¹⁰ Then Rizpah daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it on the rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until the rain poured on them from the sky. She did not let the birds of the sky rest on them by day nor the beasts of the field by night. ¹¹ David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done. ¹² So David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the men of Jabesh-Gilead, who had stolen them from the open square of Beth-Shan, where the Philistines had hanged them on the day that the Philistines killed Saul in Gilboa. ¹³ He had the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan brought up from there, and they gathered the bones of those who were hanged. ¹⁴ So they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the country of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of his father Kish. They did all of what the king commanded. Afterward, God was moved by prayer for the land.

¹⁵ Once again the Philistines made war with Israel, so David went down with his servants and fought against the Philistines. But David became weary. ¹⁶ So Ishbi-benob—who was a descendant of the Rapha, whose spear weighed 300 shekels of bronze, who was girded with new armor—thought to kill David. ¹⁷ But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid, struck the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "You must not go out with us to battle anymore. You must not quench the lamp of Israel!"

¹⁸ Now it came to pass after this that there was war again with the Philistines at Gob, and Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph, a descendant of the Rapha. ¹⁹ Then there was war again with the Philistines at Gob, and Elhanan son of Jaare-oregim the Beth-

† Or, Merav

Lehemite killed Goliath the Gittite—his spear had a shaft like a weaver's beam. ²⁰ Once again there was war at Gath, where there was a champion that had on every hand six fingers and on every foot six toes— a total of 24, and he also was a descendant of the Rapha. ²¹ When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimea killed him. ²² These four were born to the Rapha in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

David's Songs of Valor and Last Words

22 David spoke to *ADONAI* the words of this song in the day that *ADONAI* delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.

² He said:

" *ADONAI* is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer.

³ My God is my rock, in Him I take refuge, my shield, my horn of salvation, † my stronghold and my refuge, my Savior—You save me from violence.

⁴ I called upon *ADONAI*, worthy of praise, and I was rescued from my enemies.

⁵ For waves of death encompassed me. Torrents of Belial overwhelmed me.

⁶ Cords of death entangled me. Snares of death came before me.

⁷ In my distress I called upon *ADONAI*, yes, I called to my God.

From His Temple He heard my voice, my cry came into His ears.

⁸ Then the earth rocked and quaked, the foundation of heaven trembled. They reeled because He was angry.

⁹ Smoke rose from His nostrils and consuming fire from His mouth. Coals blazed from Him.

¹⁰ He parted the heavens and came down, with thick darkness under His feet.

¹¹ He rode upon a *cheruv* and flew.

He was seen on the wings of the wind.

¹² He made darkness as a *sukkah* around Him—a mass of waters, thick clouds of the skies.

¹³ Out of the brilliance before Him coals of fire flamed out.

¹⁴ *ADONAI* also thundered from heaven and *Elyon* gave forth His voice.

¹⁵ He shot arrows and scattered them, lightning bolts, and routed them.

¹⁶ Then the ravines of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were exposed by the rebuke of *ADONAI*,

at a blast of the breath of His nostrils.

¹⁷ He reached down from on high and He took hold of me.

He drew me out of mighty waters.

¹⁸ He delivered me from my powerful enemy, from those who hated me—

for they were much stronger than me.

¹⁹ They came against me in the day of my calamity, but *ADONAI* was my support.

²⁰ He brought me out to a wide-open place.

He rescued me since He delighted in me.

²¹ " *ADONAI* rewarded me for my righteousness.

For the cleanness of my hands

He repaid me.

²² For I kept the ways of *ADONAI*, and did not turn wickedly from my God.

²³ For all His judgments are before me.

As for His rulings,

I do not turn away from them.

²⁴ I also had integrity with Him,

and kept myself from my sin.

²⁵ So *ADONAI* rewarded me for my righteousness, according to my cleanness in His eyes.

²⁶ With the loyal You deal loyally.

With the blameless You are blameless.

²⁷ With the pure You show Yourself pure,

but with the crooked You show Yourself shrewd.

²⁸ You save lowly people.

But Your eyes are on the haughty—

You will humble them.

²⁹ For You are my lamp, *ADONAI*.

ADONAI shines in my darkness.

³⁰ For with You I rush on a troop, with my God I can leap over a wall.

³¹ As for God, His way is perfect.

The word of *ADONAI* is pure.

He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

³² For who is God, besides *ADONAI*?

and who is a Rock, besides our God?

³³ God is my strong fortress and He keeps my way blameless.

³⁴ He makes my legs like a deer and sets me on my heights.

³⁵ Who trains my hands for battle, so my arms can bend a bronze bow.

³⁶ You gave me Your shield of salvation, and Your answering has made me great.

³⁷ You broaden my steps beneath me, so my feet have not slipped.

³⁸ I pursue my enemies and destroy them.

I will not return till they are consumed.

³⁹ I consumed them and crushed them till they cannot rise;

yes, they fall beneath my feet.

⁴⁰ You girded me with strength for battle.

You made those rising up against me bow down before me.

⁴¹ You also made my enemies turn their backs to me. I cut off those who hate me.

⁴² They looked, but there was none to save—to *ADONAI*, but He did not answer them.

⁴³ Then I beat them as the dust of the earth, I stamped and crushed them like mud of the streets.

⁴⁴ You free me from strifes of my people.

† cf. Luke 1:69.

You kept me as head of the nations—
 people I did not know are serving me.
⁴⁵ Children of foreigners cringe before me.
 As soon as they hear, they obey me.
⁴⁶ Children of foreigners lose heart
 and come trembling from their hideouts.
⁴⁷ “ADONAI lives! And blessed be my Rock!
 Exalted be God—the Rock of my salvation!
⁴⁸ God—He gives me vengeance
 and brings down peoples under me.
⁴⁹ He brings me out from my enemies.
 Indeed You lift me up above those who rise up
 against me.
 You deliver me from the violent man.
⁵⁰ Therefore I praise You among the nations, ADONAI,
 and will sing praises to Your name.
⁵¹ He is a tower of salvation to His king,
 He shows loyal love to His anointed—
 to David and to his seed, forever.”

23 Now these are the last words of David,
 the utterance of David son of Jesse,
 the utterance of the man raised on high,
 the anointed of the God of Jacob
 and the sweet singer of Israel:
² “The *Ruach ADONAI* has spoken through me
 and His word is on my tongue.
³ The God of Israel has said,
 the Rock of Israel has spoken to me,
 ‘He who rules over men righteously,
 he who rules in the fear of God—
⁴ he is like the light of the morning when the sun rises,
 a cloudless morning of glistening
 as grass springs from the earth.’
⁵ Is it not true that my house is with God?
 For He made an everlasting covenant with me,
 ordered and secured in all things.
 Will He not make all my salvation and every desire
 come to fruition?
⁶ But the worthless, all of them will be thrust aside
 like thorns,
 for they cannot be picked up by hand.
⁷ But the man who touches them
 must be armed with iron and the shaft of a spear.
 They must be completely burned up with fire on the
 spot.”

David's Mighty Men

⁸ These are the names of the mighty men whom
 David had: Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite, chief
 of the captains—he wielded his spear against 800 and
 slew them in one encounter. ⁹ Next to him was Eleazar
 son of Dodo son of an Ahohite, one of the three
 mighty men with David when they defied the
 Philistines who were gathered there to battle. The
 men of Israel retreated, ¹⁰ but he stood his ground and
 struck down the Philistines until his hand became
 weary and stuck to the sword. So ADONAI brought

about a great victory that day, and the people re-
 turned after him only to strip the slain.

¹¹ Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the
 Hararite. Now the Philistines were assembled in for-
 mation where there was a plot of ground full of lentils,
 and the people fled from the Philistines. ¹² But he took
 his stand in the midst of the plot and defended it, and
 struck down the Philistines—so ADONAI brought about
 a great victory.

¹³ Once the three of the thirty chiefs went down and
 came to David at the cave of Adullam during the har-
 vest, while a troop of Philistines was camping in the
 Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴ David was then in the stronghold,
 while the garrison of the Philistines was in Beth-
 Lehem. ¹⁵ David said longingly, “Who would get me
 water to drink from the well which is by the gate in
 Beth-Lehem?” ¹⁶ So the three mighty men broke
 through the Philistine lines, drew water from the well
 of Beth-Lehem by the gate, took it and brought it to
 David. However, he would not drink it but poured it
 out to ADONAI ¹⁷ and he said, “Far be it from me, ADON-
 AI, that I should do this—the blood of the men who
 went in jeopardy of their lives?” So he would not drink
 it. These things the three mighty men did.

¹⁸ Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, son of Zeruiah,
 was chief of the Thirty. Once he wielded his spear
 against 300 and killed them—he had a reputation
 among the Three. ¹⁹ He was the most honored of the
 Thirty, so he was made their commander; however, he
 did not become one of the Three.

²⁰ Then there was Benaiah son of Jehoiada, son of a
 valiant man from Kabzeel, who had done mighty
 deeds. He killed the two from Ariel of Moab. Once, on
 a snowy day, he went down and killed a lion in the
 midst of a pit. ²¹ He also killed an Egyptian—an impres-
 sive man—the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but
 Benaiah went down to him with a staff, snatched the
 spear from the Egyptian’s hand, and killed him with his
 own spear. ²² These sort of things Benaiah son of Je-
 hoiada did, so that he had a name as famous as that
 of the Three mighty men. ²³ He was most honorable
 among the Thirty, but he attained not to the first
 Three. So David set him over his guard.

²⁴ Asahel brother of Joab was one of the Thirty, also
 Elhanan son of Dodo of Beth-Lehem, ²⁵ Shammah the
 Harodite, Elika the Harodite, ²⁶ Helez the Paltite, Ira
 son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, ²⁷ Aviezer the Anathothite,
 Mebunnai the Hushathite, ²⁸ Zalmon the Ahohite, Ma-
 harai the Netophathite, ²⁹ Heleb son of Baanah the Ne-
 topathite, Ittai son of Ribai of Gibeath of the children
 of Benjamin, ³⁰ Benaiah a Pirathonite, Hiddai from the
 wadis of Gaash, ³¹ Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmavet
 the Barhumite, ³² Eliahba the Shaalbonite of the sons
 of Jashen, Jonathan, ³³ Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam
 son of Sharar the Ararite, ³⁴ Eliphelet son of Ahasbai
 son of the Maacathite, Eliam son of Ahithophel the
 Gilonite, ³⁵ Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,
³⁶ Igal son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,

³⁷ Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armor-bearer to Joab son of Zeruiah, ³⁸ Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, ³⁹ and Uriah the Hittite—37 in all.

David's Unauthorized Census

24 Now the anger of *ADONAI* again flared up against Israel, so He incited David against them saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah." ² The king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, "Go about now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beer-Sheba, and number the people, so that I may know the sum of the people."

³ But Joab said to the king, "May *ADONAI* your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they are, while the eyes of my lord the king look on! But why does my lord the king desire such a thing?"

⁴ Nevertheless, the king's command to Joab and the army generals remained firm. So Joab and the army generals went out from the king's presence to number the people of Israel. ⁵ They crossed over the Jordan and camped in Aroer, on the right side of the town that is in the middle of the valley of Gad, and toward Jazer. ⁶ Then they went to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi. Then they came to Dan-jaan and round about to Sidon, ⁷ and came to the stronghold of Tyre, to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to the south of Judah, to Beer-Sheba. ⁸ So when they had gone throughout all the land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and 20 days. ⁹ Joab reported the sum of the numbering of the people to the king: there were in Israel 800,000 valiant men who drew the sword and the men of Judah were 500,000 men.

¹⁰ But David's heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So David prayed to *ADONAI*, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done! But now, *ADONAI*, please take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

¹¹ When David rose up in the morning, the word of *ADONAI* came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying: ¹² "Go and speak to David, thus says *ADONAI*: 'Three things I am proposing to you—choose one of them and I will bring it upon you.'" ¹³ So Gad came to David and told him, saying to him, "Shall seven years of famine come on you in your land? Or will you flee from your adversary for three months while he is pursuing

you? Or shall there be three days of pestilence in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should return to Him who sent me."

¹⁴ Then David said to Gad, "I am in a great distress. Let us now fall into the hand of *ADONAI*, for His mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man." ¹⁵ So *ADONAI* sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time, so that 70,000 men of the people died from Dan to Beer-Sheba. ¹⁶ When the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, *ADONAI* relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "Enough! Now withdraw your hand." The angel of *ADONAI* was then by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷ When David saw the angel that was striking down the people, he spoke to *ADONAI* saying, "Behold, it is I who have sinned, and it is I who have done wrong! But these sheep, what have they done? Please, let Your hand be against me and against my father's house."

¹⁸ On that day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up, set up an altar to *ADONAI* on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." ¹⁹ So David went up according to the word of Gad, as *ADONAI* had commanded. ²⁰ Now when Araunah looked down and saw the king and his courtiers crossing over toward him, Araunah went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. ²¹ Then Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?"

David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to *ADONAI*, so that the plague may be held back from the people."

²² Then Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good in his eyes. Look here, the oxen for the burnt offering, as well as the threshing sledges and the ox yokes for the wood." ²³ All this Araunah gives to the king." Araunah said further to the king, "May *ADONAI* your God accept you."

²⁴ But the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you at a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to *ADONAI* my God that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver. ²⁵ Then David built there an altar to *ADONAI*, and offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. So *ADONAI* was moved by prayer of entreaty for the land, and restrained the plague from Israel.

1 Kings

1 Kings Introduction

The name of Kings in Hebrew is מלכים, מלכים. The first of two English books of Kings, what we call 1 and 2 Kings, describe the reigns of every king except Saul and synchronize the kings of the Southern and Northern Kingdoms (Judah and Israel). Until the 15th century, the Hebrew text of Kings was a single book. Since the Septuagint, it was divided into two books.

Authorship of 1 and 2 Kings is uncertain, though some believe it was penned by one of three great prophets of that epoch: Ezra, Ezekiel, or possibly Jeremiah. The text of Kings is generally assumed to have been compiled near the latter half of the 6th century BCE.

1 Kings begins at the end of David's reign. It provides a theological account of Israel's history during the transition from the nation's greatest earthly king, David, to lesser men who followed him, but who never quite measured up to David's standard.

At first, David's son Adonijah pursued the throne. Bathsheba, however, stepped in and asked David to keep his promise that her son Solomon would become king. An aged man before exiting the royal scene, David gave instructions for Solomon to mete out political retribution. The inelegant end of David's reign may have helped usher in the violent, fratricidal start to Solomon's. Solomon quickly executed his conspiratorial brother Adonijah and David's military chief of staff Joab. For his part, the legacy of Solomon includes: "Solomon's Temple," volumes of profound writings, and the enduring testimony of his monumental wisdom. While building the Temple, Solomon was passionate in his devotion to God. His later proclivity toward pagan women, however, produced tragic results, inviting spiritual wickedness into the kingdom. Solomon's expensive excesses led to the assessing of unbearable taxes on Israel's citizens. Solomon's son Rehoboam inherited his throne in Jerusalem leading twelve unified tribes. But king Rehoboam met with an immediate demand for tax relief by a charismatic leader from the North, Jeroboam. Rehoboam naively ignored the advice of his father's counselors. Instead of cutting taxes, Rehoboam's cadre of newly installed advisors convinced him to show strength by raising them. Rehoboam's failed diplomacy caused a tax revolt that divided the nation. Jeroboam assumed leadership of the rebel Northern Kingdom, Israel. Rehoboam retained control over the Jerusalem-based Southern Kingdom, Judah, the Temple, the tribe of Judah, and half the tribe of Benjamin. In the short span of two generations, the magnificent kingdom of David was unalterably diminished due to bad economic policy, bad political strategy, and the overreaching, arrogant leadership of his grandson.

The integrity of Scripture is evident in the manner it presents its heroes—warts and all. "For David did what was right in eyes and did not turn aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kings 15:5). David's trust in God was legendary and inspirational. But our greatest hope exists because of his failure. David experienced God's redemption after the cover-up of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. The conspiracy to murder Uriah was David's most notable failure. But it revealed God's power to forgive. And through the line of David and Bathsheba, our Messiah was born!

1 Kings Headings

- Rivalry for the Throne
- David's Last Instructions
- Solomon's Throne Secured
- Solomon Asks for Wisdom
- Judging Between Two Women
- Solomon's Official Staff
- Wealth and Wisdom
- Hiram Offers Materials
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Dedicating the Temple
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 Resurrection of a Boy
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 Triumph on Mount Carmel
 Whisper at the Cave
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 Ahab and the Prophets
 Naboth Murdered for His Vineyard
 Ahab's Last Stand
 Jehoshaphat of Judah

Rivalry for the Throne

1 Now King David was old, advanced in years. Though they covered him with clothes, he could not keep warm. ² So his servants said to him: "Let them seek a young virgin for my lord the king, and let her attend the king and be his nurse; and let her lie by your side, so my lord the king may keep warm."

³ So they sought for a beautiful girl throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunamite, and brought her to the king. ⁴ The girl was very beautiful. So she became the king's nurse and served him, but the king was not intimate with her.

⁵ Now Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying: "I'll be king!" So he prepared for himself chariots, horsemen, and 50 men to run before him. ⁶ His father had not scolded him at any time by asking: "Why have you behaved this way?" He was also a very handsome man; and he was born after Absalom.

⁷ So he conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the *kohen*. Following Adonijah, they supported him. ⁸ But Zadok the *kohen*, Benaiah son of Jehoia-da, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei and David's mighty men, were not on Adonijah's side.

⁹ Then Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle by the stone of Zoheleth [†], which is beside En-Rogel, and invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants, ¹⁰ but he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or Solomon. ¹¹ But Nathan spoke to Bath-Sheba, Solomon's mother, saying: "Haven't you heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has assumed the kingship—and our lord David doesn't know it? ¹² Now come, please let me give you advice. Save your own life and the life of your son Solomon! ¹³ Go at once to King David, and say to him: 'My lord the king, haven't you sworn to your handmaid, saying: "Surely your son Solomon will become king after me, and he will sit on my throne"? Then why does Adonijah reign?' ¹⁴ Behold, while you are still there talking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

¹⁵ So Bath-Sheba went to the king into the chamber. Now the king was very old, with Abishag the Shunamite serving the king. ¹⁶ Bath-Sheba bowed and prostrated herself to the king. The king asked, "What troubles you?"

¹⁷ She said to him: "My lord, you swore by *ADONAI* your God to your handmaid: 'Surely, Solomon your son

[†] Meaning crawling the serpent

will be king after me, and he will sit on my throne.'

¹⁸ Yet now, behold, Adonijah reigns, though you do not know it—my lord the king. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, Abiathar the *kohen* and Joab the commander of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant. ²⁰ As for you, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. ²¹ Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be considered traitors."

²² Then behold, while she was still talking with the king, the prophet Nathan came in, ²³ and they informed the king, saying: "Behold the prophet Nathan is here." When he came in before the king, he prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground.

²⁴ Then Nathan said: "My lord the king, did you say: 'Adonijah shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne?' ²⁵ For he has gone down today, slain oxen, fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, the captains of the army and Abiathar the *kohen*—and behold, they are eating and drinking with him, and they are saying: 'Long live King Adonijah!' ²⁶ But he did not invite me, your servant, Zadok the *kohen*, Benaiah son of Jehoiada or your servant Solomon. ²⁷ Was this thing done by my lord the king, without letting your servants know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

²⁸ Then King David answered and said: "Summon Bath-Sheba to me." So she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. ²⁹ Then the king swore an oath: "As *ADONAI* lives, who has redeemed my soul out of all distress, ³⁰ as surely as I swore to you by *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, saying that your son Solomon will be king after me and will sit on my throne in my place. Thus I will surely fulfill it this day!"

³¹ Then Bath-Sheba bowed with her face to the ground and prostrated herself before the king, and said: "Let my lord King David live forever!"

³² Then King David said: "Summon to me Zadok the *kohen*, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king, ³³ the king said to them: "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. ³⁴ There let Zadok the *kohen* and Nathan the prophet anoint him as king over Israel, blow the *shofar* and say: 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵ Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne. For he shall be king in my place, as I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."

³⁶ Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king and said: "Amen! Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of my lord the king. ³⁷ As *ADONAI* has been with my lord the king, so will He be with Solomon and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David!"

³⁸ So Zadok the *kohen*, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down, and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. ³⁹ Then Zadok the *kohen* took the horn of oil out of the Tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the *shofar*, and all the people said: "Long live King Solomon!" ⁴⁰ All the people went up after him, while the people were playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the ground shook at their noise.

⁴¹ Now Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it, just as they finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the *shofar*, he said: "Why is the city in an uproar?"

⁴² While he was still speaking, behold, Jonathan son of Abiathar the *kohen* came, and Adonijah said, "Come in, for you are a valiant man, and surely bringing good news."

⁴³ But Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah: "No, for our lord King David has made Solomon king. ⁴⁴ Also the king has sent with him Zadok the *kohen*, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and they had him ride on the king's mule. ⁴⁵ Zadok the *kohen* and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon. From there they have come up rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar—that's the noise that you heard. ⁴⁶ Also Solomon has taken his seat on the royal throne.

⁴⁷ Moreover, the king's courtiers came to bless our lord King David, saying: 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and his throne greater than your throne!' Then the king bowed down on the bed. ⁴⁸ Furthermore the king said, 'Blessed be *ADONAI*, God of Israel, who this day has given one to sit on my throne, while my eyes are seeing it.'"

⁴⁹ Trembling, all the guests of Adonijah got up and each went his own way. ⁵⁰ Adonijah was afraid of Solomon, so he arose, went, and grasped the horns of the altar. ⁵¹ So it was reported to Solomon: "Behold, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon, for look, he grasped the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'"

⁵² Then Solomon said, "If he shows himself a worthy man, then not a hair of him will fall to the ground. But if wickedness is found in him, he shall die."

⁵³ So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. He came and prostrated himself before King Solomon, and Solomon said to him: "Go to your home."

David's Last Instructions

2 Now when the time of David drew near to die, he charged his son Solomon, saying: ² "I—I am going the way of all the earth. So be strong [†] and be a man.

³ Keep the charge of *ADONAI* your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His

[†] Hebrew *chazak*

ordinances, and His decrees, according to what is written in the *Torah* of Moses, so that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn ⁴ so that *ADONAI* may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying: 'If your children watch their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

⁵ "Moreover, you also know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me—what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether, whom he killed, shedding the blood of war in peacetime, and putting the blood of war on his waistband and on his sandals on his feet. ⁶ So act according to your wisdom, and let his gray hair not go down to *Sheol* in *shalom*. ⁷ But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table—for they befriended me when I fled from your brother Absalom. ⁸ Also behold, you have with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a grievous curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by *ADONAI* saying: 'I will not put you to death with the sword.' ⁹ Now don't let him go unpunished. For you are a wise man, and you will know how to deal with him, and bring his gray hair down to *Sheol* with blood."

¹⁰ Then David slept with his fathers [†] and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹ The days that David reigned over Israel were forty years—seven years he reigned in Hebron and 33 years he reigned in Jerusalem. ¹² Then Solomon sat upon the throne of his father David, and his kingdom was established firmly.

Solomon's Throne Secured

¹³ Later Adonijah son of Haggith came to Bath-Sheba, Solomon's mother. "Is your coming in *shalom*?" she asked.

"It is in *shalom*," he said. ¹⁴ Then he said, "I have something to say to you."

"Speak!" she said.

¹⁵ Then he said, "You know that the kingdom was mine and that all Israel looked to me to be the king. However, the kingship has turned about and become my brother's—for it was his from *ADONAI*. ¹⁶ So now one petition I ask of you; do not deny me."

"Speak!" she said to him.

¹⁷ Then he said, "Please, speak to King Solomon—for he won't turn you down—to give me Abishag the Shunammite as wife."

¹⁸ "Very well," said Bath-Sheba, "I will speak to the king for you."

¹⁹ So Bath-Sheba went to King Solomon to speak to him about Adonijah. The king rose up to greet her and bowed down to her. Then he sat down on his throne and had a throne set up for the king's mother, and she sat at his right hand. ²⁰ Then she said: "I ask one small petition of you; do not deny."

"Ask, my mother," the king said to her, "for I will not turn you down."

²¹ So she said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as wife."

²² King Solomon answered and said to his mother: "So why are you asking Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom as well—for he is my older brother—for him and for Abiathar the *kohen*, and for Joab son of Zeruiah!" ²³ Then King Solomon swore by *ADONAI* saying: "May God do so to me and even more, if Adonijah does not pay with his own life for this request! ²⁴ Now therefore, as *ADONAI* lives who has established me and set me on the throne of my father David, and who has made me a house as He promised, surely Adonijah shall be put to death this day."

²⁵ Then King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada. He struck him down and he died.

²⁶ Also to Abiathar the *kohen* the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own fields, for you deserve death, but I will not put you to death at this time, because you carried the ark of *ADONAI Elohim* before my father David, and because you were afflicted in everything with which my father was afflicted." ²⁷ So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being *kohen* to *ADONAI*—so fulfilling the word of *ADONAI* that He spoke at Shiloh about the house of Eli.

²⁸ When the news came to Joab, he fled to the Tent of *ADONAI* and grasped the horns of the altar—for Joab had defected to Adonijah, though he had not defected to Absalom. ²⁹ It was reported to King Solomon that Joab had fled to the Tent of *ADONAI*, and behold, he was by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying: "Go, strike him down!"

³⁰ So Benaiah came to the Tent of *ADONAI* and said to him: "Thus says the king: Come out!"

But he replied: "No, for I will die here."

Benaiah reported back to the king saying: "Thus said Joab and thus he answered me."

³¹ Then the king commanded him: "Do as he has said—strike him down. Then bury him. So you will remove the blood that Joab shed without cause, from me and from my father's house. ³² Thus *ADONAI* will return his blood on his own head, because he struck down two men more righteous and better than he—Abner son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah—and killed them with the sword, without my father David's knowledge. ³³ May the guilt of their blood return upon the head of Joab and upon the head of his offspring forever, but to David and his seed and his house, and his throne, may there be *shalom* forever from *ADONAI*."

³⁴ Then Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up, struck him down and killed him, and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. ³⁵ Then the king appointed Benaiah son of Jehoiada in his place over the army,

[†] cf. Acts 2:29.

and Zadok the *kohen* the king appointed in Abiathar's place.

³⁶ Then the king sent and summoned Shimei, and commanded him: "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there, and depart not from there anywhere else. ³⁷ For on the day you go out and cross over the Kidron valley, know for certain that you shall surely die—your blood shall be on your own head."

³⁸ "The saying is good. As my lord the king has said, so will your servant do." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem many days. ³⁹ But it came about at the end of three years that two of Shimei's servants ran away to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath. So they told Shimei, saying: "Behold, your servants are in Gath." ⁴⁰ So Shimei arose, saddled his donkey and went to Gath to Achish, to look for his servants; then Shimei went and brought his servants back from Gath. ⁴¹ But it was reported to Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and back. ⁴² So the king sent someone and summoned Shimei. He said to him: "Didn't I make you swear by *ADONAI* and forewarned you, saying: 'Know for certain that on the day you depart and go anywhere else, you shall surely die? You even said to me: 'The saying is good; I have heard it.' ⁴³ Why then haven't you kept the oath of *ADONAI* and the commandment that I charged you with?" ⁴⁴ The king added to Shimei: "You know all the evil, which your heart should acknowledge, that you did to my father David. Therefore *ADONAI* will return your evil on your own head. ⁴⁵ But King Solomon shall be blessed and the throne of David established before *ADONAI* forever." ⁴⁶ So the king commanded Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck him down, so that he died. Thus the kingdom was secured in the hand of Solomon.

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

3 Then Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt by marriage, taking Pharaoh's daughter, and bringing her to the city of David, until he finished building his own house, the House of *ADONAI*, and the wall around Jerusalem. ² The people, however, were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no House built for the Name of *ADONAI* until those days. ³ Now Solomon loved *ADONAI*, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he kept sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. ⁴ So the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Upon this very altar Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings.

⁵ At Gibeon *ADONAI* appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said: "Ask for what should I give you?" †

⁶ Solomon said: "You have shown my father Your servant David great lovingkindness, as he walked before You in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart toward You. Indeed, You have kept this great lov-

ingkindness for him by giving him a son to sit on his throne, as it is today. ⁷ So now, *ADONAI* my God, You have made Your servant king in my father David's place. I am but a youth. I don't know how to go out or come in. ⁸ Your servant is amid Your people, whom You have chosen—a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. ⁹ So give Your servant a mind of understanding to judge Your people, to discern between good and evil—for who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

¹⁰ Now it was pleasing in the eyes of *ADONAI* that Solomon requested this thing. ¹¹ So God said to him: "Because you asked for this thing—and have not asked for yourself long life, nor asked for yourself riches, nor asked for the life of your enemies, but asked for yourself understanding to discern justice— ¹² behold, I have done according to your words. I have given you a wise and discerning mind, so that there has been none like you before you, nor shall anyone like you arise after you. ¹³ Moreover I have also given you what you did not request—both riches and honor—so that no one among the kings will be like you all your days. ¹⁴ Furthermore, if you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

¹⁵ Then Solomon awoke and took note of the dream. So he went to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he made a feast for all his courtiers.

Judging Between Two Women

¹⁶ Later two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷ One woman said: "My lord, please! This woman and I live in the same house, and I delivered a child while she was in the house. ¹⁸ On the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth to a child. While we were together with no one else with us in the house, just the two of us in the house, ¹⁹ this woman's child died during the night, because she lay on top of him. ²⁰ Then she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while your handmaid was asleep. She laid him at her breast and laid her dead child at my breast. ²¹ When I rose in the morning to nurse my child, he had just died! But when I looked at him closely in the morning, I realized that he was not the son I had borne!"

²² But the other woman said, "No! For the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son!"

But the first woman said, "No! The dead one is your son and the living one is my son!" Thus they spoke before the king.

²³ Then said the king: "The one says, 'This is my son who is living, and your son is the dead,' while the other says, 'No, but your son is the dead one and my son is the living one.'"

²⁴ Then the king said: "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵ Then the king said:

† cf. Matt. 7:7.

“Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.”

²⁶ Then the woman whose son was the living one spoke up to the king—for her heart grew tender for her son—and said, “My lord, please! Give her the living child! Only don’t kill him!”

But the other said, “It will be neither mine nor yours! Cut it in two!”

²⁷ Then the king responded by saying, “Give her the living child and certainly don’t kill him. She is the mother.” ²⁸ When all Israel heard of the verdict that the king had given, they were in awe of the king. For they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

Solomon’s Official Staff

4 Now King Solomon reigned over all Israel, ² and these were his officials: Azariah son of Zadok, the *kohen*; ³ Elihoreph and Ahijah, sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud, the recorder; ⁴ Benaiah son of Jehoiada, in charge of the army; Zadok and Abiathar, *kohanim*; ⁵ Azariah son of Nathan, in charge of the officers; Zabud son of Nathan the *kohen*, the king’s personal attendant; ⁶ Ahishar, in charge of the household; Adoniram son of Abda in charge of the forced labor.

⁷ Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each had to make provision for a month in the year. ⁸ These were their names: Ben-Hur, in the hill-country of Ephraim; ⁹ Ben-Deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-Shemesh, and Elon-Beth-Hanan; ¹⁰ Ben-Hesed, in Arubboth (his were Socoh and all the land of Hehper); ¹¹ Ben-Abinadab in all the height of Dor (Taphath, Solomon’s daughter was his wife); ¹² Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-Shean which is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-Meholah as far as beyond Jokmeam; ¹³ Ben-Geber, in Ramoth-Gilead (his were the villages of Jair son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead, and also his were the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, 60 great cities with walls and bronze bars); ¹⁴ Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; ¹⁵ Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he also took Basemath, Solomon’s daughter, as wife); ¹⁶ Baana son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth; ¹⁷ Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar; ¹⁸ Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin; ¹⁹ Geber son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan; and one who was the officer in the land.

²⁰ Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea in abundance, eating and drinking and rejoicing.

Wealth and Wisdom

5 (4:21) Now Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines up to

the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life. ² (4:22) Solomon’s provision for one day was 30 measures of fine flour, 60 measures of meal, ³ (4:23) 10 fat oxen, 20 pasture-fed oxen, 100 sheep, beside deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted geese. ⁴ (4:24) For he had dominion over the entire region west of the River, from Tiphseh even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had *shalom* on all sides around him. ⁵ (4:25) So Judah and Israel lived securely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beer-Sheba, all the days of Solomon.

⁶ (4:26) Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. ⁷ (4:27) So those officers provided food for King Solomon and all who came to King Solomon’s table, each in his month. They let nothing be lacking. ⁸ (4:28) They also brought barley and straw for the horses and swift steeds to the place where it should be, each according to his charge.

⁹ (4:29) God gave Solomon wisdom and discernment in great measure, and a breadth of understanding as vast as the sand on the seashore. ¹⁰ (4:30) Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ¹¹ (4:31) For he was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, or Heman, Calcol and Darda, sons of Mahol—and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. ¹² (4:32) He also composed 3,000 proverbs and his songs were 1,005. ¹³ (4:33) He also spoke about trees, from the cedar in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall, and he spoke about beasts, birds, creeping things, and fish. ¹⁴ (4:34) People came from everywhere to hear the wisdom of Solomon—from all kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

Hiram Offers Materials

¹⁵ (1) Then King Hiram of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram was always a friend of David. ¹⁶ (2) So Solomon sent word to Hiram saying: ¹⁷ (3) “You know how my father David could not build a House for the Name of *ADONAI* his God because of the wars around him on every side, until *ADONAI* put them under the soles of my feet. ¹⁸ (4) But now *ADONAI* my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor bad incident. ¹⁹ (5) So behold, I intend to build a House for the Name of *ADONAI* my God, as *ADONAI* spoke to my father David saying: ‘Your son, whom I will set upon your throne in your place, he will build the House for My Name.’

²⁰ (6) “So now, command that they cut cedars from Lebanon for me. My servants will be with your servants, and I will give you wages for your servants according to whatever you say; for as you know, there is none among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.”

† cf. Matt. 22:14; 1 Cor. 15:25.

²¹ (7) When Hiram heard Solomon's words, he rejoiced greatly and said: "Blessed be *ADONAI* today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people."

²² (8) So Hiram sent word to Solomon saying: "I have heard the message that you sent to me. I will do all you desire concerning the cedar and cypress timber.

²³ (9) My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts to go by sea to the place that you indicate to me. There I will break them up and you will carry them away. Then you will accomplish my desire by giving food for my household."

²⁴ (10) So Hiram kept providing Solomon with cedar and cypress timber, as much as he desired, ²⁵ (11) and Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 measures of wheat for food for his household and 20 measures of beaten oil. Thus Solomon would give to Hiram year by year. ²⁶ (12) *ADONAI* gave Solomon wisdom as He promised him, so there was *shalom* between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them cut a covenant.

²⁷ (13) King Solomon also imposed forced laborers from all Israel—the levy was 30,000 men. ²⁸ (14) He sent them to Lebanon, in shifts of 10,000 a month: they would stay a month in Lebanon, then two months at home. Adoniram was over the forced labor. ²⁹ (15) Solomon had 70,000 porters, and 80,000 stonecutters in the mountains, ³⁰ (16) besides Solomon's chief officers that were over the work—3,300 who supervised the people who were doing the work. ³¹ (17) Then the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the House with cut stones. ³² (18) So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders along with the Gebalites cut them, and prepared the timber and the stones to build the House.

Building the Temple

6 Now it came to pass, 480 years after the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Ziv (which is the second month), that he began to build *ADONAI*'s House. ² Now the House that King Solomon built for *ADONAI* was 60 cubits [†] long, 20 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. ³ The porch in front of the Sanctuary of the House was 20 cubits in length—corresponding to the breadth of the House—and its depth was 10 cubits from the front of the House. ⁴ Also for the House he made windows with artistic frames. ⁵ Against the wall of the House he built a side-structure surrounding both the Temple and the inner Sanctuary; thus he made side-chambers all around. ⁶ The lowest story was 5 cubits wide, the middle was 6 cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide. All around on the outside he provided offset ledges in the wall of the House, so that the beams would not be inserted into the walls of the House. ⁷ For the House, while being constructed, was built of stone finished at the quarry; with neither hammer,

[†] A cubit was about 18 inches.

axe, nor any iron tool heard in the House during its construction.

⁸ The doorway to the lowest story of the side chambers was on the right side of the House. They went up by winding stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third. ⁹ When he finished building the House, he covered the House with beams and planks of cedar. ¹⁰ He built the stories of the side-structure against the whole House, each 5 cubits high, and they were fastened to the House with timbers of cedar.

¹¹ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Solomon saying: ¹² "As for this House which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes, execute My ordinances and keep all My *mitzvot* by walking in them, then I will establish My word with you, which I spoke to your father David, ¹³ I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel." ^{††}

¹⁴ So Solomon built the House and finished it. ¹⁵ He paneled the walls of the House on the inside with cedar planks of cedar; from the floor of the House to the ceiling he overlaid on the inside with wood; and he overlaid the floor of the House with planks of cypress. ¹⁶ Then he partitioned off 20 cubits at the rear part of the House, using cedar boards from the floor to the ceiling, building it as the inner Sanctuary—the Holy of Holies. ¹⁷ The House, that is, the Sanctuary, was 40 cubits long in front of the inner Sanctuary. ¹⁸ The cedar of the interior of the House was carved as gourds and open flowers. All was cedar; no stone was visible.

¹⁹ He prepared an inner Sanctuary within the House, to set there the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI*. ²⁰ The inner Sanctuary was 20 cubits in length, 20 cubits in breadth, and 20 cubits in height. He overlaid it with pure gold, and overlaid the cedar altar. ²¹ So Solomon overlaid the interior of the House with pure gold; and he drew chains of gold across the front of the inner Sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. ²² So the entire House he overlaid with gold until the entire House was finished; even the entire altar by the inner Sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

²³ In the inner Sanctuary he made 2 *cheruvim* of olive wood, each ten cubits high. ²⁴ The length of one wing of the *cheruv* was 5 cubits and the length of the other wing of the *cheruv* was 5 cubits—10 cubits from the end of one wing to the end of the other, ²⁵ and the other *cheruv* was also 10 cubits. Both *cheruvim* were the same in measure and form: ²⁶ the height of the one *cheruv* was 10 cubits and so the other *cheruv*. ²⁷ Then he placed the *cheruvim* inside the inner House. When the wings of the *cheruvim* extended, the wing of the one touched one wall while the wing of the other *cheruv* touched the other wall, while their wings in the center of the House touched one another. ²⁸ He also overlaid the *cheruvim* with gold.

²⁹ Then he carved all the walls surrounding the House with carved engravings of *cheruvim*, palm trees, and open flowers, in both the inner and outer

^{††} cf. John 14:18; Heb. 13:5.

rooms,³⁰ and he also covered the floor of both the inner and the outer rooms of the House with gold.³¹ For the entrance of the inner Sanctuary he made doors of olive wood, the frame of the doorposts having five angles.³² As for the double doors of olive wood, he carved on them carvings of *cheruvim*, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold. He beat out gold over the *cheruvim* and over the palm trees.

³³ He also made for the Temple entrance four-sided doorposts of olive wood³⁴ and double doors of cypress wood. The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.³⁵ He carved *cheruvim*, palm trees, and open flowers on them and overlaid them with gold evenly applied on the graven work.³⁶ He built the inner court with three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams.

³⁷ In the fourth year, in the month of Ziv, the foundation of the House of *ADONAI* was laid,³⁸ and in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul (which is the eighth month), the House was completed in all its parts and according to all its details. So he was seven years building it.

Solomon's Palace Complex

7 But it took Solomon 13 years to build and complete his own palace.² He also built the Forest House of Lebanon: its length was 100 cubits, its width 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits, built on 4 rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars.³ It was paneled with cedar above the side chambers, which were on 45 pillars—15 in a row.⁴ And there were window frames in 3 rows, with window opposite window in 3 ranks.⁵ And all the doorways had a rectangular frame, and with window opposite to window in 3 tiers.

⁶ He also made a portico of columns, 50 cubits long and 30 cubits wide, with a porch in front, and in front of that were pillars and an overhanging roof.⁷ He also made the Hall of the Throne where he would judge—the Hall of Justice. It was paneled with cedar from the floor to the ceiling.

⁸ His house where he would dwell, set farther back of the hall, was of the same construction. He also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom Solomon had taken to wife.

⁹ All these were made of expensive stones—stones cut to size and sawed with saws inside and outside—from the foundation to the top and from the outside to the great court.¹⁰ The foundation was also made of expensive stones—huge stones, stones 8 cubits and stones 10 cubits.¹¹ Above were expensive stones, cut to measure, and cedar wood.¹² The surrounding great courtyard had 3 rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams, the same as the inner court of the House of *ADONAI* and the portico of the House.

Hiram the Bronze Craftsman

¹³ King Solomon sent for and had Hiram brought from Tyre.¹⁴ He was a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali, while his father was a man of Tyre, a copper-smith, and he was filled with wisdom, understanding, and skill to do any work in bronze. So he came to King Solomon and executed all his work.¹⁵ He fashioned the 2 bronze pillars, 18 cubits high and 12 cubits in circumference each.¹⁶ He also made 2 capitals of molten bronze to set upon the tops of the pillars (the height of each capital was 5 cubits),¹⁷ nettings of latticework and twisted threads of chain work for the capitals were on top of the pillars—7 for the one capital and 7 for the other capital.¹⁸ So he made the pillars with 2 rows of pomegranates all around on the netting covering the capitals on top of each capital.¹⁹ The capitals that were on the top of the pillars in the portico were of lily design, 4 cubits high.²⁰ So also the capitals on the 2 pillars—close to the belly next to the netting were the pomegranates in rows of 200 around both capitals.

²¹ Thus he set up the pillars at the porticos of the Temple. He set up the right pillar and named it Jachin, and he set up the left pillar and named it Boaz.²² On the top of the pillars was lily design. So the work of the pillars was finished.

²³ Next he made the sea of cast metal, 10 cubits across from brim to brim, circular in form, 5 cubits in its height, and 30 cubits in circumference.²⁴ Under its brim there were gourds encircling it, ten per cubit, completely surrounding the sea. The gourds were cast in two rows in one piece with it.²⁵ It stood on 12 oxen, 3 facing north, 3 facing west, 3 facing south, and 3 facing east; and the sea was set on top of them, and all their rear parts were inward.²⁶ It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, like the petals of a lily; it held 11,000 gallons.

²⁷ Then he made 10 bases of bronze—the length of each base was 4 cubits, the width 4 cubits, and the height 3 cubits.²⁸ The structure of the bases was as follows: they had borders, and borders between the frames,²⁹ and on the borders that were below the frames were lions, oxen, and *cheruvim*. On the frames there was a pedestal manner above, and beneath the lions and oxen were wreaths of hanging work.³⁰ Each base had 4 bronze wheels with bronze axles. Its 4 legs had brackets; the brackets were beneath the laver, cast with wreaths at each side.³¹ Its opening inside the crown at the top was a cubit high, and its opening was round like the design of a pedestal, a cubit and a half, and also on its opening were engravings, and their borders were square, not round.³² The 4 wheels were underneath the borders, and the axles of the wheels were in the base. The height of a wheel was a cubit and half.³³ And the structure of the wheels was like the structure of a chariot wheel; their axletrees, their

† Meaning, He Will Establish In Him is Strength

rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast metal. ³⁴ There were 4 brackets at the four corners of each base; each bracket was of one piece with the base itself. ³⁵ On top of the base there was a band half a cubit high encircling it—its braces and its borders were part of it. ³⁶ On the plates of the braces and on its borders, he engraved *cheruvim*, lions, and palm trees, wherever there was clear space around each, with encircling wreaths. ³⁷ He made the 10 bases like this—all of them cast from the same mold, the same size, and same shape.

³⁸ Then he made 10 basins of bronze: 1 basin held 220 gallons. Each basin was 4 cubits, and on each of the 10 bases was 1 basin. ³⁹ Then he set up the laver stands, 5 on the right side of the House and 5 on the left side of the House, and set up the sea of cast metal on the right side of the House eastward, toward the south. ⁴⁰ Then Hiram made the basins, the shovels, and the sprinkling bowls.

So Hiram finished doing all the work that he performed for King Solomon on *ADONAI*'s House: ⁴¹ the 2 pillars, the 2 bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars, the 2 nettings to cover the 2 bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars, ⁴² the 400 pomegranates for the 2 nettings, 2 rows of pomegranates for each to cover the 2 bowls of the capitals on top of the pillars, ⁴³ the 10 bases and the 10 basins on the bases, ⁴⁴ the one sea and the 12 oxen under the sea, ⁴⁵ the pots, the shovels, and the basins. All these vessels Hiram made for King Solomon in the House of *ADONAI* were made of polished bronze. ⁴⁶ The king had them cast in the plain of the Jordan, with clay of the ground between Sukkot and Zarethan. ⁴⁷ Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were too many—the weight of the bronze could not be determined.

⁴⁸ So Solomon made all the equipment that was to be in the House of *ADONAI*: the golden altar, the table on which was the bread of the presence, of gold; ⁴⁹ the *menorot*—5 on the right side and 5 on the left in front of the inner Sanctuary—of pure gold; the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; ⁵⁰ the cups, the snuffers, the bowls, the wick trimmers, and the fire pans, of pure gold; the hinges for the doors of the inner House, the Holy of Holies, and for the doors of the House, that is, of the Temple, of gold.

⁵¹ When all the work that King Solomon did in *ADONAI*'s House was finished, Solomon brought in the things that his father David had dedicated—the silver, the gold, and the vessels—and put them in the treasuries of the House of *ADONAI*.

Dedicating the Temple

8 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel—all the heads of the tribes and the ancestral chieftains of the children of Israel—to King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* up from the city of David, which is Zion. ² All the men

of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the Feast in the month of Ethanim, which is the seventh month. ³ Then all the elders of Israel came and the *kohanim* brought up the ark. ⁴ They brought up the ark of *ADONAI*, the Tent of Meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent; the *kohanim* and the Levites brought them up.

⁵ Now King Solomon—and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled to him—were with him before the ark sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be numbered or counted. ⁶ The *kohanim* brought the ark of the covenant of *ADONAI* to its place, into the inner Sanctuary of the House, to the Holy of Holies, under the wings of the *cheruvim*. ⁷ For the *cheruvim* spread out their wings over the place of the ark, and the *cheruvim* covered the ark and its poles from above. ⁸ But the poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place before the inner Sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside; there they are to this day. ⁹ Nothing was in the ark except the two tables of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, † when *ADONAI* cut a covenant with the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰ Now when the *kohanim* came out of the Holy Place, the cloud filled the House of *ADONAI*, ¹¹ so that the *kohanim* could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of *ADONAI* filled the House of *ADONAI*. ¹² Then Solomon spoke: “*ADONAI* said that He would dwell in the thick cloud. ¹³ I have surely built You a magnificent House, a place for Your dwelling forever.”

¹⁴ Then the king turned his face about and blessed the whole congregation of Israel while the whole congregation of Israel was standing. ¹⁵ He said: “Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David, and has fulfilled it by His hand, saying: ¹⁶ ‘Since the day I brought My people Israel out from Egypt, I have not chosen a city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a House where My Name would be there. But I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’

¹⁷ “Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a House for the Name of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ But *ADONAI* said to my father David: ‘Because it was in your heart to build a House for My Name, you did well that it was in your heart. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, you will not build the House, but your son who will come out of your loins, he shall build the House for My Name.’ ²⁰ Now *ADONAI* has fulfilled His word that He spoke, for I have risen in the place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as *ADONAI* promised. Also I have built the House for the Name of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, ²¹ and have set there a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of *ADONAI*, which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

† cf. Heb. 9:4.

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of *ADONAI* in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven, ²³ and said: “*ADONAI*, God of Israel, there is no God like You, in heaven above or on earth below, keeping covenant and lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart.

²⁴ “You have kept what You promised with Your servant David my father. Yes, You spoke with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.

²⁵ “Now therefore, *ADONAI*, God of Israel, keep with Your servant David my father what You have promised him, saying: ‘You shall not lack a man to sit before Me on the throne of Israel, if only your children watch their way, walking before Me as you have walked before Me.’ ²⁶ Now therefore, God of Israel, please, let Your word be confirmed, which You spoke to Your servant my father David. ²⁷ So will God really dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You! † How much less this House that I have built! ²⁸ Nevertheless, turn to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, *ADONAI* my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You this day. ²⁹ Let Your eyes be open toward this House night and day, toward the place of which You have said: ‘My Name shall be there;’ listening to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place.

³⁰ “So listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive! ³¹ If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, then comes and swears before Your altar in this House, ³² then hear from heaven and act and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked, bringing his way on his own head, and justifying the righteous, giving him according to his righteousness.

³³ “When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy, because they have sinned against You, if they turn back to You and confess Your Name and pray and make supplication to You in this House, ³⁴ then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers.

³⁵ “When the skies are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, yet if they pray toward this place and confess Your Name and turn from their sin because You have afflicted them, ³⁶ then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and Your people Israel. Teach them the good way in which they should walk, and send rain on Your land which You gave to Your people as an inheritance.

³⁷ “If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there be blight or mildew, locust or caterpillar, if their enemy should besiege them in the land of their cities, whatever plague or sickness, ³⁸ when prayer or

supplication is made by anyone or by all Your people Israel—each knowing the plague of his own heart—when one spreads his hands toward this House, ³⁹ then may you hear from heaven, Your dwelling place, forgive and act, and give to each man according to all his ways, as You know his heart to be. For You alone know the hearts of all the children of men. †⁴⁰ Then they will fear You all the days that they live in the land that You gave to our fathers.

⁴¹ “Moreover concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel, when he comes from a distant country because of Your Name— ⁴² for they will hear of Your great Name, of Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm—when he comes to pray toward this House, ⁴³ then may you hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner asks of You. So all the peoples of the earth may know Your Name, to fear You as Your people Israel do, and know that this House that I have built is called by Your Name.

⁴⁴ “When Your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way You send them, and they pray to *ADONAI* toward the city which You have chosen and toward the House which I have built for Your Name, ⁴⁵ then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. ⁴⁶ If they sin against You—for there is no man that does not sin ‡—and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and their captors carry them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near, ⁴⁷ yet if they take it to the heart in the land which they have been carried captive, and they repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captors, saying: ‘We have sinned, we have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly,’ ⁴⁸ and they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who carried them into exile, and pray to You toward their land that You gave to their fathers, the city that You have chosen and the House which I have built for Your Name, ⁴⁹ then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, maintain their cause, ⁵⁰ and forgive Your people who have sinned against You as well as all their transgressions they have transgressed against You, and grant them mercy before their captors, so they may have mercy on them. ⁵¹ For they are Your people and Your inheritance that You brought out of Egypt, out of the middle of the iron furnace.

⁵² “May Your eyes be open to the supplication of Your servant and to the supplication of Your people Israel, listening to them whenever they cry to You. ⁵³ For You have set them apart from among all the peoples of the earth to be Your inheritance, as You spoke by the hand of Moses Your servant, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, my Lord *ADONAI* .”

⁵⁴ When Solomon finished praying this entire prayer and petition to *ADONAI*, he arose from before the altar

† cf. Acts 7:48-49.

†† cf. John 2:24; Rev. 2:23. ‡ cf. Rom. 3:9, 23.

of *ADONAI*, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread out toward heaven. ⁵⁵ Then he stood and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying: ⁵⁶ "Blessed be *ADONAI* who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. Not a single word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant. ⁵⁷ May *ADONAI Eloheinu* be with us as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us. ⁵⁸ May He incline our hearts to Him, to walk in all His ways and to keep His *mitzvot*, His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers. ⁵⁹ May these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before *ADONAI*, be near *ADONAI Eloheinu* day and night, so that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires. ⁶⁰ May all the peoples of the earth know that *ADONAI*, He is God, there is no other! ⁶¹ Let your heart, therefore, be wholly devoted to *ADONAI Eloheinu*, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as it is today."

⁶² Now the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifice before *ADONAI*. ⁶³ Solomon offered a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to *ADONAI*: 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the House of *ADONAI*. ⁶⁴ On that same day, the king consecrated the middle of the court that was before the House of *ADONAI*, for there he offered the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the fellowship offerings, because the bronze altar that was before *ADONAI* was too small to accommodate the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the fat of the fellowship offerings.

⁶⁵ So Solomon and all Israel with him celebrated the Festival at that time—a great congregation from the entrance of Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt—before *ADONAI Eloheinu*, seven days and then seven more days—14 days in all. ⁶⁶ On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart over all the goodness that *ADONAI* had shown to His servant David and to His people Israel.

Promise and Warning

9 Now it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the House of *ADONAI*, the royal palace and all that Solomon was pleased to do, ² that *ADONAI* appeared to Solomon a second time, just as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³ *ADONAI* said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your petition that you made before Me. I have consecrated this House, which you have built, to put My Name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there every day.

⁴ "As for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked—in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing all I commanded you, keeping My statutes and My ordinances—⁵ then I will establish the throne of

your kingship over Israel forever, as I promised your father David saying: 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

⁶ "But if you or your sons will indeed turn away from following Me—not keeping My *mitzvot* and My statutes that I set before you—and go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷ then will I cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and this House which I have consecrated for My Name, I will cast out of My sight. So Israel will become a proverb and a by-word among all peoples. ⁸ This House, now so exalted—everyone passing by it will gasp in shock and hiss, saying: 'Why has *ADONAI* done thus to this land and to this House?' ⁹ They will be told: 'Because they forsook *ADONAI* their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, worshiped them and served them, therefore *ADONAI* has brought all this evil on them.'"

Solomon's Economic Achievements

¹⁰ Now at the end of 20 years during which Solomon had built the two houses—*ADONAI*'s House and the royal palace—¹¹ since King Hiram of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar and cypress logs and with gold for all his desire—in return King Solomon gave Hiram 20 cities in the land of Galilee. ¹² So Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, but he was not pleased with them. ¹³ He said, "What are these cities that you've given me, my brother?" So they have been called the land of Kabul ^{††} to this day. ¹⁴ (Hiram had also sent to the king 120 talents [‡] of gold.)

¹⁵ Now this was the purpose of the forced labor that King Solomon had imposed to build *ADONAI*'s House, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. ¹⁶ Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, captured Gezer, burned it with fire, killed the Canaanites who dwelt in the city, and given it as a dowry for his daughter, Solomon's wife. ¹⁷ So Solomon rebuilt Gezer, lower Beth-Horon, ¹⁸ Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness in the land, ¹⁹ as well as all the storage cities, chariot cities, and cavalry cities, and that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

²⁰ As for all the people that were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the children of Israel, ²¹ even their children who remained in the land after them whom the children of Israel were not able to destroy utterly, on them Solomon imposed forced labor until this day.

²² But Solomon did not make slaves of the children of Israel, for they were the men of war, his servants, his officials, his captains, his charioteers, and his horsemen.

²³ These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work, 550 who supervised the people who

† cf. Matt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5.

†† Meaning, as good for nothing ‡ About 9,000 pounds.

did the work. ²⁴ As soon as Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David to her house built for her, he built the Millo.

²⁵ Now three times a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar that he built for *ADONAI*, burning incense with them on the altar that was before *ADONAI*. When he finished the House, ²⁶ King Solomon also built a fleet of ships in Ezion-Geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Sea of Reeds in the land of Edom. ²⁷ Hiram sent his servants with the fleet—sailors who knew the sea—along with Solomon's servants. ²⁸ So they went to Ophir and took from there 420 talents of gold, and brought it to King Solomon.

Queen of Sheba marvels

10 Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon because of the Name of *ADONAI*, she came to test him with hard questions. ¹² So she came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels carrying spices and gold in great abundance, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him of all that was on her heart. ³ Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king that he did not explain to her. ⁴ So when the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon, the palace that he had built, ⁵ the food at his table, the seating of his courtiers, the attendance of his servants and their attire, his cupbearers, and his burnt offering which he offered in the House of *ADONAI*, she was left breathless.

⁶ Then she said to the king: "It was a true report that I heard in my own land of your deeds and of your wisdom. ⁷ But I didn't believe the reports until I came and my eyes saw it. Indeed, not even the half was told to me. You're way past the report of wisdom and prosperity that I'd heard! ⁸ Blessed are your people, blessed are your courtiers who are standing continually before you, listening to your wisdom. ⁹ Blessed be *ADONAI* your God, who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel. It is because of *ADONAI*'s everlasting love for Israel that He made you king, to do justice and righteousness."

¹⁰ Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones. Never again did such abundance of spices come as what the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹¹ Also Hiram's ships that brought gold from Ophir brought from Ophir a great quantity of sandalwood and precious stones. ¹² The king made from the sandalwood a railing for the House of *ADONAI* and for the royal palace, and also lyres and harps for the singers. Never again did such quantity of sandalwood come in, nor have they been seen to this day.

¹³ So King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire—whatever she asked for—besides what King Solomon gave her out of his royal bounty. Then

she and her servants left and returned to her own land.

Solomon's Splendor

¹⁴ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, ¹⁵ besides what was from the merchants from the traffic of the traders, and from all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the region. ¹⁶ King Solomon made 200 full body shields of beaten gold—600 shekels [†] of gold on each shield—¹⁷ and 300 small shields of beaten gold—three minas [‡] of gold on each shield. The king put them in the Forest House of Lebanon. ¹⁸ Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with refined gold. ¹⁹ There were six steps to the throne, and the throne had a back with a rounded top, and there were armrests on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms. ²⁰ Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps—six on each side—nothing like it had ever been made in any other kingdom.

²¹ All of King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the Forest House of Lebanon were of pure gold. (None was of silver—that did not count for anything in the days of Solomon.)

²² For the king had a Tarshish fleet at sea with Hiram's fleet; once every three years the Tarshish fleet came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. ^{‡†}

²³ So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in wealth as well as in wisdom. ²⁴ All the earth sought an audience with Solomon, to listen to his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. ²⁵ They brought, each man his gift—vessels of silver and gold, robes, weapons, spices, horses and mules—so much year by year. ²⁶ Solomon accumulated chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁷ Also the king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees in the foothills. ²⁸ Solomon's horses were brought from Egypt and from Keveh. The king's merchants would buy them from Keveh at a price. ²⁹ They imported a chariot from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150; and in turn they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

Decline of Solomon

11 Now King Solomon loved so many foreign women, besides the daughter of Pharaoh—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—² from the nations of whom *ADONAI* had said to the children of Israel: "You shall not associate with them nor they associate with you, for surely they would turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon clung to them for love. ³ So he had 700 wives as

^{††} About 15 pounds. [‡] About four pounds. ^{‡†} Or baboons

[†] cf. Matt. 12:42; Luke 11:31.

princesses and 300 concubines—and his women led his heart astray. ⁴ For it came about, as Solomon grew old, that his wives led his heart away after other gods, so that his heart was no longer wholly devoted to *ADONAI* his God, unlike the heart of his father David. ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of *ADONAI* and did not fully follow after *ADONAI*, unlike his father David.

⁷ At that time Solomon also built a high place for Chemosh, the detested thing of Moab, on the mountain near Jerusalem, as well as for Molech the detested thing of the children of Ammon. ⁸ Thus he did for all his foreign wives, who were burning incense and offering sacrifices to their gods.

⁹ So *ADONAI* became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from *ADONAI*, the God of Israel—who had appeared to him twice. ¹⁰ He had commanded him about this, that he should not go after other gods, yet he did not keep what *ADONAI* had commanded. ¹¹ So *ADONAI* said to Solomon: “Since you have done this and did not keep My covenant and My statutes that I commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹² Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days for David your father’s sake; but I will tear it away from the hand of your son. ¹³ Yet I will not tear away the whole kingdom, but will give one tribe to your son for My servant David’s sake, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”

¹⁴ Then *ADONAI* raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite, of the royal line in Edom. ¹⁵ Earlier, when David was at war with Edom, Joab, commander of the army, went up to bury the slain, and had struck down every male in Edom. ¹⁶ Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom. ¹⁷ But Hadad and some Edomites, servants of his father, had fled to Egypt, while Hadad was a small boy. ¹⁸ Setting out from Midian they came to Paran and took men from Paran along with them, and went to Egypt—to Pharaoh king of Egypt—who gave him a house, allotted him food, and gave him land. ¹⁹ Then Hadad found great favor in Pharaoh’s eyes, so that he gave him his own sister-in-law, the sister of Queen Tahpenes, as wife. ²⁰ The sister of Tahpenes gave birth to his son Genubath. Tahpenes weaned him in Pharaoh’s palace and Genubath remained in Pharaoh’s palace among Pharaoh’s sons.

²¹ Now when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers and that Joab commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh: “Let me leave so I may go to my own country.”

²² Then Pharaoh replied to him, “What do you lack with me, that all of a sudden, you seek to go back to your own country?”

“Nothing,” he answered. “Nevertheless, let me go anyway.”

²³ Then God raised up another adversary against him, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his lord King Hadad-Ezer of Zobah, ²⁴ when David killed them. He then gathered men to himself and became the leader of a marauding band that went to Damascus and dwelt there and gained control in Damascus. ²⁵ Rezon was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, adding to the trouble that was Hadad. He despised Israel, while he reigned over Aram.

Prophecy to Jeroboam

²⁶ Then there was Jeroboam son of Nebat (the name of his mother, a widow, was Zeruah), an Ephraimite of Zereda. Though he was Solomon’s servant, he also raised a hand against the king. ²⁷ Now the reason that he raised a hand against the king was this: Solomon built the Millo and closed the breach of the city of his father David. ²⁸ Now the man Jeroboam was mighty of strength, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he appointed him over the entire labor force of the house of Joseph.

²⁹ It was around that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had covered himself in a new cloak, and the two of them were alone in the field. ³⁰ Then Ahijah seized the new cloak that was on him, tore it into twelve pieces, ³¹ and said to Jeroboam, “Take ten pieces for yourself, for thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of Solomon’s hand and will give ten tribes to you. ³² But he will have one tribe, for My servant David’s sake, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.

³³ “For they have abandoned Me and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon. They have not walked in My ways, nor done what is right in My eyes, nor kept My statutes and My ordinances, as his father David did. ³⁴ Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will keep him as a ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, because he kept My *mitzvot* and My statutes. ³⁵ Yet I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand, and I will give it to you—the ten tribes. ³⁶ To his son I will give one tribe so that My servant David may have a lamp every day before Me in Jerusalem, the city that I chose for Myself to put My Name there.

³⁷ “So I will take you and you will reign over all that your soul desires—you will be king over Israel. ³⁸ Then it will be, if you obey everything I command you and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My eyes, keeping My statutes and My *mitzvot* as My servant David did, then I will be with you, and will establish for you a lasting dynasty, as I did for David—I will give Israel to you. ³⁹ So I will for this afflict David’s seed, but not for all days.’ ” †

† cf. Luke 1:27; John 7:42.

⁴⁰ Therefore Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam got up and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt. He remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon. ⁴¹ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom—are they not recorded in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? ⁴² So the days of Solomon's kingship in Jerusalem over all Israel was 40 years. ⁴³ Then Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam was king in his place.

Rehoboam's Foolishness

12 Then Rehoboam went to Shechem for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ² Now when Jeroboam son of Nebat heard about it, he was still in Egypt where he had fled from the face of King Solomon and settled in Egypt. ³ They summoned him, so Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam saying: ⁴ "Your father made our yoke burdensome. Now therefore lighten the harsh labor of your father and his heavy yoke which he laid on us and we will serve you."

⁵ He said to them: "Go away for three more days and then come back to me." So the people departed.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, "How do you advise me to respond to these people?"

⁷ They spoke to him, saying: "If you will be a servant to this people today, serving them, granting them their petition, and speaking favorably to them, then they will be your servants forever."

⁸ But he rejected the counsel the elders had given him, instead consulting with the young men who grew up with him and stood before him. ⁹ So he asked them, "How do you advise me to respond to these people who have spoken to me saying: 'Lighten the yoke that your father laid on us?'"

¹⁰ The young men who had grown up with him spoke to him saying: "Thus you should say to these people who spoke to you saying 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you, make it lighter on us!' thus you should say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins! ¹¹ So now, my father laid on you a heavy yoke, and as for me, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but as for me, I will chastise you with scorpions.'"

¹² Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king told them, saying, "Come back to me on the third day." ¹³ The king answered the people harshly. He rejected the counsel the elders had given him, ¹⁴ and spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

Ten Tribes Revolt

¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people. For it was a turn of events from *ADONAI* fulfilling His word, which *ADONAI* spoke by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat. ¹⁶ But when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king saying:

"What share have we in David?

No inheritance in Jesse's son!

To your tents, O Israel!

Now look at your own house, David!"

So the Israelites departed to their tents. ¹⁷ But as for the children of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. ¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram who was over the forced labor, but all Israel stoned him to death. Then King Rehoboam hurried to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Israel has rebelled against the house of David to this day.

²⁰ Now when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they summoned him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the house of David. ²¹ When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah as well as the tribe of Benjamin—180,000 select soldiers, to fight against the house of Israel in order to restore the kingship back to Rehoboam son of Solomon.

²² But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying: ²³ "Speak to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people saying, ²⁴ Thus says *ADONAI*: you are not to go up or fight against your brothers, the children of Israel. Turn back every man to his own house, for this matter is from Me."

So they heeded the word of *ADONAI*. They turned and went back, according to the word of *ADONAI*.

²⁵ Then Jeroboam rebuilt Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and resided there. From there he went out and built Penuel. †

Jeroboam Resorts to Idolatry

²⁶ But Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David. ²⁷ If this people keep going up to offer sacrifices in the House of *ADONAI* at Jerusalem, then the heart of these people will turn back to their lord—to King Rehoboam of Judah. Then they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah." ²⁸ So the king sought counsel and made two golden calves. He said to them, "You have been going up to Jerusalem long enough! Here are your gods O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt."

²⁹ Then he set up one in Beth-El and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one even up in Dan.

† Hebrew face of God

³¹ He also made shrines on the high places and appointed priests from among the people, who were not sons of Levi. ³² Then Jeroboam instituted a festival in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, imitating the Festival that is in Judah. He went up to the altar that he built in Beth-El, to sacrifice to the calves that he had made. He installed in Beth-El the priests of the high places that he made. ³³ Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Beth-El on the fifteenth day in the eighth month—in the month that he had made up from his own heart—and made up a festival for the children of Israel, and went up to the altar to burn incense.

Prophet Against Beth-El

13 Unexpectedly, a man of God came from Judah to Beth-El with the word of *ADONAI* while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. ² He cried out against the altar with the word of *ADONAI* and said: "O altar, altar, thus says *ADONAI*, 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon you will he sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones will be burned upon you.'" ³ The same day he gave a sign, saying, "This is the sign that *ADONAI* has spoken, the altar is about to be split apart and the fat ashes on it will be poured out."

⁴ Now when the king heard the word of the man of God, which he proclaimed against the altar in Beth-El, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar saying: "Seize him!" But the hand which he stretched out against him withered—he could not even draw it back to himself. ⁵ The altar also was split apart and the fat ashes poured out from the altar, just as was the sign that the man of God gave with the word of *ADONAI*.

⁶ So the king responded by saying to the man of God: "Please seek the face of *ADONAI* your God, and pray for me, so my hand may be restored to me!" So the man of God sought the face of *ADONAI* and the king's hand was restored to him, becoming as it was before.

⁷ Then the king said to the man of God: "Come home with me and have something to eat, and then, I will give you a reward."

⁸ But the man of God said to the king: "Even if you give me half your house, I will not go with you nor will I eat bread or drink water in this place. ⁹ For so I was charged by the word of *ADONAI*, saying, 'You are to eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way by which you came.'" ¹⁰ So he took another road and did not return by the way he had come to Beth-El.

¹¹ Now one old prophet was living in Beth-El. His son came and told him all the deeds that the man of God had done that day in Beth-El and all the words that he had spoken to the king they related to their father.

¹² Then their father asked them: "Which way did he go?" For his sons had seen which way the man of God that came from Judah went.

¹³ Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me!" So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode away on it. ¹⁴ Then he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak tree. He said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?"

"I am," he said.

¹⁵ "Come home with me," he said to him, "and eat bread!"

¹⁶ But he said: "I cannot return with you nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷ For it was said to me by the word of *ADONAI*: You shall eat no bread nor drink water there, nor should you return back by the way by which you came."

¹⁸ So he said to him: "I also am a prophet like you. An angel spoke to me with the word of *ADONAI* saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" (He lied to him.) ¹⁹ So he went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water.

²⁰ Now while they were sitting at the table, the word of *ADONAI* came to the prophet who had brought him back, ²¹ and he cried to the man of God that came from Judah saying, "Thus says *ADONAI*: Because you rebelled against the word of *ADONAI*, and did not keep the commandment which *ADONAI* your God commanded you, ²² but turned back, ate bread and drank water in the place of which He said to you, 'Eat no bread and drink no water,' your carcass will not enter the tomb of your fathers."

²³ So after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet he had brought back. ²⁴ But when he was gone, a lion met him along the way and killed him. So his carcass was thrown on the road with both the donkey and the lion standing beside the carcass. ²⁵ Then, men passed by and saw the carcass thrown on the road with the lion standing by the carcass. So they came and told it in the town where the old prophet lived. ²⁶ Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the road heard it, he said: "It is the man of God who defied the word of *ADONAI*; therefore *ADONAI* gave him to the lion which mauled him and killed him, according to the word *ADONAI* spoke to him."

²⁷ Then he spoke to his sons saying: "Saddle the donkey for me!" So they saddled it. ²⁸ Then he went and found his carcass lying on the road, with the donkey and the lion standing by the carcass. The lion had not eaten the carcass nor mauled the donkey. ²⁹ Then the prophet picked up the carcass of the man of God, he laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to the town of the old prophet to mourn and to bury him. ³⁰ He laid his carcass in his own tomb and they mourned over him saying, "Oy, my brother!" ³¹ After burying him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the tomb where the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. ³² For the message he declared by the word

† cf. 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 John 4:1.

of *ADONAI* against the altar in Beth-El, and against all the shrines of the high places which are in the towns of Samaria, will surely come to pass."

³³ Even after this, Jeroboam did not turn back from his evil way, but once again, he appointed priests for the high places from among all ranks of the people. Whoever wanted to be a priest, he consecrated him for the high places. ³⁴ So this matter became sin against the house of Jeroboam, in the end, wiping it out and destroying it from the face of the earth.

Curse on House of Jeroboam

14 At that time, Abijah, Jeroboam's son fell sick. ² Jeroboam said to his wife, "Please go disguise yourself, so they won't recognize you as Jeroboam's wife, and go to Shiloh. Look, the prophet Ahijah who told me that I would be king over these people is there. ³ Take with you ten loaves, biscuits, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy."

⁴ Jeroboam's wife did so. She got up and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see for his eyes were dim because of his age. ⁵ *ADONAI* had said to Ahijah, "Look! Jeroboam's wife is coming to ask you about her son, for he is sick. You are to say such and such to her, for she will be in disguise."

⁶ As soon as Ahijah heard the sound of her feet as she came through the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why this disguise? But I have been sent to you with a difficult message. ⁷ Go tell Jeroboam, thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel: 'I raised you up from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel. ⁸ I tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it you. Yet you have not been like My servant David who kept My commandments and followed Me with all his heart, doing only what was right in My eyes. ⁹ Instead, you have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made yourself other gods—molten images to vex Me—and have cast Me behind your back. ¹⁰ Therefore, I am about to bring evil on the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off to Jeroboam even one man, bond and free, in Israel. I will burn up the house of Jeroboam as one burns the dung until it is all gone. ¹¹ Anyone who belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and anyone who dies in the field, the birds of the sky will eat. For *ADONAI* has spoken it.'

¹² "As for you, arise and go to your house. As soon as you set foot in the town, the boy will die. ¹³ All Israel will lament over him and bury him, for it is only him of Jeroboam's house who will be buried, because in him alone, of all Jeroboam's house, something good was found toward *ADONAI*, the God of Israel.

¹⁴ "Moreover, *ADONAI* will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam that day. So now, what else? ¹⁵ *ADONAI* will strike Israel until it sways like a reed in the water. He will uproot Israel

from this good land that He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their Asherah poles, provoking *ADONAI*. ¹⁶ So He will give up Israel because of the sins of Jeroboam which he committed, and caused Israel to commit."

¹⁷ Then Jeroboam's wife got up, left, and went to Tirzah. As soon as she stepped over the threshold of the house, the child died. ¹⁸ They buried him and all Israel lamented over him, just as was the word of *ADONAI* that He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

¹⁹ As for the rest of the deeds of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. ²⁰ The days that Jeroboam reigned were 22 years and then he slept with his fathers. His son Nadab reigned in his place.

Idolatry and Consequences

²¹ Meanwhile, Rehoboam son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was 41 years old when he became king, and he reigned 17 years in Jerusalem—the city where *ADONAI* had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put His Name. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.

²² Judah did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. They provoked Him to jealousy with more than all that their forefathers had done with the sins that they committed. ²³ They also built for themselves high places, sacred pillars, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every leafy tree; ²⁴ and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did the same abominations as those of the nations that *ADONAI* had driven out before the children of Israel.

²⁵ Now it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem. ²⁶ He took away the treasures of the House of *ADONAI* and the treasures of the royal palace. He took away everything—even taking all the golden shields that Solomon had made. ²⁷ So King Rehoboam made in their place bronze shields and committed them to the hands of the captains of the guard, watching over the doorway of the royal palace. ²⁸ Whenever the king went to the House of *ADONAI*, the guard would carry them and bring them back into the guardroom.

²⁹ Now the rest of the deeds of Rehoboam and all that he did—are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ³⁰ There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. ³¹ Then Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. Then his son Abijam became king in his place.

15 Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah. ² He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. ³ He

walked in all the sins of his father which he had done before him; and his heart was not wholly devoted to *ADONAI* his God, like the heart of his father David.

⁴ Nevertheless, for David's sake, *ADONAI* his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, raising up his son after him and establishing Jerusalem. ⁵ For David did what was right in *ADONAI*'s eyes and did not turn aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

⁶ As there had been war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life, ⁷ so there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. The rest of the deeds of Abijam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ⁸ Then Abijam slept with his fathers so they buried him in the city of David, and his son Asa became king in his place.

Asa Starts Out Right

⁹ In the twentieth year of King Jeroboam of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah. ¹⁰ He reigned 41 years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. ¹¹ Now Asa did what was right in *ADONAI*'s eyes, like his father David. ¹² He also expelled the male prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. ¹³ Also he deposed his mother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made an abominable image as an Asherah pole. So Asa cut down her image and burned it in the Kidron Valley. ¹⁴ But they did not take away the high places.

Nevertheless Asa's heart was wholly devoted to *ADONAI* all his days. ¹⁵ He brought into the House of *ADONAI* the consecrated things of his father as well as his own consecrated things of silver, gold, and utensils.

¹⁶ Now there was war between Asa and King Baasa of Israel all their days. ¹⁷ King Baasa of Israel marched against Judah, and he built up Ramah to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to King Asa of Judah. ¹⁸ Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasuries of *ADONAI*'s House and the treasuries of the royal palace, and delivered them into the hand of his officials. King Asa sent them to Ben-Hadad son of Tabrimmon, son of Hezion, king of Aram, who resided in Damascus, saying: ¹⁹ "Let there be a treaty between me and you, as it was between my father and your father. I have just sent you a present of silver and gold; go, break your treaty with King Baasa of Israel, so that he may withdraw from me."

²⁰ So Ben-Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, conquering Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah and all Chinneroth, as well as all the land of Naphtali. ²¹ When Baasa heard it, he stopped fortifying Ramah and remained in Tirzah. ²² Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah—none was exempted—and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber which

Baasa had built. Then King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah with them.

²³ Now the rest of all the deeds of Asa, all his might, all he did, and the cities that he built—are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was diseased in his feet.

²⁴ And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David, and his son Jehoshaphat became king his place.

End of Jeroboam's Line

²⁵ Nadab son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of King Asa of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. ²⁶ He also did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, walking in the way of his father and in his sins that he caused Israel to commit. ²⁷ Then Baasa son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him, and Baasa struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were besieging Gibbethon. ²⁸ So Baasa slew him, in the third year of King Asa of Judah, and became king in his place. ²⁹ As soon as he became king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not spare Jeroboam anything with breath until he had destroyed him, just as was the word of *ADONAI* that He spoke by the hand of His servant Ahijah the Shilonite, ³⁰ because of the sins Jeroboam had committed and caused Israel to commit, by which he utterly provoked *ADONAI*, God of Israel. ³¹ Now the rest of the deeds of Nadab and all he did—are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

³² So there was war between Asa and King Baasa of Israel all their days. ³³ In the third year of King Asa of Judah, Baasa son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, reigning 24 years. ³⁴ He did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, and followed the way of Jeroboam and the sin that he had made Israel commit.

Zimri Ends Baasa's Line

16 Now the word of *ADONAI* came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasa, saying: ² "Since I raised you up from the dust and made you ruler over My people Israel, yet you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have caused My people Israel to sin, vexing Me with their sins. ³ I am about to consume Baasa and his house. I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat. ⁴ Anyone of Baasa who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field, the birds of the sky will eat."

⁵ Now the rest of the deeds of Baasa and what he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ⁶ Then Baasa slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and his son Elah became king in his place. ⁷ But the word of *ADONAI* had already come by the hand of the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasa and against his house, because of all the evil he had done in *ADONAI*'s eyes,

vexing Him with the work of his hands, becoming thus like the house of Jeroboam which He struck down.

⁸In the twenty-sixth year of King Asa of Judah, Elah son of Baasa became king over Israel in Tirzah, and reigned two years. ⁹Then his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariotry, conspired against him while he was in Tirzah, making himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was in charge of the palace in Tirzah.

¹⁰Then Zimri went in, struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, and became king in his place. ¹¹It came about when he became king, as soon as he sat on the throne, he struck down all the household of Baasa, leaving him not even one man, nor his kinsmen nor his friend.

¹²So Zimri destroyed the entire house of Baasa, according to the word of *ADONAI* which He spoke against Baasa by the prophet Jehu, ¹³for all the sins of Baasa and the sins of his son Elah, which they committed and caused Israel to commit, vexing *ADONAI* God of Israel with their useless idols. ¹⁴Now the rest of the deeds of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Rise of Omri

¹⁵In the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, Zimri reigned for seven days in Tirzah. Now the people were encamped against Gibbethon of the Philistines.

¹⁶When the people encamped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired and even struck down the king," then all Israel proclaimed Omri—the commander of the army—king over Israel that very day in the camp.

¹⁷Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah. ¹⁸When Zimri saw that the city was captured, he went into the citadel of the royal palace, and burned down the royal palace over him with fire. So he died too, ¹⁹because of the sins which he committed, doing what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sin which he had committed, making Israel sin. ²⁰Now the rest of the deeds of Zimri and his treason that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

²¹Then the people of Israel were divided into two factions: half of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath, making him king, while the other half followed Omri. ²²But the people following Omri prevailed against the people following Tibni son of Ginath. Tibni died, and Omri became king.

²³In the thirty-first year of King Asa of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel, and reigned 12 years, six years in Tirzah. ²⁴Then he bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver, and built a city on the hill. He named the city that he built Samaria, based on the name Shemer, the owner of the hill.

²⁵But Omri did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, and acted more wickedly than all who were before him. ²⁶For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in the sins that he had caused Israel to

commit, vexing *ADONAI* God of Israel, with their useless idols. ²⁷Now the rest of the deeds of Omri that he did and the valiant deeds that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ²⁸So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria.

Ahab Even Worse

Then his son Ahab became king in his place. ²⁹In the thirty-eighth year of King Asa of Judah, Ahab son of Omri began to reign over Israel; and Ahab son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria 22 years. ³⁰But Ahab son of Omri did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, more than all who were before him. ³¹Now, as if it was a trifling thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, he also took as wife Jezebel the daughter of King Ethbaal of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshiped him. ³²He also erected an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he had built in Samaria. ³³Also Ahab made the Asherah pole. So Ahab did yet more to provoke *ADONAI* the God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.

Curse of Jericho Rebuilt

³⁴During his days, Hiel of Beth-El rebuilt Jericho. At the cost of Abiram his firstborn, he laid its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son Segub, he set up its gates—according to the word of *ADONAI*, which He had spoken through Joshua son of Nun.

Elijah Proclaims Famine

17 Now Elijah the Tishbite, one of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab: "As *ADONAI* God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be no dew or rain these years, except at my word." †

²Then the word of *ADONAI* came to him saying: ³"Leave this place, turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Wadi Cherith, east of the Jordan. ⁴It will come about that you will drink from the wadi. I have also commanded the ravens to feed you there."

⁵So he went and did according to the word of *ADONAI*—he went and lived by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. ⁶The ravens kept bringing him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the wadi. ⁷Then it came to pass after a while that the wadi dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

⁸Then the word of *ADONAI* came to him saying: ⁹"Arise, go to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have just commanded a widow there to provide for you."

Miracle of Flour and Oil

¹⁰So he arose and went to Zarephath. Now when he came to the town gate, to his surprise, a widow was there gathering sticks. So he called her and said,

† cf. Luke 4:25; Jacob 5:17.

"Please bring a little water in a jar that I may drink."

¹¹ As she was going to fetch it, he called her and said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."

¹² So she said, "As *ADONAI* your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of flour in the jar, and a little oil in the jug. Now look, I am gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go in and prepare it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die."

¹³ Elijah said to her, "Fear not! Go and do as you said, but first make me a little cake from what you have there. Bring it out to me and afterwards, make some for you and for your son. ¹⁴ For thus says *ADONAI* God of Israel, 'The jar of flour shall not be exhausted nor shall the jug of oil be empty until the day *ADONAI* sends rain on the land.'"

¹⁵ So she went and did according to the word of Elijah—and she and he, and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶ The jar of flour was not exhausted, nor did the jug of oil become empty, according to the word of *ADONAI* which He spoke through Elijah.

Resurrection of a Boy

¹⁷ After these things, it came to pass that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house fell sick, and his sickness was getting much worse until he had no breath left in him. ¹⁸ So she said to Elijah, "What do I have to do with you, man of God? Have you come to me to remind me of my sin and kill my son?"

¹⁹ He said to her, "Give me your son." Then he took him from her arms, carried him up to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ He cried out to *ADONAI* and said, " *ADONAI* my God, have You brought such evil even on the widow with whom I am staying, by causing her son to die?" ²¹ Then he stretched himself upon the child three times. He cried out to *ADONAI* and said, " *ADONAI* my God, please let this child's soul come back into his body!"

²² *ADONAI* listened to the cry of Elijah, so the soul of the child came back into his body and he was revived. ²³ Then Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. Elijah said, "See! Your son is alive." †

²⁴ Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word in your mouth is truth."

Elijah Confronts Ahab

18 Now it was after many days that the word of *ADONAI* came to Elijah in the third year saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab; then I will send rain on the land." ² So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab.

Now the famine was severe in Samaria. ³ Ahab summoned Obadiah who was the steward of the palace. Now Obadiah feared *ADONAI* greatly— ⁴ for when Jezebel was cutting off the prophets of *ADONAI*, Obadiah took 100 prophets, hid them 50 to a cave, and pro-

vided them with bread and water. ⁵ Then Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the wadis. Perhaps we may find grass and so keep the horses and mules alive and not lose all the animals." ⁶ So they divided the land between them to explore it—Ahab went one way by himself while Obadiah went another way by himself.

⁷ As Obadiah was on the road, all of a sudden, Elijah met him. When he recognized him, he fell on his face and said, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?"

⁸ "It is I," he answered him. "Go tell your lord, 'Look, Elijah is here!'"

⁹ "How have I sinned," he replied, "that you are giving your servant into the hand of Ahab, to put me to death? ¹⁰ As *ADONAI* your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent to search for you; and when they said, 'He is not here,' he made that kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you.

¹¹ "Now you're saying, 'Go tell your lord, 'Look, Elijah is here!'" ¹² But as soon as I leave you, the *Ruach ADONAI* may carry you off where I wouldn't know. Then, when I come and tell Ahab and he can't find you, he'll kill me! Now I, your servant, have feared *ADONAI* since my youth. ¹³ Wasn't my lord told what I did when Jezebel slaughtered the prophets of *ADONAI*—how I hid 100 of *ADONAI*'s prophets, 50 to a cave and provided them with bread and water? ¹⁴ So now you say, 'Go tell your lord, 'Look, Elijah is here!'" He'll kill me!"

¹⁵ Then Elijah said, "As *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today."

¹⁶ So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; then, Ahab went to meet Elijah. ¹⁷ Now when Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, the one who causes trouble for Israel?"

¹⁸ But he answered, "I have not troubled Israel. Rather, it is you and your father's house—by forsaking the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* and going after the Baalim.

¹⁹ Now then, send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table."

Triumph on Mount Carmel

²⁰ So Ahab sent word to all the children of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel.

²¹ Then Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If *ADONAI* is God, follow Him; but if Baal is, follow him." But the people did not answer him, not even a word.

²² Then Elijah said to the people, "I am the only prophet of *ADONAI* left, but Baal's prophets are 450 men. ²³ Now let them give us two young bulls. Let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it into pieces, lay it on the wood, and put no fire underneath, while I prepare the other bull, lay it on the wood, and put no fire underneath. ²⁴ Then you will call on the

† cf. *Heb.* 11:23.

name of your god, and then, I will call on the Name of *ADONAI*. The God who answers with fire, He is God.”

All the people responded and said, “It’s a good thing.”

²⁵ Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first—since you are so many. Then call on the name of your god, but put no fire underneath.”

²⁶ So they took the bull that he gave them, prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning till noon, crying, “O Baal, answer us!” But there was no voice—no one was answering. They also danced leaping around the altar that was made.

²⁷ Now when it was about noon, Elijah mocked them and said, “Shout louder! After all, he is a god! Maybe he’s deep in thought, or he’s relieving himself, or he’s off on a journey, or perhaps he’s asleep and must wake up!” ²⁸ So they shouted even louder and cut themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until the blood gushed over them. ²⁹ When midday was past, they kept prophesying ecstatically until the time of offering up the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice, no one answering, no one paying attention.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came closer to him. Then he repaired the damaged altar of *ADONAI*. ³¹ Elijah took twelve stones—like the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of *ADONAI* had come saying, “Israel shall be your name”—³² and with the stones he built an altar in the Name of *ADONAI*. Then he made a trench around the altar, large enough to contain two measures of seed. ³³ Then he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood.

³⁴ Then he said, “Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood.” Then he said, “A second time!” and they did it a second time. Then he said, “A third time!” and they did it a third time. ³⁵ So the water ran around the altar and he also filled the trench with water.

³⁶ Now it was at the time of offering up the evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “*ADONAI*, 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, *ADONAI*, answer me, so that these people may know that You, *ADONAI*, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again.”

³⁸ Then the fire of *ADONAI* fell and consumed the burnt offering—and 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 on their faces, and they said, “*ADONAI*, He is God! *ADONAI*, He is God!”

⁴⁰ Then Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal! Let not a single one of them escape.” So they

seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Wadi Kishon and slew them there.

⁴¹ Then Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink, for there’s the sound of rain.” ⁴² So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, crouched on the ground, and put his face between his knees. ^{††43} Then he said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.”

So he went up, looked, and said, “There’s nothing.”

Then he said, “Go back”—seven times—⁴⁴ and it was the seventh time that he said, “Look! A cloud as small as a man’s hand is rising from the sea.”

Then he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Harness your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.’”

⁴⁵ In a little while the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. Ahab mounted and rode, and headed to Jezreel. ⁴⁶ Now the hand of *ADONAI* was on Elijah, so he girded up his loins and outran Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Whisper at the Cave

19 Then Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, “So let the gods do to me and worse if by this time tomorrow I don’t make your life like the life of one of them.” ³ Frightened, he got up and ran for his life. When he came to Beer-Sheba, which belongs to Judah, he left his servant there. ⁴ But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom bush. He prayed that he might die. “It’s too much!” he said. “Now, *ADONAI*, take my life! For I’m no better than my fathers.”

⁵ Then he lay down and slept under the broom bush. Then behold, an angel touched him, and said to him, “Get up, and eat.” ⁶ So he looked, and to his surprise, there by his head was a cake baked on the hot stones and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. ⁷ Then the angel of *ADONAI* came again a second time, touched him and said. “Get up and eat, because the journey is too much for you.” ⁸ So he arose and ate and drank, and in the strength of that meal forty days and forty nights went to Horeb, the mountain of God.

⁹ When he arrived there at the cave, he spent the night there. Then behold, the word of *ADONAI* came to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

¹⁰ “I have been very zealous for *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot*,” he said, “for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and slain Your prophets with the sword—and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it!” [‡]

¹¹ Then He said, “Come out and stand on the mount before *ADONAI*.” ^{††} Behold, *ADONAI* was passing by—a great and mighty wind was tearing at the mountains and shattering cliffs before *ADONAI*. But *ADONAI* was

† cf. Matt. 22:32.

†† cf. Jacob 5:18. ‡ cf. Acts 7:52; Rom. 11:3. †† cf. Matt. 17:1-3.

not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but *ADONAI* was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake a fire, but *ADONAI* was not in the fire. After the fire there was a soft whisper of a voice. ¹³ As soon as Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle, went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

Then all of a sudden, a voice addressed him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ "I have been very zealous for *ADONAI Tzva'ot*," he said, "for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and slain Your prophets with the sword—and I alone am left, and they are seeking to take my life!"

¹⁵ Then *ADONAI* said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram, ¹⁶ and anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-Meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷ It shall come to pass that whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu will slay; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha will slay. ¹⁸ Yet I have preserved seven thousand in Israel whose knees have not bowed to Baal and whose mouth has not kissed him."

Calling of Elisha

¹⁹ So he departed from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. Then Elijah crossed over to him and threw his mantle on him. ²⁰ So he left the oxen and ran after Elijah saying, "Let me please kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." †

"Come back," he said to him. "For what have I done to you?" ²¹ So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the oxen's yoke gear, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose, went after Elijah, and became his attendant.

Ahab and the Prophets

20 Now King Ben-Hadad of Aram gathered all his army. With him were 32 kings, along with horses and chariots. He marched up, besieged Samaria, and attacked it. ² Then he sent messengers into the city to King Ahab of Israel, ³ and said to him, "Thus says Ben-Hadad: Your silver and gold are mine! Your best wives and children are also mine."

⁴ The king of Israel replied, "As you say, my lord the king: I am yours, along with all I have."

⁵ Then the messengers came back and said, "Thus says Ben-Hadad: Indeed I sent word to you, ordering you to give me your silver, your gold, your wives, and your children. ⁶ Now I will send my servants to you tomorrow at this time, and they shall search your palace and the houses of your courtiers. Whatever is valuable

in your eyes, they shall seize in their hand and take it away."

⁷ Then the king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land and said, "Please know and see how this man is bent on evil! For he sent someone to me for my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold, and I didn't refuse him."

⁸ All the elders and all the people said to him, "Don't listen to him or consent."

⁹ So he said to the messengers of Ben-Hadad, "Tell my lord the king: All that you sent to your servant at first, I will do, but this thing I cannot do." The messengers departed and reported it to him.

¹⁰ Then Ben-Hadad sent word to him again saying, "May the gods do so to me and even more, if the dust of Samaria will suffice for handfuls for all the people at my feet."

¹¹ The king of Israel answered and said, "Tell him: 'Let not the one who puts on his armor boast like the one who takes it off.'"

¹² On hearing this reply—while he and the other kings were drinking in the booths—he said to his servants, "Take your positions." So they stationed themselves against the city.

¹³ Then behold, a prophet approached King Ahab of Israel and said, "Thus says *ADONAI*: Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into your hand this day, and you will know that I am *ADONAI*."

¹⁴ Ahab asked, "By whom?"

He said, "Thus says *ADONAI*: By the young men of the rulers of the provinces."

Then he asked, "Who should begin the battle?"

"You!" he answered.

¹⁵ So he mustered the young men of the rulers of the provinces. There were 232. After them he mustered all the people of all the children of Israel, 7,000. ¹⁶ They marched out at noon, while Ben-Hadad was drinking himself drunk in the booths—he and the 32 kings allied with him. ¹⁷ The young men of the rulers of the provinces marched out first. Ben-Hadad sent out scouts, who reported to him saying, "There are men coming out from Samaria."

¹⁸ He said, "Whether they are coming out for peace, take them alive, or whether they are coming out for battle, take them alive."

¹⁹ Now when the young men of the rulers of the provinces marched out of the city, with the army following them, ²⁰ each man struck down his foe. Then the Arameans fled and Israel pursued them, but King Ben-Hadad of Aram escaped on a horse with horsemen. ²¹ Then the king of Israel went out, struck the horses and chariots, and inflicted on the Arameans a great defeat.

²² The prophet then approached the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself. Consider carefully what you should do, for at the turn of the year the king of Aram will march up against you."

† cf. Luke 9:61-62.

²³ Meanwhile, the servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their God is a God of the mountains—that's why they were stronger than us. But let's fight against them in the plain. Then surely we'll be stronger than them." ²⁴ So this is what you should do: remove the kings, each from his post, and appoint governors in their place. ²⁵ Then muster an army like the army that you lost—horse for horse and chariot for chariot—and let's fight against them in the plain, and surely we'll be stronger than them!" He listened to their advice and acted accordingly.

²⁶ It came about at the turn of the year that Ben-Hadad mustered the Arameans and marched up to Aphek, to fight against Israel. ²⁷ Now the children of Israel were mustered, given provisions, and marched against them. But when the children of Israel encamped before them, they looked like two little flocks of goats while the Arameans covered the land.

²⁸ Then a man of God approached the king of Israel and spoke to him saying, "Thus says *ADONAI*: Because the Arameans have said, 'ADONAI is a God of the mountains, but He is not a God of the valleys,' therefore I will deliver all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am *ADONAI*."

²⁹ So they encamped one over against the other seven days. On the seventh day the battle was joined, and the children of Israel struck down 100,000 of the Aramean foot soldiers in a single day. ³⁰ The rest fled to Aphek into the city and the wall fell upon 27,000 men that were left. But Ben-Hadad fled into the city, into an inner chamber. ³¹ His officials said to him, "Look now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings. Please let's put sackcloth on our loins and ropes on our heads, and surrender to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will spare your life."

³² So they girded sackcloth on their loins, put ropes on their heads, came to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-Hadad says: 'Please let me live.'"

He replied, "Is he still alive? He is my brother."

³³ The men took it as a good sign and were quick to catch on, so they said, "Yes, Ben-Hadad is your brother."

"Go, bring him," he said. So Ben-Hadad came out to him and he took him up into his chariot.

³⁴ Then he said to him, "The cities which my father took from your father I will give back, and you may set up markets for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria."

"Then I will let you go with this covenant." So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

³⁵ Now a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to his fellow by the word of *ADONAI*, "Strike me please!" But the man refused to strike him. ³⁶ Then he said to him, "Because you did not obey the voice of *ADONAI*, behold, as soon as you leave me, a lion shall kill you." As soon as he left him, a lion found him and killed him.

³⁷ Then he found another man, and said, "Strike me please!" So the man struck him and wounded him.

³⁸ Then the prophet left and waited for the king by the road, disguising himself with a headband over his eyes. ³⁹ As the king was passing by, he cried to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the midst of the battle, and behold, a man turned aside and brought another man to me and said, 'Guard this man! If by any means he is missing, then your life will be for his life, or else you will weigh out a talent of silver.'" ⁴⁰ Then as your servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

The king of Israel said to him, "So will your sentence be—you yourself have decided it."

⁴¹ Then he quickly took the headband away from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. ⁴² Then he said to him, "Thus says *ADONAI*: 'Because you have released out of your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life will be in place of his life and your people in place of his people.'"

⁴³ Then the king of Israel went home to Samaria sullen and resentful.

Naboth Murdered for His Vineyard

21 Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, next to the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. ² Ahab spoke to Naboth saying, "Give me your vineyard, so I may have it for a garden of herbs, since it's right next to my house. I'll give you a better vineyard than it in exchange, or if it seems better to you, I'll give you its price in money."

³ But Naboth said to Ahab, "ADONAI forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."

⁴ So Ahab went into his house sullen and resentful because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him, when he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and would eat no food.

⁵ Then his wife Jezebel came to him and asked him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you are eating no food?"

⁶ Then he told her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and asked him: 'Give me your vineyard for money, or if it pleases you, I'll give you another vineyard for it,' but he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

⁷ Then his wife Jezebel said to him, "Now, do you really govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, eat some food, and let your heart be merry! I will get 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 the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city. ⁹ She wrote in the letters saying, "Proclaim a fast and set Naboth at the head of the people." ¹⁰ Then she set two sons of Belial before him, and let them testify against him saying, "You cursed God

and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

¹¹ So the men of his city—the elders and the nobles who lived in his city—did just as Jezebel had bid them, just as was written in the letters that she had sent to them. ¹² They proclaimed a fast then seated Naboth at the head of the people. ¹³ Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him, and the worthless men testified against him, against Naboth, before the people saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king!" Then they carried him out of the city and stoned him to death. ¹⁴ Then they sent word to Jezebel saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

¹⁵ Now when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, 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 As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it.

¹⁷ Then the word of the *ADONAI* came to Elijah the Tishbite saying: ¹⁸ "Arise, go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who is in Samaria. Behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it. ¹⁹ You shall speak to him saying, 'Thus says *ADONAI*: Have you murdered and then taken possession?' You shall also speak to him saying, 'Thus says *ADONAI*: In the same place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your blood too.'"

²⁰ Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, my enemy?"

"I have found you," he answered, "because you have sold yourself over to do what is evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes.

²¹ 'Behold, I will bring evil upon you, utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel. ²² I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasa son of Ahijah because you provoked My anger by leading Israel to sin.'

²³ "*ADONAI* has also spoken about Jezebel saying: 'The dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

²⁴ Any of Ahab who die in the city, the dogs will eat; or any who die in the country, the birds of the sky will eat.'"

²⁵ Surely there was none like Ahab, who sold himself over to do evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, at the instigation of Jezebel his wife. ²⁶ He did grossly loathsome acts in following idols just like all that the Amorites had done, whom *ADONAI* had dispossessed before the children of Israel.

²⁷ Now when Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his body, fasted, lay in sackcloth, and walked about subdued. ²⁸ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Elijah the Tishbite saying: ²⁹ "Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not

bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days I will bring the evil upon his house."

Ahab's Last Stand

22 Three years remained without war between Aram and Israel. ² Then it came about in the third year that King Jehoshaphat of Judah came down to the king of Israel. ³ The king of Israel said to his courtiers, "Do you know that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, yet we are still doing nothing to recover it from the hand of the king of Aram?" ⁴ Then he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." ⁵ Jehoshaphat said further to the king of Israel, "Please inquire of *ADONAI* for a word first,"

⁶ So the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about 400 men, and asked them: "Should I march against Ramoth-Gilead to battle or should I refrain?"

They responded, "Go up, for my Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king."

⁷ But Jehoshaphat said: "Is there no longer a prophet of *ADONAI* here that we may inquire of Him?"

⁸ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Yes, there is still one by whom we may inquire of *ADONAI*—Micaiah son of Imlah—but I hate him, because he never prophesies good concerning me, only evil."

But Jehoshaphat said, "May the king not say so!"

⁹ So the king of Israel summoned one of his eunuchs and said, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah quickly."

¹⁰ Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting each on his throne, arrayed in their robes, at a threshing-floor at the entrance of Samaria's gate. All the prophets were prophesying before them.

¹¹ Now Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made himself horns of iron and said, "Thus says *ADONAI*: 'With these you will gore the Arameans until they are consumed!'"

¹² Then all the prophets were prophesying so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and triumph! For *ADONAI* will deliver it into the hand of the king!"

¹³ Meanwhile the messenger that went to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, "Behold now, the words of the prophets are uniformly declaring favor to the king. So please let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably."

¹⁴ But Micaiah said, "As *ADONAI* lives, what *ADONAI* says to me, that will I speak."

¹⁵ Now when he came to the king, the king asked him, "Micaiah, should we march to Ramoth-Gilead in battle or should we refrain?"

"March and triumph!" he answered, "and *ADONAI* will give it into the hand of the king."

¹⁶ But the king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to speak to me nothing but the truth in the Name of *ADONAI*?"

¹⁷ Then he said,

"I saw all Israel scattered on the hills,

as sheep without a shepherd. †

Then *ADONAI* said, 'These have no master; let each of them return home in peace.'"

¹⁸ And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Didn't I tell you that he wouldn't prophesy good concerning me, only evil?"

¹⁹ Micaiah then continued, "Therefore hear the word of *ADONAI*. I saw *ADONAI* sitting on His throne, †† with all the hosts of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left. ²⁰ Then *ADONAI* said, 'Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?' One suggested this and another that, ²¹ until a certain spirit came forward and stood before *ADONAI* and said, 'I will entice him.' So *ADONAI* asked him, 'How?' ²² And he said: 'I will go and be a deceiving spirit ‡ in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then He said: 'You shall entice him and shall prevail also—go and do so.' ²³ Now therefore, behold, *ADONAI* has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and *ADONAI* has decreed evil upon you."

²⁴ Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah approached Micaiah, struck him on the cheek and said, "Which way did the *Ruach ADONAI* pass from me to speak to you?"

²⁵ Micaiah replied, "Behold, you will see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide."

²⁶ Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and take him back to Amon the city governor and to Joash the king's son, ²⁷ and say, "Thus says the king: 'Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him only bread and water until I return safely.'"

²⁸ Micaiah then said, "If you ever return safely, then *ADONAI* has not spoken through me." And he added, "Did you hear, all you people?"

²⁹ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah marched to Ramoth-Gilead. ³⁰ Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you, put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle.

³¹ Now the king of Aram had commanded his 32 chariot commanders saying, "Do no single combat with anyone, small or great—except the king of Israel."

³² So when the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "He must be the king of Israel!" and they turned aside to do combat with him, but Jehoshaphat cried out. ³³ When the captains of the chariots realized that he was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

³⁴ But a man drew his bow aimlessly and struck the king of Israel between the lower armor and the breastplate. Then he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I'm wounded." ³⁵ The battle raged that day, and the king re-

mained propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans. But he died at evening—and the blood ran out of the wound into the bottom of the chariot. ³⁶ As the sun was setting, a shout went throughout the army, saying, "Each man to his town, and each man to his land!"

³⁷ So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. ³⁸ Then they washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria where the harlots washed and the dogs licked up his blood—just as was the word of *ADONAI* that He had spoken.

³⁹ Now the rest of Ahab's deeds and all he did, including the ivory palace he built and all the cities he fortified, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ⁴⁰ So Ahab slept with his fathers, and his son Ahaziah became king in his place.

Jehoshaphat of Judah

⁴¹ Now Jehoshaphat son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. ⁴² Jehoshaphat was 35 years old when he became king, and he reigned 25 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

⁴³ (43a) He walked in all the ways of his father Asa, not straying from them, but doing what was right in *ADONAI*'s eyes. ⁴⁴ (43b) However, they did not take away the high places, and the people continued to sacrifice and burn incense on the high places.

⁴⁵ (44) Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel. ⁴⁶ (45) Now the rest of the deeds of Jehoshaphat along with his might that he showed and how he warred, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ⁴⁷ (46) He expelled from the land the cult prostitutes remaining from the days of his father Asa. ⁴⁸ (47) There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king. ⁴⁹ (48) Jehoshaphat made Tarshish ships go to Ophir for gold, but they never went, because the ships were wrecked at Ezion-Geber. ⁵⁰ (49) Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants sail with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat refused. ⁵¹ (50) Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David, and his son Jehoram became king in his place.

⁵² (51) Ahaziah son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. ⁵³ (52) But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes and followed the way of his father, and the way of his mother, and the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat who caused Israel to sin. ⁵⁴ (53) For he worshiped Baal and bowed down to him, vexing *ADONAI* God of Israel, like all his father had done.

† cf. Matt. 9:36; Mark 6:34. †† cf. Rev. 4:9-10. ‡ cf. 2 Thes. 2:11.

2 Kings

2 Kings Introduction

See introduction to 1 Kings for name, authorship and dating. Beyond noting that 1 and 2 Kings were initially considered one volume, worth mentioning is that both volumes of Samuel and Kings were once “wrapped” together as 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Kingdoms until the 15th BCE; the reason being that books of Kings were recognized as a continuation of the history presented in the books of Samuel. The similarity of style and choice of sources in 1 Kings and 2 Kings suggest that both were the work of a single writer. Jewish sources often attribute the authorship to Jeremiah.

1 Kings notes David’s transfer of a unified kingdom to Solomon who, in turn, passed it off to his son Rehoboam. Rehoboam’s ineptness prompted the secession of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, which was later destroyed by the Assyrians in approximately 722 BCE. True to its name, 2 Kings runs through the rise and demise of kings in both kingdoms, till the Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians in chapter 17, and till the sack of the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 BCE, described in chapter 25.

The narrative tells of history as prophecy. Prophet Elijah was God’s messenger fearlessly and ferociously speaking truth to power throughout Ahab’s career. The shift of prophetic influence from Elijah to Elisha took place early in 2 Kings. Kings, in fact, is a biblical Who’s Who of royal and prophetic personages in the post-Davidic years of ancient Jewish monarchies. Wondrous and tragic stories are recounted. Great decisions by godly leaders are highlighted in contrast to horrific choices made by wicked kings. The blessing of obedience to God is juxtaposed against the curse of failure to follow His clearly defined will. The correlation between good leadership and blessings is evident when viewed against the darkness of evil overtaking the people in the years following ungodly leadership.

2 Kings reveals the result of pagan influences on God’s people. Jerusalem was God’s established center of worship for the Jewish nation. The Northern Kingdom established its own religious preeminence by circumventing Jerusalem and creating local worship centers. This deteriorated into pagan practices akin to neighboring peoples. Israel was ruled by a larger number of ungodly kings than Judah. The Northern Kingdom was destroyed for its disobedience. But the Southern Kingdom also experienced ungodly kings who succumbed to idolatry and, consequentially, suffered its own humiliating exile. Sin brought judgment, whereas the obedience of good kings yielded blessings and miraculous provision.

Since the days of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, the Jewish people repeatedly descended into periods of idolatry. From the time of the “Golden Calf” through the long list of royal failures documented in Kings, idolatry paved the way to the Babylonian Exile. Since that time, such obvious forms of pagan behavior have been eradicated from modern Judaism. Nevertheless, less obvious forms of unbelief and disobedience rob God’s people of His blessings. The words of the prophet, repeated three times in the first chapter of 2 Kings, remain true. Israel’s problems are the direct result of behaving like “there is no God in Israel.” Our proves otherwise and provides perfect deliverance to those who worship Him alone!

2 Kings Headings

- Elijah Prophecies to Ahaziah
- Elijah in a Chariot of Fire
- Elisha Takes up the Mantle
- Moab Revolts against Israel
- Elisha Foretells Moab’s Defeat
- Miracle of Multiplying Oil
- Shunammite Hospitality
- Elisha Purifies Deadly Stew
- Naaman’s
- Floating Ax-Head
- Fiery Armies of Heaven

Scattering an Aramean Army
 The Shunammite's Land Restored
 Elisha Weeps in Damascus
 Edom Revolts against Jehoram
 Jehu Avenges Naboth
 Jehu Destroys Ahab's Sons and Baal Worshipers
 Wicked Queen Athaliah Overthrown
 Jehoash Restores the Temple
 The Reign of Jehoahaz and Jehoash
 Victories as Elisha Dies
 Amaziah's Demise
 Menahem Ends Jehu's Line
 Israel and Aram Attack Judah
 Ahaz Remodels the Temple
 The Israelites are Deported to Assyria
 Origin of the Samaritans
 Righteous King Hezekiah
 Proud Sennacherib Challenges Hezekiah
 Hezekiah's Cry of Desperation
 Put Your House in Order
 Hezekiah Shows His Treasury to Babylon
 Wicked Kings Manasseh and Amon
 Josiah and a Discovered Scroll
 Consulting Huldah the Prophetess
 Josiah Renews the Covenant
 Prophecy Fulfilled at Beth-El
 Josiah's Death
 Judah's Decline
 Judah Exiled to Babylon
 Destruction of Jerusalem

Elijah Prophecies to Ahaziah

1 After Ahab's death, Moab rebelled against Israel.
² Now Ahaziah fell down from the balcony of his upper chamber in Samaria and was injured. So he sent messengers and instructed them, "Go inquire of Baal-Zebub † the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this injury."

³ But an angel of *ADONAI* said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron?' ⁴ Therefore thus says *ADONAI*: 'You will not leave the bed you are lying on, for you will surely die.'" And Elijah departed.

⁵ When the messengers returned to the king, he asked them, "Why have you returned?"

⁶ They answered him, "A man came up to meet us and said to us: 'Go, return to the king who sent you, and say to him, thus says *ADONAI*, "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not leave the bed you are lying on, for you will surely die.'""

⁷ Then he said to them, "What kind of man was he that came up to meet you and told you these words?"

⁸ They answered him, "He was a hairy man with a leather belt around his waist."

"It's Elijah the Tishbite," he said.

⁹ So the king sent a captain of 50 with his 50 to Elijah. When the captain went up to him, behold, he was sitting on the top of the hill. So he announced to him, "O man of God, by order of the king, come down!"

¹⁰ In response, Elijah said to the captain of 50, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50!" Then fire did come down from heaven and consumed him and his 50.

¹¹ So the king again sent to him another captain of 50 with his 50 men, who addressed him and said, "O man of God, by order of the king, come down quickly!"

¹² In response, Elijah said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50." And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his 50.

¹³ So the king again sent the captain of a third 50 with his 50. But when the third captain of 50 went up and came near, he knelt before Elijah, and begged him saying, "O man of God, please, let my life and the lives of these 50 servants of yours be precious in your eyes!"

† Meaning Lord of the flies

¹⁴ Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two previous captains of 50 with their 50; but now let my life be precious in your eyes!"

¹⁵ Then the angel of *ADONAI* said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king.

¹⁶ Then Elijah said to the king, "Thus says *ADONAI*: You have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron. Is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word? Therefore you will not leave the bed you are lying on, for you will surely die." ¹⁷ So he died just as was the word of *ADONAI* that Elijah had spoken.

Then Jehoram became king in his place, because Ahaziah had no son. It was in the second year of Jehoram, son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah. ¹⁸ Now the rest of the deeds of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Elijah in a Chariot of Fire

2 Now it came to pass, when *ADONAI* was about to take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. ² Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here please, for *ADONAI* has sent me on to Beth-El."

But Elisha said, "As *ADONAI* lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Beth-El.

³ Then the sons of the prophets at Beth-El came out to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that *ADONAI* is going to take your master away from over you today?"

He said, "Yes, I know. Be silent."

⁴ Then Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here please, for *ADONAI* has sent me on to Jericho."

But he said, "As *ADONAI* lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho.

⁵ Then the sons of the prophets at Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that *ADONAI* is going to take away your master from over you today?"

He replied, "Yes, I know. Be silent."

⁶ Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here please, for *ADONAI* has sent me to the Jordan."

But he said, "As *ADONAI* lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So both of them went on.

⁷ Then 50 of the sons of the prophets went and stood aside at a distance from them, while the two of them stood by the Jordan. ⁸ Elijah then took his mantle, wrapped it together, and struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground. ⁹ Now as they were crossing over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I will do for you before I am taken from you."

So Elisha said, "Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

¹⁰ He replied, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be so to you; but if not, it will not be so."

¹¹ As they were walking along and talking, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

¹² As Elisha was watching, he was crying out, "Avi! Avi! The chariot of Israel and its horsemen!" Then he saw him no more. So he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Elisha Takes up the Mantle

¹³ He then picked up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him. When he returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan, ¹⁴ he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen off him, struck the waters and said, "Where is *ADONAI*, the God of Elijah?" As he indeed struck the waters, they parted here and there. Then Elisha crossed over.

¹⁵ When the sons of the prophets at Jericho saw him some way off, they said, "The spirit of Elijah has rested on Elisha." So they came to meet him and bowed down to the ground before him. ¹⁶ Then they said to him, "Behold now, there are 50 strong men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master. Perhaps the *Ruach ADONAI* has taken him up and cast him onto some mountain or into some valley."

But he said, "Don't send them." ¹⁷ But when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." So they sent 50 men. Though they searched for three days, they did not find him. ¹⁸ When they came back to him while he staying in Jericho, he said to them, "Didn't I tell you not to go?"

¹⁹ Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Look now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees, but the water is bad and the land barren."

²⁰ He responded, "Bring me a new jar, and put salt in it." So they brought it to him. ²¹ Then he went out to the spring of water, threw salt in it and said, "Thus says *ADONAI*, I have healed this water. No longer will there be from there death or barrenness." ²² So the waters were healed to this day, according to the word that Elisha spoke.

²³ From there he went up to Beth-El. As he was going up along the road, some young boys came out of the city. They mocked him saying to him, "Go on up, baldy! Go on up, baldy!" ²⁴ So he turned around and looked at them and cursed them in the Name of *ADONAI*. Then two she-bears came out of the woods and mauled 42 of the boys.

²⁵ From there he went to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

3 Now Jehoram, Ahab's son, became king of Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. ² He did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, though not like his father and his mother, for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made. ³ Nevertheless, he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, not turning away from them.

Moab Revolts against Israel

⁴ Now King Mesha of Moab was a sheep-breeder, and he used to render as tribute to the king of Israel the wool of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams. ⁵ But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. ⁶ So King Jehoram marched out from Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. ⁷ Then he sent word to King Jehoshaphat of Judah saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you march with me against Moab to battle?"

Jehoshaphat replied, "I will march. I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses."

⁸ And he added, "By which route will we go up?"

He answered, "The route of the wilderness of Edom."

⁹ So the king of Israel, the king of Judah and the king of Edom marched. They kept circling roundabout for seven days, but there was no water for the army or for the animals that followed them. ¹⁰ "Ah!" the king of Israel cried, "ADONAI has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab!"

Elisha Foretells Moab's Defeat

¹¹ But Jehoshaphat said, "Isn't there a prophet of ADONAI here, that we may inquire of ADONAI by him?"

One of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, "Elisha son of Shaphat, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah, is here."

¹² Jehoshaphat replied, "The word of ADONAI is with him." So the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. ¹³ But Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What do I have to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother!"

"No!" the king of Israel said to him, "For has ADONAI brought these three kings together only to deliver them into the hand of Moab?"

¹⁴ Elisha said, "As ADONAI - *Tzva'ot* lives, before whom I stand, were it not that I respect the presence of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, I would not look at you or even see you. ¹⁵ Now, bring me a musician."

Now as the musician played, the hand of ADONAI came upon him, ¹⁶ and he said, "Thus says ADONAI: Make this valley full of trenches. ¹⁷ For thus says ADONAI: You will not see wind nor will you see rain, yet this valley will be filled with water. So you will drink, both you and your cattle and your animals. ¹⁸ Yet this is an easy thing in ADONAI's eyes—for He will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. ¹⁹ Then you must strike every fortified city and every major town, cut down every good tree, stop up all the springs of water, and ruin every good field with stones."

²⁰ Then it came to pass in the morning, about the time of offering up the sacrifice, behold—water was flowing from the direction of Edom—so that the water covered the land.

²¹ Meanwhile the Moabites heard that the kings had marched to fight against them. So they gathered themselves together, all that were able to put on armor and older, and stood at the border. ²² When they rose up early in the morning and the sun was shining upon the water, the Moabites saw the water from a distance as red as blood! ²³ So they said, "This is blood! The kings have surely clashed swords and slain each other. Now, to the spoil, Moab!"

²⁴ But when they came near Israel's camp, the Israelites rose up and struck the Moabites, who fled before them. Then they invaded, slaughtering the Moabites. ²⁵ They destroyed the cities. Also each man threw his stone onto every good field and covered it. They stopped up all the springs of water and cut down all the good trees—until nothing was left except Kir-Hareseth with the stones of its wall. However, the slingers encircled it and struck it down.

²⁶ When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him 700 swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they could not. ²⁷ Then he took his firstborn son who should have become king in his place and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And there was great wrath against Israel that they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.

Miracle of Multiplying Oil

4 Now a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha saying, "Your servant my husband is dead—you know that your servant feared ADONAI. Now the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves."

² "What should I do for you?" Elisha asked her. "Tell me, what do you have in the house?"

She replied, "Your handmaid has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."

³ Then he said, "Go borrow for yourself vessels from all your neighbors—empty jars—not just a few. ⁴ Then go inside and shut the door behind you and behind your sons, and pour into all those vessels, setting aside what is full."

⁵ So she left him and shut the door behind her and behind her sons. They kept bringing the vessels to her and she kept pouring. ⁶ When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel."

But he said to her, "There isn't another vessel." So the oil stopped.

⁷ Then she came and told the man of God. So he said, "Go sell the oil and pay your debt, then you and your sons can live on the rest."

Shunammite Hospitality

⁸ One day when Elisha passed through Shunem, where there was a prominent woman who persuaded him to eat some food. And so it was, whenever he passed through, he would stop for a meal. ⁹ Then she

said to her husband, "Behold now, I realize that this man who often passes through is a holy man of God. ¹⁰ Please, let's make a little walled room on the roof, and let's put there a bed, a table, a chair, and a lampstand for him. Then whenever he comes to us, he can stay there."

¹¹ One day he came there, and retired to the upper chamber and lay down there. ¹² Then he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. ¹³ He said to him, "Tell her: Behold, you have gone to all this trouble for us. What can be done for you? Can something be communicated to the king or to the commander of the army for you?"

She answered, "I am living among my own people."

¹⁴ So he asked, "Then what should be done for her?"

Then Gehazi answered, "In fact, she has no son, and her husband is old."

¹⁵ "Call her," he said. And when he had called her, she stood in the doorway. ¹⁶ Then he said, "At this season next year, you will be embracing a son."

But she said, "No, my lord, do not lie to your handmaid, man of God."

¹⁷ Nevertheless, the woman conceived and bore a son during that season the following year, just as Elisha had told her.

¹⁸ Now when the child was grown, one day he went out to his father among the reapers. ¹⁹ Then he said to his father, "My head, my head!" So he said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." ²⁰ So he picked him up and brought him to his mother. The child sat on her lap until noon, and then died. ²¹ She then went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door on 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 run to the man of God and come back."

²³ But he said, "Why are you going to him today? It is neither New Moon nor *Shabbat*."

But she said, "It will be well."

²⁴ Then she saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Move on! Don't slow down riding unless I tell you."

²⁵ So she set out and came near the man of God at Mount Carmel. Upon seeing her from a distance, the man of God said to his servant Gehazi, "Look! There's the Shunammite. ²⁶ Please, run now to meet her and ask her: 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the boy?'"

She answered, "It is well." ²⁷ But when she arrived at the mountain, up to the man of God, she caught hold of his feet.

Then Gehazi stepped forward to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for her soul is bitter within her, yet *ADONAI* has hid it from me and has not told me."

²⁸ "Did I ask my lord for a son?" she said. "Didn't I say, 'Don't deceive me?'"

²⁹ Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand and go. If you meet anyone, don't greet him. Or if anyone greets you, don't answer him; and lay my staff on the face of the child."

³⁰ But the mother of the child said, "As *ADONAI* lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So he arose and followed her. ³¹ Gehazi passed on ahead of them and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or response. So he returned to meet him and told him, saying, "The boy has not awakened."

³² When Elisha entered the house, there was the child, dead and laying on his bed. ³³ So he entered and shut the door behind the two of them and prayed to *ADONAI*. ³⁴ Then he got up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his hands on his hands, and he stretched himself upon him. So the flesh of the child became warm.

³⁵ Then he stepped down and walked in the house to and fro, and then he got up on the bed and stretched himself on him. The child sneezed seven times, then the child opened his eyes. ³⁶ He then called Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite."

So he called her. When she came in to him, 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.

Elisha Purifies Deadly Stew

³⁸ Afterward Elisha returned to Gilgal. Now there was famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets."

³⁹ Then one of them went out into the field to gather herbs, found a wild vine and picked from it a lapful of wild gourds. Then he came back and sliced them into the stew pot, for they didn't know what they were.

⁴⁰ Then they served it for the men to eat. But it came to pass as they were still eating the stew, they cried out and said, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." So they could not eat it.

⁴¹ But he said, "Bring some flour," and he threw it into the pot and said, "Serve it to the people and let them eat." So there was nothing bad in the pot.

⁴² Now a man came from Baal-Shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits—20 loaves of barley bread and fresh ears of corn in his sack. Then he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat."

⁴³ But his attendant said, "What? Will I set this before 100 men?" But he said, "Give them to the people that they may eat, for thus says *ADONAI*, 'They will eat and will have left over.'" ⁴⁴ So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the word of *ADONAI*.

Naaman's *Tzara'at*

5 Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man in his master's sight and highly esteemed, because through him *ADONAI* had given victory to Aram. Though the man was a mighty man of valor, he had *tzara'at*.

² Aram had gone out in bands, and had taken captive a young girl from the land of Israel. So she served Naaman's wife. ³ Then she said to her mistress, "If only my lord went before the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his *tzara'at*."

⁴ So Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel." ⁵ The king of Aram said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, 6,000 pieces of gold, and ten changes of clothes.

⁶ He brought the letter to the king of Israel saying, "When this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent my servant Naaman to you, so you may cure him of his *tzara'at*."

⁷ Now when the king of Israel read the letter, he ripped his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending to me to cure a man of his *tzara'at*? But please consider, and see how he is seeking a pretext against me."

⁸ Now when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, he sent word to the king saying, "Why have you rent your clothes? Please, let him come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."

⁹ So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots, and stood at the doorway of the house of Elisha. ¹⁰ So Elisha sent him a messenger, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored, and you will be clean."

¹¹ But Naaman was angered and walked away, saying, "I thought he would surely come out to me, stand and call on the Name of *ADONAI* his God, and wave his hand over the spot and cure the *tzara'at*." ¹² Aren't Amanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

¹³ But his servants approached him and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he told you only to 'Wash and be clean?'" ¹⁴ So, he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God. Then his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

¹⁵ When he returned with his entire retinue to the man of God, and came and stood before him, he said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. Now please, accept a present † from your servant."

† *Lit. blessing*

¹⁶ But Elisha said, "As *ADONAI* before whom I stand lives, I will accept nothing." Naaman pressed him to accept, but Elisha refused.

¹⁷ So Naaman said, "If not, then please, let your servant be given two mule loads of soil, for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any other god, except *ADONAI*." ¹⁸ In this matter, may *ADONAI* pardon your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning on my hand, and I prostrate myself in the house of Rimmon—when I prostrate myself in the house of Rimmon, may *ADONAI* pardon your servant in this matter."

¹⁹ Elisha said to him, "Go in peace." So Naaman departed from him some distance.

²⁰ But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, "Behold, my master held back from accepting what this Naaman the Aramean brought. As *ADONAI* lives, I will surely run after him and get something from him."

²¹ So Gehazi pursued Naaman. Now when Naaman saw someone running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him and asked, "Is everything all right?"

²² "It's all right, he replied. "My master sent me saying: 'Behold, two young men of the sons of the prophets have just come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'"

²³ Naaman said, "Please, take two talents." He even urged him, and packed two talents of silver in two bags with two changes of clothes, and gave them to two of his servants; and they carried them ahead of him. ²⁴ Now when he arrived at the fortified hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in the house, and let the men go, so they departed.

²⁵ When he entered and stood before his master, Elisha asked him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?"

So he replied, "Your servant has gone nowhere."

²⁶ Then Elisha said to him, "Didn't my heart go, when the man got down from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to accept money and accept clothes, or olive groves and vineyards, or sheep and oxen, or male and female servants? ²⁷ Therefore, the *tzara'at* of Naaman will cling to you and to your offspring forever." Then he went out from his presence with *tzara'at* as white as snow.

Floating Ax-Head

6 Now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "Behold now, the place where we are living in your presence is too cramped for us. ² So please, let's go to the Jordan and pick from there each one a beam, and make ourselves a place there to live."

"Go," he answered.

³ Then one of them said, "Will you please come with your servants?"

"I will go," he answered. ⁴ So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they began to cut down

trees.⁵ But as one of them was cutting down a beam, the ax-head fell into the water; and he cried, and said, "Ah, my master! It was borrowed."

⁶ Then the man of God asked, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and threw it there, and made the ax-head float.⁷ Then he said, "Pick it up for yourself." So he reached out his hand and took it.

Fiery Armies of Heaven

⁸ Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel. He consulted with his officers, saying, "In such and such a place will be my camp."

⁹ But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, saying, "Be careful not to pass this place, for the Arameans are coming down there."¹⁰ So the king of Israel sent word to the place the man of God told him and warned him about, and so he was on his guard there—more than once or twice.

¹¹ His heart upset over this matter, the king of Aram summoned his officers and said to them, "Tell me, which one of us is on the king of Israel's side?"

¹² But one of his officers said, "No, my lord the king. Rather, Elisha the prophet who is in Israel keeps telling the king of Israel the very words that you speak in your bedroom!"

¹³ So he said, "Go, see where he is, so I may send and seize him."

Then it was reported to him, "Behold, he is in Dothan."¹⁴ So he sent horses, chariots, and a great army there. They arrived at night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵ Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was surrounding the city. So his attendant said to him, "Alas, my master! What are we going to do?"

¹⁶ "Fear not," he replied, "for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed and said, "ADONAI, please open his eyes that he may see." Then ADONAI opened the eyes of the young man and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

¹⁸ When they came down to him, Elisha prayed to ADONAI and said, "Please strike this people with blinding light." So He struck them with blinding light according to the word of Elisha.¹⁹ Then Elisha said to them, "This is not the road, nor is this the city. Follow me, and I will lead you to the man whom you seek." So he led them to Samaria.²⁰ Upon their arrival in Samaria, Elisha said, "ADONAI, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." So ADONAI opened their eyes, and they could see—behold, they were in the middle of Samaria.

²¹ When the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, "Shall I surely strike them down, *avi*?"

²² "Don't strike them down," he replied. "Would you strike down those whom you have captured with your

own sword and bow? Set before them bread and water that they may eat and drink and go back to their master."²³ So he prepared a great feast for them. After they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went back to their master. Ever since, the marauding bands of Aram stopped invading the land of Israel.

²⁴ Now it came to pass after this, that King Ben-Hadad of Aram gathered all his army and marched against Samaria and besieged it.²⁵ Now there was a great famine in Samaria, since they were besieging it, until a donkey's head was sold for 80 pieces of silver, and the quarter of a kav[†] of dove's dung for 5 pieces of silver.

²⁶ As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him saying, "My lord the king, help!"

²⁷ But he said, "If ADONAI doesn't help you, how would I help you? From the threshing floor, or from the winepress?"²⁸ Then the king asked her, "What's the matter with you?"

She answered, "This woman said to me: 'Give your son that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'²⁹ So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I told her: 'Give your son that we may eat him'—but she hid her son."

³⁰ Now it came to pass when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes—as he was passing by on the wall, the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth underneath upon his flesh.

³¹ Then he said, "May God do so to me and even more, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat remains on him today."

³² Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king had sent a messenger ahead, yet even before the messenger arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "Do you see, this son of a murderer was sent to take away my head! Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door and hold the door fast against him. Is not the sound of his master's footsteps behind him?"³³ While he was yet talking with them, behold, the messenger came down to him. So the king said, "Look! This evil is from ADONAI—why should I wait for ADONAI any longer?"

Scattering an Aramean Army

7 Then Elisha said, "Hear the word of ADONAI. Thus says ADONAI: Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will sell for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria."

² Then the officer on whose hand the king was leaning responded to the man of God and said, "Look, even if ADONAI should make windows in heaven, could this thing happen?"

He announced, "Behold, you will see it with your own eyes, but will not eat any of it!"

[†] Quarter of a kav

³ Now there were four men with *tzara'at* at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, "Why should we sit here till we die? ⁴ If we say: 'Let's go into the city,' then the famine is in the city, so we will die there; but if we sit still here, we'll die also. So come, let's go into the camp of the Arameans. If they spare us, we'll live; and if they kill us, we'll just die."

⁵ So they got up at twilight to go to the camp of the Arameans. But when they arrived at the edge of the Aramean camp, behold, no one was there! ⁶ For *ADONAI* had caused the army of the Arameans to hear a noise of chariots and a noise of horses—indeed a noise of a huge army. So they said one to another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians to assault us." ⁷ So they got up and fled at twilight, abandoning their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—the entire camp just as it was—and fled for their lives.

⁸ When these men with *tzara'at* came to the edge of the camp, they entered into one tent, ate and drank, and took from there silver, gold, and clothes, then went and hid them. Then they returned and went into another tent, and took from there too, and went and hid them. ⁹ Then they said to each other, "It's not right, what we're doing. This day is a day of good news, and we're keeping silent! If we wait till the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Let's go now and report to the king's household."

¹⁰ So they came and called out to the city gatekeepers, and told them, "We went to the camp of the Arameans, and look, there was not a single soul there, no human voice—just the horses and the donkeys tied up, and the tents just as they were." ¹¹ Then the gatekeepers called out, and it was reported to the royal palace inside.

¹² When the king got up in the night, he said to his courtiers, "Let me tell you now what the Arameans have contrived against us. They know that we are hungry, so they went out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, thinking, 'When they come out of the city, we'll capture them alive and get into the city.'"

¹³ But one of his courtiers answered and said, "Please let some men take five of the remaining horses left in the city—look, they are just like the whole multitude left in it, and look, they will be just like the whole multitude of Israel that has already perished—so let's send and see."

¹⁴ So they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them after the army of the Arameans, saying, "Go and see." ¹⁵ They went after them to the Jordan, and behold, all the way was strewn with clothes and equipment, which the Arameans had thrown away in their haste. Then the messengers returned and reported to the king. ¹⁶ So the people went out and ransacked the camp of the Arameans. Then a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel—just as was the word of *ADONAI*.

¹⁷ Now the king appointed the officer on whose hand he leaned, to have charge of the gate—but the people trampled on him at the gate, and he died—just as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king came down to him. ¹⁸ For when the man of God had spoken to the king, "Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, will be tomorrow about this time at the gate of Samaria," ¹⁹ that officer had answered the man of God and said, "Look, even if *ADONAI* should make windows in heaven, could such a thing happen?" and he replied, "Behold, you will see it with your own eyes, but will not eat any of it!" ²⁰ That's what happened to him—for the people trampled on him at the gate, and he died.

The Shunammite's Land Restored

8 Now Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life saying, "Arise and go with your household, and stay wherever you can stay, because *ADONAI* has called for a famine—indeed it has already come—on the land for seven years." ² So the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God. She and her household went and stayed in the land of the Philistines for seven years.

³ Now at the end of seven years the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, and she went to the king to appeal for her house and her farm. ⁴ Now the king was talking with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, "Please tell me," he was saying, "all the great things that Elisha has done." ⁵ Then it came to pass, just as he was telling the king how he had revived someone who was dead, behold, there was the woman whose son he had revived, appealing to the king for her house and her farm. So Gehazi said, "My Lord the king, this is the woman and this is her son whom Elisha revived."

⁶ When the king asked the woman, she told him the story. So the king assigned to her a court official, saying, "Restore all that was hers, and all the revenue of the field since the day that she left the land until now."

Elisha Weeps in Damascus

⁷ Then Elisha went to Damascus. At the time King Ben-Hadad of Aram was sick, and he was told, "The man of God has come all the way here." ⁸ So the king said to Hazael, "Take an offering in your hand and go meet the man of God, and inquire of *ADONAI* by him saying: 'Will I recover from this illness?'"

⁹ So Hazael went to meet him and took an offering in his hand, of every good thing of Damascus—40 camel-loads—then came and stood before him and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to you saying: 'Will I recover from this illness?'"

¹⁰ Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him: 'You will surely recover.' However, *ADONAI* has also shown me that he will surely die." ¹¹ Then he fixed his gaze steadily on him until he was ashamed, and then the man of God

wept. ¹² When Hazael asked, "Why is my lord weeping?" he answered, "Because I know the evil that you will inflict on the men of Israel: their strongholds you will set on fire, their young men you will slay with the sword, their little ones you will dash into pieces, and their pregnant ones you will rip open."

¹³ Then Hazael said, "But what is your servant, who is but a dog, that he should do anything of such magnitude?"

Elisha answered, "ADONAI has shown me that you will be king over Aram."

¹⁴ Then he departed from Elisha and went to his master, who asked him, "What did Elisha say to you?"

He answered, "He told me that you would surely recover." ¹⁵ But the next day he took a thick cloth, soaked it in water and spread it on his face, so that he died. Then Hazael became king in his place.

Edom Revolts against Jehoram

¹⁶ Now in the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel—Jehoshaphat had been king of Judah—Jehoram the son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah became king.

¹⁷ He was 32 years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. ¹⁸ But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did—for Ahab's daughter was his wife—and he did what was evil in ADONAI's eyes. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, ADONAI was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David His servant, since He had promised to give him a lamp for his children all days.

²⁰ In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and set up their own king. ²¹ Then Joram crossed over to Zair with all his chariots. It came about that he rose by night and struck the Edomites who had surrounded him and the chariot commanders, but his troops fled to their tents. ²² So Edom kept rebelling from under the hand of Judah to this day. Then Libnah also revolted at the same time.

²³ Now the rest of the acts of Joram and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²⁴ Then Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. Then his son Ahaziah became king in his place.

²⁵ In the twelfth year of Joram son of King Ahab of Israel, Ahaziah son of King Jehoram of Judah began to reign. ²⁶ Ahaziah was 22 years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, the daughter of King Omri of Israel. ²⁷ Now he walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did what was evil in ADONAI's eyes, as the house of Ahab had done—for he was a son-in-law of the house of Ahab. ²⁸ He marched with Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth-Gilead, but the Arameans wounded Joram. ²⁹ So King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. Ahaziah

son of King Jehoram of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

Jehu Avenges Naboth

⁹ Then Elisha the prophet summoned one of the sons of the prophets and told him, "Strap up your cloak, take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth-Gilead. ² When you arrive there, look out there for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi. Then go in, get him to rise up from among his fellows, and bring him to an inner room. ³ Then take the flask of oil and pour it on his head and say, thus says ADONAI: 'I have anointed you king over Israel.' Then open the door and flee—don't wait around."

⁴ So the young man, a young prophet, went to Ramoth-Gilead. ⁵ Now when he arrived, behold, the army commanders were sitting. So he said, "I have a word for you, commander."

Jehu asked, "For which one of us?"

He replied, "For you, commander." ⁶ Then he rose and went inside the house, and the prophet poured the oil on his head and said to him, "Thus says ADONAI, God of Israel: I have anointed you king over the people of ADONAI, over Israel. ⁷ So you will strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of ADONAI shed by Jezebel. ⁸ For the whole house of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male, slave or free, in Israel. ⁹ I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasa son of Ahijah.

¹⁰ The dogs will eat Jezebel in the field of Jezreel, and there will be none to bury her." Then he opened the door and fled.

¹¹ Then Jehu came out to the officers of his master, and one asked him, "Is everything all right? Why did this crazy fellow come to you?"

He said to them, "You know the man and his babbling."

¹² But they said, "It's a lie! Tell us now."

So he said, "He said something like this to me, saying 'Thus says ADONAI, I have anointed you king over Israel.'"

¹³ Then they hurried and every man took his garment and put it under him on the bare steps, and blew the *shofar*, saying, "Jehu is king!"

¹⁴ So Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Now Joram had been defending Ramoth-Gilead, he and all Israel, against King Hazael of Aram. ¹⁵ But King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him, when he fought with King Hazael of Aram. Then Jehu said, "If this is your wish, then let no one escape and go out of the city to go to tell the news in Jezreel."

¹⁶ So Jehu mounted a chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram was lying there. Meanwhile, King Ahaziah of Judah came down to see Joram. ¹⁷ Now the watchman

stationed on the tower in Jezreel saw Jehu's troop approaching and said, "I am seeing a troop."

Then Joram said, "Take a horseman and dispatch him to meet them, and let him ask: 'Is it peace?'"¹⁸ So the horse rider went to meet him, and said, "Thus says the king: 'Is it peace?'" But Jehu said, "What do you have to do with peace? Turn behind me."

So the watchman reported, saying, "The messenger reached them, but didn't come back."¹⁹ Then he dispatched out another horseman, who went to them and said, "Thus says the king: 'Is it peace?'" But Jehu answered, "What do you have to do with peace? Turn behind me."

²⁰ So the watchman reported, saying, "He reached them, but didn't come back—and the driving is like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi, for he is driving on like a maniac!"

²¹ Then Joram ordered, "Hitch up the chariot!" So he hitched up his chariot. Then King Joram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah went out each in his chariot to meet Jehu, and found him at the field of Naboth the Jezreelite.²² Now when Joram saw Jehu, he asked, "Is it peace, Jehu?"

So he answered, "What peace, so long as the harlotries of your mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?"

²³ So Joram turned his horses around and fled, crying out to Ahaziah, "Treason, Ahaziah!"

²⁴ But Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out through his heart, and he collapsed in his chariot.

²⁵ Then he said to Bidkar his aide, "Pick him up and throw him on the property of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. Remember how you and I were riding together behind Ahab his father, when *ADONAI* took up this burden against him: ²⁶ 'As surely as I have seen the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons yesterday—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—I will repay you on this property—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.' So now pick him up and throw him onto the property, just as in the word of *ADONAI*."

²⁷ When King Ahaziah of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. But Jehu pursued him, and said, "Shoot him too!" They shot him in the chariot at Gur Pass near Ibleam. Then he fled to Megiddo, but he died there.²⁸ Then his servants 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 over Judah in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab.)

³⁰ Now when Jehu arrived at Jezreel, Jezebel heard about it. So she painted her eyes and dressed her hair, and looked out the window.³¹ As Jehu entered the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, your master's assassin?"³² Then he lifted up his face to the window and called out, "Who is on my side? Who?" Two or three eunuchs looked down toward him.³³ Then he said, "Throw her down!" So they threw her down—then her

blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, and they trampled her.

³⁴ Then he went inside, ate and drank. Then he said, "Attend now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she was a king's daughter."³⁵ But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands.³⁶ So they came back and told him. He said, "This is the word of *ADONAI*, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying: 'In the field of Jezreel will the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel,³⁷ and the carcass of Jezebel will be as dung upon the face of the field in the property of Jezreel, so that they will not say, "This was Jezebel."'"

Jehu Destroys Ahab's Sons and Baal Worshipers

10 Now Ahab had 70 sons in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, the elders, and to the guardians of Ahab's sons, saying: ² "Now as soon as this letter reaches you—since your master's sons are with you, and you also have chariots and horses, a fortified city and weapons—³ choose the best and the most worthy of your master's sons, set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house."

⁴ But they were very terrified and said, "Look, two kings couldn't stand before him, how then can we?"⁵ So the steward of the palace, the governor of the city, the elders, and the guardians sent word to Jehu saying, "We are your servants, and will do whatever you tell us to. We won't make any man king. Do whatever is good in your eyes."

⁶ Then he wrote a second letter to them saying, "If you are on my side, and if you will obey me, then bring the heads of the men, your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel at this time tomorrow."

Now the king's sons, 70 people, were with the city's prominent men.⁷ When it came to pass that the letter reached them, they took the king's 70 sons and slaughtered them, put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel.⁸ When a messenger came and told him saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until morning."

⁹ It came to pass in the morning that he went out and stood and addressed all the people, "You are innocent. Behold, I conspired against my master and killed him, but who struck down all these?¹⁰ Know then that not a word of *ADONAI* will fall to the earth—which *ADONAI* spoke about the house of Ahab—for *ADONAI* has done what He spoke through His servant Elijah."¹¹ So Jehu struck down all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel—all his nobles, his acquaintances, his priests—until he left him not a survivor.

¹² Then he arose and went on his way to Samaria. As he was at Shearing House † of the Shepherds along the way,¹³ Jehu met with the kinsmen of King Ahaziah of Judah and asked, "Who are you?"

† Hebrew *Beth-Eked*

"We are the kinsmen of Ahaziah," they replied, "We've come down to greet the children of the king and the children of the queen mother."

¹⁴ "Take them alive!" he said. So they took them alive, then struck them down at the pit of Shearing House, 42 men—he spared not a single one of them.

¹⁵ Now when he left from there, he met Jehonadab son of Rechab coming to meet him. So he greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart right as my heart is with your heart?"

"It is," Jehonadab replied.

"If it is, give me your hand." So he gave him his hand, and Jehu helped him up into the chariot. ¹⁶ Then he said, "Come with me and see my zeal for *ADONAI*." So he let him ride in his chariot.

¹⁷ When he came to Samaria, he struck down all who remained from Ahab in Samaria, until he had destroyed him, according to the word of *ADONAI* spoken to Elijah.

¹⁸ Then Jehu gathered all the people together and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much! ¹⁹ Now therefore, summon to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers, and all his priests, let none be missing, for I have a great sacrifice for Baal—whoever is missing will not live." But Jehu did it in cunning, in order to destroy the worshipers of Baal.

²⁰ Then Jehu said, "Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed it. ²¹ Then Jehu sent throughout Israel and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. When they went into the temple of Baal, the temple of Baal was filled from one end to another.

²² Then he said to the one over the wardrobe, "Bring out vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." So he brought out vestments for them. ²³ Then Jehu and Jehonadab son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal, and he said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and look that there is here with you none of the servants of *ADONAI*—only servants of Baal." ²⁴ Then they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings.

Now Jehu had already stationed 80 of his men outside and said, "If any of the men whom I am bringing into your hands escapes, your life will be for his life."

²⁵ Then it came to pass, as soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, "Go in, strike them down—let none get out." So they struck them down with the edge of the sword, and the guard and the captains threw them out. Then they proceeded to the inner room of the temple of Baal, ²⁶ brought out the pillars of the temple of Baal, and burned them. ²⁷ Then they demolished the pillar of Baal, tore down the temple of Baal and turned it into latrines—as it is to this day.

²⁸ Thus Jehu eradicated Baal from Israel. ²⁹ However, from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit, from these Jehu did not turn away—the golden calves in Beth-El and in Dan. ³⁰ Now

ADONAI had said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in executing what is right in My eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in My heart, your sons of the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel."

³¹ Yet Jehu was not careful to walk in the *Torah* of *ADONAI*, God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which he caused Israel to commit. ³² In those days *ADONAI* began to reduce the size of Israel. For Hazael defeated them throughout the territory of Israel, ³³ from the Jordan eastward in all the land of Gilead—the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites—from Aroer by the Arnon Valley up to Gilead and Bashan.

³⁴ Now the rest of the acts of Jehu and all that he did and all his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ³⁵ Then Jehu slept with his fathers and they buried him in Samaria. And his son Jehoahaz became king in his place. ³⁶ The days of Jehu's reign over Israel in Samaria were 28 years.

Wicked Queen Athaliah Overthrown

11 Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal offspring. ² But Jehosheba, daughter of King Joram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash 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 the bedroom, so he was hidden from Athaliah, so that he was not killed. ³ He remained with her, hidden in the House of *ADONAI* for six years, while Athaliah was reigning over the country.

⁴ Now in the seventh year, Jehoiada sent and fetched the captains of the hundreds, of both the Carites and the guards, and had them come to him in the House of *ADONAI*. After he cut a covenant with them and put them under oath in the House of *ADONAI*, he showed them the king's son. ⁵ Then he commanded them saying, "This is what you will do: one-third of you—those going on duty on *Shabbat*—keeps watch over the palace. ⁶ Then another third will be stationed at the Sur Gate and the last third will be at the gate behind the guards—so you will keep watch over the House on every side. ⁷ Your other two divisions, who are off duty on *Shabbat*, will also keep watch over the House of *ADONAI* for the king. ⁸ So you are to surround the king on every side—every man with his weapons in his hand—whoever breaks through the ranks must be put to death. You must be with the king in his comings and goings."

⁹ So the captains of hundreds did all that Jehoiada the *kohen* commanded. Each of the captains took his men—those who were on duty on *Shabbat* and those who were off duty on *Shabbat*—and presented themselves to Jehoiada the *kohen*. ¹⁰ The *kohen* delivered to the captains of hundreds the spear and shields that belonged to King David that were in the House of *ADONAI*. ¹¹ So the guards stood, every man with his

weapons in his hand, from the right side of the House to the left side of the House, by the altar and the House, around the king on every side.

¹² Then he brought out the king's son and put the crown and the insignia on him, and so they proclaimed him king and anointed him. Then they clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!"

¹³ When Athaliah heard the noise of the guards and the people, she came to the people in the House of *ADONAI*. ¹⁴ She looked and behold, the king was standing by the pillar, as was the custom, with the captains and the trumpets beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason, treason!"

¹⁵ Then Jehoiada the *kohen* ordered the captains of hundreds, appointed over the army, and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks—whoever follows her, put him to death with the sword." For the *kohen* said, "Let her not be put to death in the House of *ADONAI*."

¹⁶ So they laid hands on her, and brought her to the horses' entry of the royal palace, where she was put to death.

¹⁷ Then Jehoiada cut a covenant between *ADONAI* and the king and the people—that they would be *ADONAI*'s people—and also between the king and the people.

¹⁸ Next, all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They broke his altars and his images into pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan, the priest of Baal, before the altars. Moreover, the *kohen* appointed officers over the House of *ADONAI*. ¹⁹ Then he took the captains over hundreds, the Carites, the guard, and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the House of *ADONAI*, and came by the way of the gate of the guards to the royal palace. So he sat on the royal throne. ²⁰ Then all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet—they had already slain Athaliah with the sword in the royal palace.

Jehoash Restores the Temple

12 (11:21) Jehoash was seven years old when he became king. ² (1) Jehoash began his reign in the seventh year of Jehu and he reigned 40 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-Sheba. ³ (2) Now Jehoash did what was right in *ADONAI*'s eyes all his days, just as Jehoiada the *kohen* instructed him. ⁴ (3) The high places, however, were not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.

⁵ (4) Then Jehoash said to the *kohanim*, "All the money of the sacred donations brought to the House of *ADONAI*—the money in exchange for each person's valuation, as well as all the money that anyone's heart prompts him to bring to the House of *ADONAI*—⁶ (5) let the *kohanim* receive it, each from one of the treasurers, so they may repair the damage to the House wherever any damage is found."

⁷ (6) But by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash, the *kohanim* still had not repaired the damage to the House. ⁸ (7) Then King Jehoash summoned Jehoiada the *kohen* and the other *kohanim*, and said to them, "Why are you not repairing the damage to the House? Now therefore, take no more money from your treasurers, but hand it over for the damage to the House."

⁹ (8) The *kohanim* agreed that they would take no more money from the people, nor would they repair the damage of the House.

¹⁰ (9) But Jehoiada the *kohen* took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and placed it beside the altar, on the right side as one entered the House of *ADONAI*. The priestly guards of the threshold deposited there all the money that was brought to the House of *ADONAI*. ¹¹ (10) Whenever they saw that there was a large amount of money in the chest, the royal scribe and the *kohen gadol* would come up, put the money in bags and count the money that was found in the House of *ADONAI*. ¹² (11) Then they would give the money that was weighed out into the hands of those who did the work, who had been overseeing the House of *ADONAI*—they, in turn, would pay it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the House of *ADONAI*, ¹³ (12) and to the masons and the stonecutters, and for buying timber and cut stone to repair the damage to *ADONAI*'s House, and for all that was laid out for the House to repair it.

¹⁴ (13) But there were no silver cups, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, and no vessels of gold or vessels of silver made for the House of *ADONAI* from the money brought to the House of *ADONAI*. ¹⁵ (14) For they gave it to those that did the work, and with it they repaired the House of *ADONAI*. ¹⁶ (15) They did not check on the men to whom they gave the money to pay the workers, for they dealt faithfully. ¹⁷ (16) The money from the guilt offering and money from the sin offering was not brought into the House of *ADONAI*—it was for the *kohanim*.

¹⁸ (17) Then King Hazael of Aram marched and attacked Gath and captured it, and next Hazael set his face to march against Jerusalem. ¹⁹ (18) But King Jehoash of Judah took all the sacred objects that his fathers Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own sacred objects, and all the gold that was found in the treasuries of the House of *ADONAI* and in the royal palace, and sent them to King Hazael of Aram, so he withdrew from Jerusalem.

²⁰ (19) Now the rest of the acts of Joash and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²¹ (20) But his courtiers arose, conspired against him and assassinated Joash at Beth-Millo, on the way that goes down to Silla. ²² (21) His courtiers Jozacar son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer struck him down, and he died. Then they buried him with his fathers in the city of David. His son Amaziah became king in his place.

The Reign of Jehoahaz and Jehoash

13 In the twenty-third year of Joash son of King Ahaziah of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned 17 years. ² But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes—he continued in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit, and did not turn away from them. ³ So the anger of *ADONAI* was kindled against Israel, and He continually gave them into the hand of King Hazael of Aram and into the hand of Ben-Hadad son of Hazael.

⁴ Then Jehoahaz sought *ADONAI*'s face, so *ADONAI* listened to him, for He saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram oppressed them. ⁵ *ADONAI* gave Israel a deliverer, so that they escaped from under the hand of the Arameans, and the men of Israel dwelt in their tents as they had before.

⁶ Nevertheless, they did not turn away from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, which he caused Israel to commit, but walked in them—and the Asherah pole remained standing in Samaria. ⁷ Indeed, Jehoahaz was not left with a force of more than 50 horsemen, 10 chariots, and 10,000 foot soldiers, because the king of Aram had destroyed them and trampled them like dust when threshing. ⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ⁹ Then Jehoahaz slept with his fathers and they buried him in Samaria. His son Joash became king in his place.

¹⁰ In the thirty-seventh year of King Joash of Judah, Jehoash son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned 16 years. ¹¹ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. He did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit, but he walked in them. ¹² Now the rest of the events of Joash's reign and all that he did, and his might with which he fought against King Amaziah of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ¹³ Then Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat on his throne. So Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Victories as Elisha Dies

¹⁴ When Elisha got sick with his illness from which he would die, King Joash of Israel came down to him, wept over him and cried, "Avi, avi, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!"

¹⁵ Then Elisha said to him, "Take bow and arrows." So he took bow and arrows. ¹⁶ Then he said to the king of Israel, "Mount your hand on the bow!" So he mounted his hand on it. Elisha then laid his hands on the king's hands, ¹⁷ and said, "Open the window to the east," and then Elisha said, "Shoot!" and he shot. Then he said, "*ADONAI*'s arrow of deliverance! Yes, an arrow of victory

over Aram! You will strike down the Arameans in Aphek until they are demolished." ¹⁸ Then he said, "Take the arrows!" and he took them. Then he said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground!" and he struck it three times, then stopped. ¹⁹ But the man of God was upset with him and said, "If only you had struck five or six times, then you would have annihilated Aram till you had consumed it. But now you will strike Aram only three times."

²⁰ Then Elisha died, and they buried him. Now bands of Moabite marauders used to invade the land at the spring of the year. ²¹ It came about, as they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band, so they threw the man's body into Elisha's tomb. As soon as the man's body touched Elisha's bones, he came back to life and stood up on his feet!

²² But King Hazael of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. ²³ Yet *ADONAI* was gracious to them, had compassion on them, and turned to them because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So He was not willing to destroy them or cast them from His presence up to now. ²⁴ Then King Hazael of Aram died, and his son Ben-Hadad became king in his place. ²⁵ Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz restored from the hand of Ben-Hadad son of Hazael the towns which he had taken out from the hand of his father Jehoahaz in war. Three times Joash defeated him and recovered the towns of Israel.

Amaziah's Demise

14 In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah became king. ² He was 25 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. ³ Now he did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI*, yet not like his father David—he did like all his father Joash had done. ⁴ Still, the high places were not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense in the high places.

⁵ Once the kingdom was established in his hand, he killed his courtiers who had assassinated his father the king. ⁶ However, he did not execute the children of the assassins, keeping what is written in the *Torah* of Moses, where *ADONAI* commanded saying, "The fathers will not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but each one will be put to death for his own sin."

⁷ He struck down 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, captured Sela in the battle, and renamed it Joktheel, as it is to this day.

⁸ Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come! Let's meet face to face."

⁹ But King Jehoash of Israel sent word to King Amaziah of Judah, saying, "The briar in Lebanon sent word to the cedar in Lebanon saying: 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' But a wild beast in Lebanon

passed by and trampled down the briar. ¹⁰ You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has become arrogant. Glory and stay at home! Why should you provoke trouble and cause your own downfall—you and Judah with you?"

¹¹ But Amaziah would not listen. So King Jehoash of Israel advanced, and he and Amaziah king of Judah confronted each other at Beth-Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. ¹² Judah was routed before Israel—they fled every man to his home. ¹³ King Jehoash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah, son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah, at Beth-Shemesh. Then Jehoash advanced to Jerusalem and breached the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate—400 cubits. ¹⁴ He also took all the gold and silver and all the articles that were found in the House of *ADONAI* and in the treasuries of the royal palace, as well as hostages, and returned to Samaria.

¹⁵ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ¹⁶ Then Jehoash slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Then his son Jeroboam became king in his place.

¹⁷ And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel. ¹⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ¹⁹ They conspired against him in Jerusalem, so he fled to Lachish, but they sent men after him to Lachish and assassinated him there. ²⁰ Then they brought his body back on horses, and he was buried in Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

²¹ And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and proclaimed him king in place of his father Amaziah. ²² It was he who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah after the previous king slept with his fathers.

²³ In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and he reigned 41 years. ²⁴ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. He did not turn away from all the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit. ²⁵ It was he who restored Israel's border from the entrance of Hamath to the sea of the Arabah, as was the word of *ADONAI*, God of Israel, which He spoke by the hand of His servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath-Hepher.

²⁶ For *ADONAI* saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter and spared no one—whether bond or free—nor was there a helper for Israel. ²⁷ But *ADONAI* did not say He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so He delivered them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash. ²⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did, and his might, including how he fought

and recovered Damascus and Hamath for Judah in Israel, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ²⁹ Then Jeroboam slept with his fathers with the kings of Israel. His son Zechariah became king in his place.

Menahem Ends Jehu's Line

15 In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah became king. ² He was 16 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 52 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. ³ Now he did what was right in *ADONAI*'s eyes, just like all that his father Amaziah had done. ⁴ However, the high places were not taken away—the people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.

⁵ Then *ADONAI* struck the king, so that he had *tzara'at* until the day of his death, and lived in an isolated house. Meanwhile Jotham, the king's son, was in charge of the palace and governing the people of the land. ⁶ Now the rest of the acts of Azariah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ⁷ Then Azariah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David. Then his son Jotham became king in his place.

⁸ In the thirty-eighth year of King Azariah of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria for six months. ⁹ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, as his fathers had done. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit. ¹⁰ Then Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against him and smote him before the people, killed him, and became king in his place. ¹¹ Now the rest of the acts of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

¹² This was the word of *ADONAI* that He spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your descendants to the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel," and so it came to pass. ¹³ Shallum son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirtieth year of King Uzziah of Judah, and he reigned for one month in Samaria. ¹⁴ Then Menahem son of Gadi marched up from Tirzah, reached Samaria, then struck down Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria, killed him, and became king in his place. ¹⁵ Now the rest of the acts of Shallum, including his conspiracy that he contrived, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

¹⁶ Then Menahem struck down Tiphshah and all who were in it, and its territories from Tirzah, because they did not open to him, therefore he attacked it and ripped open all its pregnant women. ¹⁷ In the thirtieth year of King Azariah of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king over Israel, and he reigned 10 years in Samaria. ¹⁸ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. Throughout his days he never turned away from

the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit.

¹⁹ Then King Pul of Assyria invaded the country, so Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver so that his hand might be with him to strengthen his hold on the kingdom. ²⁰ Menahem exacted the money from Israel, from every person of means, each one 50 shekels of silver to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and stayed no longer in the land.

²¹ Now the rest of the acts of Menahem and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? ²² Then Menahem slept with his fathers, and his son Pekahiah became king in his place. ²³ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned two years. ²⁴ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit. ²⁵ Then Pekah son of Remaliah, his aide, conspired against him and assassinated him in Samaria, in the castle of the royal palace, along with Argob, Arieah, and 50 Gileadite men. So he killed him and became king in his place. ²⁶ Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah and all that he did, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

Israel and Aram Attack Judah

²⁷ In the fifty-second year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned 20 years. ²⁸ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit. ²⁹ In the days of Pekah king of Israel, King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria invaded and captured Ijon, Abel-Beth-Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee—all the region of Naphtali, and he deported them to Assyria. ³⁰ Then Hoshea son of Elah conspired against Pekah son of Remaliah. He attacked and assassinated him, and then became king in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. ³¹ Now the rest of the acts of Pekah and all that he did, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

³² In the second year of Pekah son of King Remaliah of Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah king of Judah began to reign. ³³ He was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha daughter of Zadok. ³⁴ Now he did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI*, just as his father Uzziah had done. ³⁵ However, the high places were not taken away, and the people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. It was he who built the upper gate of the House of *ADONAI*. ³⁶ Now the rest of the acts of Jotham and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ³⁷ In those days *ADONAI* began to send King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah against

Judah. ³⁸ Jotham slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David. Then Ahaz his son became king in his place.

16 In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of King Jotham of Judah, began to reign. ² Ahaz was 20 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. But he did not do what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI* his God, as his father David had done. ³ Instead he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and even made his son pass through the fire, like the abominations of the nations whom *ADONAI* had dispossessed before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁴ He offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every leafy tree.

⁵ Then King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of King Remaliah of Israel marched against Jerusalem to wage war. They besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. ⁶ At that time King Rezin of Aram recovered Elath for Aram, and drove the Jews out of Elath. Then the Edomites came to Elath and settled there to this day.

⁷ So Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and deliver me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are rising up against me." ⁸ Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the House of *ADONAI* and in the treasuries of the royal palace, and sent them as a present to the king of Assyria. ⁹ So the king of Assyria responded to him. The king of Assyria marched up against Damascus and captured it, and deported its inhabitants as captives to Kir and put Rezin to death.

Ahaz Remodels the Temple

¹⁰ Then King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria and saw the altar that was at Damascus. So King Ahaz sent to Urijah the *kohen* the pattern of the altar and its model needed for its construction. ¹¹ Then Urijah the *kohen* built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus, and Urijah the *kohen* finished it by the time King Ahaz returned from Damascus. ¹² When the king came back from Damascus and saw the altar, the king approached the altar and went up to it. ¹³ Then he burned his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his fellowship offerings on the altar. ¹⁴ As for the bronze altar that was before *ADONAI*, he moved it from the forefront of the House, from between his altar and the House of *ADONAI*, and put it on the north side of his own altar.

¹⁵ Then King Ahaz commanded Urijah the *kohen* saying, "Upon the great altar you will burn the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering, the king's burnt offering and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land and their grain offering and their drink offering. Also sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering and all the

blood of the sacrifices. But the bronze altar will be for me to inquire by.”

¹⁶ Thus Urijah the *kohen* did everything just as King Ahaz commanded. ¹⁷ Then King Ahaz cut off the borders of the stands and removed the laver from them. He also took down the sea from the bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a stone pavement. ¹⁸ The covered passageway for *Shabbat* that they had built in the House as well as the outer entry for the king, he removed from the House of *ADONAI*, because of the king of Assyria.

¹⁹ Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²⁰ Then Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. Then his son Hezekiah became king in his place.

The Israelites are Deported to Assyria

17 In the twelfth year of King Ahaz of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king in Samaria over Israel, and he reigned nine years. ² He did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him. ³ King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched against him, so Hoshea became his vassal and paid him tribute. ⁴ But the king of Assyria caught Hoshea conspiring—he had sent messengers to King So of Egypt, and had not paid the tribute to the king of Assyria as he had done every year. Therefore the king of Assyria seized him and put him in prison. ⁵ Then the king of Assyria invaded the entire country, marched up to 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 placed them in Halah and Habor, on the Gozan River, and in the towns of the Medes. ⁷ Now it was so because the men of Israel had sinned against *ADONAI* their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods. ⁸ Instead they followed the customs of the nations, whom *ADONAI* had dispossessed before *Bnei-Yisrael*, yet which the kings of Israel practiced. ⁹ *Bnei-Yisrael* secretly did things against *ADONAI* their God that were not right. They built shrines for themselves in all their settlements—from watchtowers to fortified cities, ¹⁰ and they set up pillars and Asherah poles for themselves on every high hill and under every leafy tree. ¹¹ There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom *ADONAI* had driven out before them. So they did wicked things to provoke *ADONAI*. ¹² They worshiped idols, about which *ADONAI* had said to them, “You shall not do this thing.”

¹³ Yet *ADONAI* had forewarned Israel and Judah by the hand of every prophet and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the *Torah* which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by the hand of My servants the prophets.” ¹⁴ Yet they would

not listen, but stiffened their neck like their fathers, who did not trust in *ADONAI* their God. ¹⁵ So they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies that He testified against them. Instead they went after futile things and became futile, following the nations that surrounded them, about whom *ADONAI* had charged them not to emulate. ¹⁶ So they abandoned all the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* their God. So they made for themselves molten images, two calves, and made an Asherah pole, and bowed down to all the host of heavens, and worshiped Baal, ¹⁷ and they made their sons and daughters pass through the fire, practiced divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, to provoke Him.

¹⁸ So *ADONAI* became very angry with Israel, and banished them from His presence. There was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.

¹⁹ Even Judah did not keep the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* their God, but followed the customs which Israel had practiced. ²⁰ So *ADONAI* spurned all the descendants of Israel and afflicted them and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them out of His sight.

²¹ When He had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drew Israel away from following *ADONAI* and made them commit a great sin. ²² The men of Israel kept walking in all the sins that Jeroboam committed. They did not turn away from them, ²³ until *ADONAI* banished Israel from His presence, as He spoke by the hand of all His servants the prophets. So Israel has been exiled from their own land to Assyria to this day.

Origin of the Samaritans

²⁴ Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the men of Israel. So they possessed Samaria and settled in its cities. ²⁵ When they first began dwelling there, they did not fear *ADONAI*—so *ADONAI* sent lions among them, which killed some of them. ²⁶ Then they spoke to the king of Assyria saying, “The nations that you deported and resettled in the towns of Samaria do not know the requirement of the God of the land. Therefore He has sent lions among them, and behold, they are killing them because they don't know the requirement of the God of the land.”

²⁷ Then the king of Assyria commanded saying, “Send there one of the *kohanim* whom you have exiled from there. Let them go and live there and teach them the requirement of the God of the land.” ²⁸ So one of the *kohanim* that had been deported from Samaria came and lived in Beth-El, and taught them how they should fear *ADONAI*.

²⁹ However, every nation kept making its own gods, and put them in the shrines of the high places that the Samaritans had made—every nation in their cities

where they settled. ³⁰ So the people of Babylon made Succoth-Benoth, the people of Cuth made Nergal, the people of Hamath made Ashima, ³¹ the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. ³² So they feared *ADONAI*, while they also appointed for themselves from among themselves priests of the shrines, who officiated for them in the shrines of the high places. ³³ They continued to fear *ADONAI*, but worshiped their own gods, after the custom of the nations from which they had been deported.

³⁴ Up to this day, they follow their former customs. Nor do they fear *ADONAI*, or follow the statutes, the ordinances, the *Torah* or the *mitzvot* that *ADONAI* commanded the children of Jacob—whom He had re-named Israel. ³⁵ With them *ADONAI* had made a covenant, and charged them saying, “You will not fear other gods, or bow down to them, or serve them, or sacrifice to them, ³⁶ but only *ADONAI*, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm—Him will you fear, and to Him will you bow down and to Him will you sacrifice. ³⁷ The statutes and the ordinances, and the *Torah* and the *mitzvah*, which He wrote for you, you will take care to do all the time. You are not to fear other gods. ³⁸ The covenant that I have made with you, you will not forget. Nor will you fear other gods, ³⁹ but *ADONAI* your God will you fear. Then He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.”

⁴⁰ Yet they did not listen, but they continued their former practices. ⁴¹ So while these nations feared *ADONAI*, they also worshiped their idols. Their children and grandchildren do as their fathers did to this day.

Righteous King Hezekiah

18 Now it was in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel that Hezekiah son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. ² He was 25 years old when he became king and he reigned for 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Abi daughter of Zechariah. ³ He did what was right in *ADONAI*’s eyes, according to all his ancestor David had done. ⁴ He removed the high places, smashed the pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. He also broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made—for up to those days *Bnei-Yisrael* were still burning incense to it—it was called Nehushtan.

⁵ He trusted in *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. Indeed, none of all the kings of Judah after him was like him—and none before him. ⁶ For he clung to *ADONAI*. He did not turn away from following Him, but kept His *mitzvot*, which *ADONAI* had commanded Moses. ⁷ So *ADONAI* was with him. Wherever he went he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. ⁸ He defeated the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territories, from watchtower to fortified city.

⁹ Now it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of King Elah of Israel, that King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched against Samaria and besieged it, ¹⁰ and at the end of three years they captured it. So Samaria was captured in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel. ¹¹ The king of Assyria deported Israel to Assyria and placed them in Halah and Habor on the Gozan River, and in the towns of the Medes. ¹² For they had not listened to the voice of *ADONAI* their God, but transgressed His covenant—all that Moses the servant of *ADONAI* had commanded—they neither listened nor did it.

Proud Sennacherib Challenges Hezekiah

¹³ Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria marched against all the fortified towns of Judah and seized them. ¹⁴ So King Hezekiah of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria at Lachish saying, “I have done wrong. Withdraw from me, whatever you impose on me, I will bear.” So the king of Assyria imposed on King Hezekiah of Judah 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. ¹⁵ Then Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the House of *ADONAI* as well as in the treasuries of the royal palace. ¹⁶ At that time Hezekiah stripped off the gold from the doors of the Temple of *ADONAI* and from the doorposts that King Hezekiah of Judah had overlaid, and gave them to the king of Assyria.

¹⁷ Then the king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rab-Saris and the Rab-Shakeh † from Lachish with a great army to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem. So they went up and arrived at Jerusalem. Now when they arrived, they stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway of the fuller’s field. ¹⁸ When they had called to the king, Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the royal palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder, came out to them.

¹⁹ So the Rab-Shakeh said to them, “Say now to Hezekiah, thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: ‘What is this confidence you’ve relied on? ²⁰ You say you have a plan and military force for the battle—they are only words of a lip. Who do you rely on now, so that you have rebelled against me? ²¹ Behold, you rely on this splintered reed as a staff—Egypt! If a man leans on it, it will go into the palm of his hand and pierce it—thus Pharaoh king of Egypt is to all who trust in him.

²² “But if you say to me: ‘We trust in *ADONAI* our God’—is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has removed, and then said to Judah and Jerusalem: ‘You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem?’

²³ “So now, make a bargain with my master, the king of Assyria. I’ll give you 2,000 horses—if you could put riders of your own on them! ²⁴ So, how can you repulse

† Official titles, possible meaning Supreme Commander, Chief Eunuch Chief Cupbearer

a single lieutenant—the least of my master’s servants? Yes, you’re relying on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen.

²⁵ “Moreover, have I now come up against this land to destroy it without *ADONAI*’s approval? *ADONAI* said to me: ‘Go up against this land, and destroy it.’”

²⁶ Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to the Rab-Shakeh, “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Don’t speak to us in the language of the Jews when the people on the wall are listening.”

²⁷ But the Rab-Shakeh said to them, “Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words, and not to the men who sit on the wall—who will eat their own wastes and drink their own urine with you?”

²⁸ Then the Rab-Shakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the language of the Jews and said: “Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. ²⁹ Thus says the king: “Don’t let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand! ³⁰ Nor let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in *ADONAI* by saying: “*ADONAI* will surely deliver us—this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.”

³¹ “Don’t listen to Hezekiah! For thus says the king of Assyria: ‘Make peace with me and come out to me. Then everyone will eat from his own vine and fig tree, and everyone will drink 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 oil and honey, that you may live and not die.’

“So don’t listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you by saying: ‘*ADONAI* will deliver us.’ ³³ Have any of the gods of the nations 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? Have they delivered Samaria from my hand?

³⁵ Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their country out of my hand? So will *ADONAI* deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”

³⁶ But the people were silent and did not answer him a word, for the king’s commandment was, “Do not answer him.”

³⁷ Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rab-Shakeh.

Hezekiah’s Cry of Desperation

19 When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the House of *ADONAI*. ² Then he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and the senior *kohanim*, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet son of Amoz.

³ Then they said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah: This day is a day of distress, rebuke and contempt. For children have come to the point of birth, and there is no

strength for giving birth. ⁴ Perhaps *ADONAI* your God, hearing all the words of the Rab-Shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master has sent to mock the living God, will rebuke the words which *ADONAI* your God has heard. So offer prayer for the remnant that is left.”

⁵ When the officials of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, ⁶ Isaiah said to them: “Thus you will say to your master, ‘Thus says *ADONAI*: Do not be afraid of the words you have heard, with which the boys of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷ Behold, I am putting a spirit in him, and he will hear a rumor, and will return to his own country; then I will make him fall by the sword in his own land.’”

⁸ Then the Rab-Shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that he had withdrawn from Lachish. ⁹ Now he heard a report of Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia saying, “Behold, he has come out to fight against you.” When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah saying: ¹⁰ “Thus will you speak to King Hezekiah of Judah saying: ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying: Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. ¹¹ Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands—utterly destroying them—so will you be delivered? ¹² Have the gods of the nations delivered those my fathers destroyed—Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the children of Eden who were in Tel-Assar? ¹³ Where is the king of Hamath, or the king of Arpad, or the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, or Ivvah?’”

¹⁴ Then Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it. Then Hezekiah went up to the House of *ADONAI* and spread it before *ADONAI*.

¹⁵ Hezekiah prayed before *ADONAI*, saying, “*ADONAI*, God of Israel, who is enthroned upon the *cheruvim*. You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made heaven and earth. ¹⁶ Incline Your ear, *ADONAI*, and hear! Open Your eyes, *ADONAI*, and see! Listen to the words of Sennacherib that he has sent to mock the living God. ¹⁷ It is true, *ADONAI*, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands, ¹⁸ and have cast their gods into the fire—for they were not gods, but the work of human hands—wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. ¹⁹ Now, *ADONAI* our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, *ADONAI*, are God.”

²⁰ Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent word to Hezekiah saying, “Thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel: ‘Because you prayed to Me about King Sennacherib of Assyria, I have heard you.’ ²¹ This is the word that *ADONAI* has spoken about him:

“The virgin Daughter of Zion
will despise you and mock you.
The Daughter of Jerusalem
will shake her head at you.

²² Whom did you taunt and blaspheme?
Against whom did you raise your voice
and haughtily lift up your eyes?

Against the Holy One of Israel!
²³ Through your servants,
 you have blasphemed my Lord and said:
 ""With my many chariots I have climbed
 to the heights of the mountains,
 to the remotest parts of Lebanon!
 I cut down its tall cedars and choice cypress trees.
 I have gone to its farthest lodge, its thickest forest.
²⁴ I have dug wells and drunk foreign waters,
 and with the soles of my feet
 I dried up all the streams of Egypt.""
²⁵ Have you not heard? I did it long ago!
 From ancient times I planned it.
 Now I have brought it to pass—
 that you should turn fortified cities into heaps of
 rubble.
²⁶ Their inhabitants are weak-handed, shattered and
 ashamed
 They are like the grass of the field
 and green herb, like grass on roofs,
 scorched before it is grown up.
²⁷ But I know your sitting down,
 your going out, and your coming in,
 and your raging against Me.
²⁸ ""Because your raging against Me
 and your arrogance reached My ears,
 I will put My hook in your nose,
 and My bridle in your lips,
 and I will turn you back
 by the way you came.""
²⁹ ""So this shall be the sign to you: This year you will
 eat what grows by itself, in the second year what
 springs from that. But in the third year, you will sow,
 reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.
³⁰ ""The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will
 take root downward and bear fruit upward. ³¹ For from
 Jerusalem a remnant will go out, and survivors from
 Mount Zion. The zeal of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* will accom-
 plish this.""
³² Therefore thus says *ADONAI* concerning the king of
 Assyria:
 "He will not come to this city,
 or shoot an arrow there,
 or come before it with a shield,
 or throw up a siege-ramp against it.
³³ By the way that he came,
 by the same he will return,
 and he will not come into this city"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* .
³⁴ "For I will defend this city to save it,
 for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake."
³⁵ Then it came about that night that the angel of
ADONAI went out and struck down 185,000 men in the
 Assyrian camp. When the men arose early in the
 morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. ³⁶ So
 King Sennacherib of Assyria withdrew, went away, and
 returned home, and stayed in Nineveh. ³⁷ One day, as
 he was worshiping in the house of his god Nisroch, his

sons Adrammelech and Sarezer struck him down with
 the sword, and escaped to the land of Ararat. Then his
 son Esarhaddon became king in his place.

Put Your House in Order

20 In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. So
 Isaiah the prophet son of Amoz came to him
 and said to him, "Thus says *ADONAI* : Put your house in
 order. For you are dying, and will not live."

² Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to
ADONAI saying: ³ "Please, *ADONAI* , remember how I
 have walked before You in truth and with a whole
 heart, and have done what is good in Your eyes." And
 Hezekiah wept bitterly.

⁴ Then it came to pass, before Isaiah was gone out of
 the middle court, that the word of *ADONAI* came to
 him, saying: ⁵ "Return, and say to Hezekiah the leader
 of My people, thus says *ADONAI* , the God of your fa-
 ther David: 'I have heard your prayer and I have seen
 your tears. Behold, I am going to heal you. On the
 third day you will go up to the House of *ADONAI* .

⁶ Then I will add 15 years to your life. I will deliver you
 and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; I will
 defend this city for My own sake, and for My servant
 David's sake."

⁷ Then Isaiah said, "Take a cake of figs." So they took
 one and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.

⁸ Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What will be the sign
 that *ADONAI* will heal me, and that I should go up to
 the House of *ADONAI* on the third day?"

⁹ Then Isaiah said, "This will be the sign to you from
ADONAI , that *ADONAI* will do this word He has spoken:
 Should the shadow go forward ten steps or go back
 ten steps?"

¹⁰ Hezekiah answered, "It's easy for a shadow to go
 forward ten steps; no, let the shadow turn back ten
 steps."

¹¹ Then Isaiah the prophet cried to *ADONAI* ; and He
 brought the shadow ten steps backward, by which it
 had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.

Hezekiah Shows His Treasury to Babylon

¹² At that time Berodach-Baladan, son of King Bal-
 adan of Babylon, sent a letter and a present to Hezeki-
 ah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

¹³ Now Hezekiah listened to them, and showed them
 his entire treasure house—the silver and the gold, the
 spices and the precious oil—and his armory, and
 everything that was found in his treasuries. There was
 nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezeki-
 ah did not show them.

¹⁴ Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah
 and asked him, "What did these men say, and from
 where did they come to you?"

Hezekiah replied, "They have come to me from a far
 country, from Babylon."

¹⁵ Then he asked, "What have they seen in your house?"

Hezekiah said, "They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing of my treasures that I didn't show them."

¹⁶ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of *ADONAI*: ¹⁷ 'Behold, days are coming when everything in your house, which your fathers have stored up to this day, will be carried to Babylon—nothing will be left,' says *ADONAI*. ¹⁸ 'Moreover, some of your descendants—who will issue from you, whom you will father—will be taken away and will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

¹⁹ Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "Good is the word of *ADONAI* which you have spoken." For he thought, "Is it not so, if there will be *shalom* and security in my days?"

²⁰ Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and all his might—including how he made the pool and the tunnel that brought water into the city—are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²¹ So Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and his son Manasseh became king in his place.

Wicked Kings Manasseh and Amon

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned 55 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. ² But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, following the abominations of the nations that *ADONAI* had dispossessed before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ³ For he rebuilt the shrines that his father Hezekiah had destroyed and he erected altars for Baal and made an Asherah pole, as King Ahab of Israel had done, and bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them. ⁴ He even built altars in *ADONAI*'s House, where *ADONAI* had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My Name." ⁵ He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the House of *ADONAI*. ⁶ He also made his son pass through the fire, practiced soothsaying and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes to provoke Him.

⁷ Then he set up the carved image of Asherah that he made in the House about which *ADONAI* had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this House and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My Name forever. ⁸ No longer will I cause the feet of Israel to wander from the land which I gave their fathers—if only they will keep doing all I have commanded them and the whole *Torah* that My servant Moses commanded them."

⁹ But they did not listen, so Manasseh led them astray to do more evil than the nations that *ADONAI* had destroyed before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁰ Then *ADONAI* spoke through His servants the prophets, saying: ¹¹ "Since King Manasseh of Judah has done these abominations, and has outdone in wickedness all that the Amorites who were before him did, and has also

made Judah sin with his idols, ¹² therefore thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel, behold, I am bringing such evil on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle! ¹³ I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab, and I will utterly wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish—wiping it and turning it upside down. ¹⁴ Then I will cast off the remnant of My inheritance and hand them over to their enemies—they will become plunder and spoil to all their enemies. ¹⁵ For they have done such evil in My eyes, and kept provoking Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt up to this day."

¹⁶ Moreover, Manasseh shed so much innocent blood until he filled Jerusalem with blood from one end to another—in addition to his sin which he made Judah sin, in doing what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes. ¹⁷ Now the rest of the deeds of Manasseh, all that he did and his sin that he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ¹⁸ Then Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own palace, in the garden of Uzza.

Then his son Amon became king in his place.

¹⁹ Amon was 22 years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. ²⁰ He did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, as his father Manasseh had done. ²¹ So he walked in all the ways that his father had walked in, and worshiped the idols that his father had worshiped, and bowed down to them. ²² He abandoned *ADONAI*, God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of *ADONAI*.

²³ Then Amon's courtiers conspired against him and assassinated the king in his own palace. ²⁴ But the people of the land put to death all the conspirators against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place.

²⁵ Now the rest of the deeds of Amon which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²⁶ Then he was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah became king in his place.

Josiah and a Discovered Torah Scroll

22 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned 31 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. ² Now he did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI* and walked in all the ways of his father David, and turned not aside to the right or to the left.

³ It came to pass in the eighteenth year of King Josiah that the king sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam the scribe, to the House of *ADONAI*, saying. ⁴ "Go up to Hilkiah the *kohen gadol* and let him weigh the silver that has been brought to the House of *ADONAI*, which the doorkeepers have gathered from the people. ⁵ Then let them give it into the hand of the workmen appointed to oversee the work on the House

of *ADONAI* and let them in turn give it to the workmen that are in the House of *ADONAI* to repair the damages to the House: ⁶ to the carpenters, builders and masons, and for buying timber and cut stone to repair the House.” ⁷ However, there was no accounting made with them for the silver given into their hand, for they dealt faithfully.

⁸ Hilkiyah the *kohen gadol* said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found a scroll of the *Torah* in the House of *ADONAI*.” So Hilkiyah gave the scroll to Shaphan who read it.

⁹ Then Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought back word to the king and said, “Your servants have emptied out the silver that was found in the House and have given it into the hand of the workmen appointed to oversee the work on the House of *ADONAI*.” ¹⁰ Shaphan the scribe also told the king, saying, “Hilkiyah the *kohen* has given me a scroll.” Then Shaphan read it before the king.

¹¹ After the king heard the words of the *Torah* scroll, he tore his clothes. ¹² Then the king commanded Hilkiyah the *kohen*, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king’s servant saying: ¹³ “Go, inquire of *ADONAI* for me, for the people and for all Judah, about the words of this scroll that was found. For great is the wrath of *ADONAI* that is kindled against us, since our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do everything written here that concerns us.”

Consulting Huldah the Prophetess

¹⁴ So Hilkiyah the *kohen*, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe—she was living in the Second Quarter of Jerusalem—and spoke with her. ¹⁵ She said to them, “Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: Tell the man that sent you to me: ¹⁶ ‘Thus says *ADONAI*, behold, I am bringing disaster on this place and on its inhabitants, as in all the words of the scroll that the king of Judah read. ¹⁷ For they have forsaken Me and burned incense to other gods, in order to provoke Me with all the work of their hands. Therefore My wrath has been kindled against this place and it will not be quenched.’

¹⁸ “But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of *ADONAI*, thus will you say to him: ‘Thus says *ADONAI*, God of Israel. As for the words that you have heard, ¹⁹ because your heart was softened and you humbled yourself before *ADONAI* when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants—that they should become a desolation and a curse—and because you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you,’ declares *ADONAI*. ²⁰ ‘Therefore behold, I will gather you to your fathers and you will be gathered to your grave in *shalom*. So your eyes will not see all the disaster I am bringing on this place.’” Then they brought back word to the king.

Josiah Renews the Covenant

²³ Then the king sent for and they gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. ² The king went up to the House of *ADONAI* and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him—the *kohanim* and the prophets, all the people, young and old—and he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which was found in the House of *ADONAI*. ³ Then the king stood by the pillar and cut a covenant before *ADONAI*, to follow *ADONAI*, keep His *mitzvot*, His laws and His decrees with all their heart and soul, in order to fulfill the words of this covenant that were written in this scroll. So all the people stood for the covenant.

⁴ Then the king commanded Hilkiyah the *kohen gadol*, the *kohanim* of the second order, and the doorkeepers to bring out of the Temple of *ADONAI* all the vessels made for Baal and Asherah, and all the host of heaven, and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and took their ashes to Beth-El. ⁵ He stopped the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained from burning incense on the high places in the towns of Judah and around Jerusalem, as well those burning incense to Baal, the sun, the moon, the constellations, and to all the host of heaven.

⁶ Then he brought out the Asherah pole from the House of *ADONAI* to Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem, burned it in the Kidron Valley, ground it to dust and threw its dust over the graves of the common people.

⁷ Then he tore down the quarters of the male cult prostitutes that had been in the House of *ADONAI*, where the women had been weaving coverings for the Asherah.

⁸ Then he brought all the priests from the towns of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-Sheba. He also broke down the high places of the gates that were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua, the city governor, which were on one’s left as one entered the city gate. ⁹ Nevertheless, the priests of the high places did not go up to the altar of *ADONAI* in Jerusalem, but they did eat *matzot* with their kinsmen.

¹⁰ Next he defiled Topheth, which is in the Ben-Hinnom Valley, so that no one might make his son or daughter pass through the fire for Molech. ¹¹ Then he did away with the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance of the House of *ADONAI*, in the colonnades by the chamber of the officer Nethan-Melech, and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

¹² The king also tore down the altars made by the kings of Judah on the roof—the upper chamber of Ahaz and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courtyards of the House of *ADONAI*. He smashed them suddenly there and threw their dust into the Kidron Valley. ¹³ The king also desecrated the shrines facing Jerusalem—to the south of the Mount of De-

struction—which King Solomon of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ¹⁴ He smashed the pillars and cut down the Asherah poles and filled their places with human bones.

Prophecy Fulfilled at Beth-El

¹⁵ Moreover, the altar that was at Beth-El and the shrine built by Jeroboam son of Nebat—who caused Israel to sin—that altar and the shrine he demolished, too. He burned the shrine and ground it to dust, and burned up the Asherah. ¹⁶ Then, as Josiah looked around, he saw the burial caves there on the mountain, so he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, thus desecrating it—as was the word of *ADONAI* which the man of God had proclaimed, who foretold it.

¹⁷ Then he asked, “What is this monument I see?”

So the men of the town told him, “It is the tomb of the man of God, who came from Judah and proclaimed these things that you have just done to the altar of Beth-El.”

¹⁸ “Let him rest,” he said. “Let no one disturb his bones.” So they left his bones undisturbed along with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria.

¹⁹ Josiah also removed all the shrines of the high places that the kings of Israel had built in the towns of Samaria to provoke. He did to them just as he had done in Beth-El. ²⁰ All the priests of the high places there he slaughtered on the altars, and burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ Then the king commanded all the people saying, “Celebrate the Passover to *ADONAI* your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.” ²² For no Passover like this had been celebrated from the days of the judges who judged Israel or in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. ²³ But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was observed for *ADONAI* in Jerusalem.

²⁴ Moreover, Josiah got rid of the necromancers and the mediums, the teraphim and the idols, and all the detestable things that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem—in order to confirm the words of the *Torah* that were written in the scroll that Hilkiyah the *kohen* found in the House of *ADONAI*.

²⁵ Before him there had never been a king like him, who turned to *ADONAI* with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the *Torah* of Moses, nor has any king like him risen since him.

Josiah's Death

²⁶ Nevertheless, *ADONAI* did not turn from the fury of His great wrath which burned against Judah, because of all that Manasseh had provoked Him. ²⁷ *ADONAI* said, “I will banish Judah also from My presence as I banished Israel, and I have spurned this city,

Jerusalem, which I chose, and the House about which I had said: ‘My Name will be there.’”

²⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ²⁹ In his days Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, went up against the king of Assyria to the Euphrates River. King Josiah marched against him, but Necho killed him at Megiddo when he saw him.

³⁰ So his servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb.

Judah's Decline

Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him and made him king in his father's place. ³¹ Jehoahaz was 23 years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ³² But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, as in all that his ancestors had done. ³³ Then Pharaoh Necho imprisoned him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so he would not reign in Jerusalem. He also imposed on the land a fine of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold.

³⁴ Then Pharaoh Necho installed Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away and brought him to Egypt, and he died there. ³⁵ Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money in keeping with Pharaoh's command. He exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land, each according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Necho. ³⁶ Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. ³⁷ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, just as in all that his ancestors had done.

Judah Exiled to Babylon

24 In his days, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded, so Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. But he turned and rebelled against him. ² Then *ADONAI* sent against him marauding bands of the Chaldeans, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites—He sent them against Judah to destroy it, as was the word of *ADONAI* that He had spoken by the hand of His servants the prophets. ³ Surely at the command of *ADONAI* this happened to Judah, to banish them from His presence, because of all the sins of Manasseh and all that he had committed, ⁴ and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed—for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood that *ADONAI* was not willing to pardon. ⁵ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? ⁶ So

Jehoiakim slept with his fathers, and his son Jehoiachin became king in his place.

⁷ No longer did the king of Egypt march out of his country, for the king of Babylon had seized all the land that once belonged to the king of Egypt, from the Wadi of Egypt to the Euphrates River. ⁸ Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnatan of Jerusalem. ⁹ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, like all his father had done.

¹⁰ At that time, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon's troops marched against Jerusalem and the city fell under siege. ¹¹ Then King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon himself arrived at the city while his troops were besieging it. ¹² Then King Jehoiachin of Judah, his mother, his courtiers, his officials, and his eunuchs surrendered to the king of Babylon. So the king of Babylon took him captive in the eighth year of his reign. ¹³ He also carried off from there all the treasures of *ADONAI*'s House and the treasures of the royal palace, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold that King Solomon of Israel had made in the Temple of *ADONAI*—just as *ADONAI* had said. ¹⁴ Then He exiled all Jerusalem—all the captains, all the mighty men of valor, all the craftsmen, and the smiths—10,000 exiles. None was left except the poorest sort of the people of the land.

¹⁵ So he deported Jehoiachin to Babylon, along with the king's mother, the king's wives, his officials and the notables of the land—he deported all as captives from Jerusalem to Babylon. ¹⁶ All the men of valor, 7,000 strong and fit for war, and 1,000 craftsmen and smiths, the king of Babylon also took as captives to Babylon.

¹⁷ Then the king of Babylon appointed Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. ¹⁸ Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king, and he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ¹⁹ But he did what was evil in *ADONAI*'s eyes, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰ For through the anger of *ADONAI* it came to a point in Jerusalem and Judah that He finally banished them from His presence.

Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Destruction of Jerusalem

25 Now it came to pass in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and his entire army advanced against Jerusalem, set up camp by it, and built a siege wall all around it. ² So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

³ On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine became so severe in the city that there was no bread for the common people.

⁴ Then the city was broken into, and all the warriors fled by night by the way of the gate between the dou-

ble walls near the king's garden—though the Chaldeans were all around the city—and they went by the way to the Arabah. ⁵ But the Chaldean army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. ⁶ So they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and passed sentence on him. ⁷ They slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his eyes, then put out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and took him to Babylon.

⁸ Now on the seventh day of the fifth month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the imperial guard, officer of the Babylonian king, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned down the House of *ADONAI*, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem—every notable building he burned with fire.

¹⁰ Then the whole Chaldean army that was with the captain of the guard demolished the walls of Jerusalem on every side. ¹¹ Then the remnant of the people who were left in the city—the deserters who had defected to the Babylonian king and the rest of the populace—Nebuzaradan captain of the guard exiled them. ¹² But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and field hands.

¹³ Now the Chaldeans broke into pieces the bronze pillars that were in the House of *ADONAI*, the stands and the bronze sea that were in the House of *ADONAI*, and carried their bronze away to Babylon. ¹⁴ They also took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the pans, and all the bronze vessels that were used in Temple service. ¹⁵ The captain of the guard took away the fire pans and the basins—whatever was gold or silver. ¹⁶ The two pillars, the one sea, and the stands which Solomon had made for the House of *ADONAI*—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight. ¹⁷ The height of each pillar was eighteen cubits, with a bronze capital on top. The height of the capital was three cubits, with a netting of copper pomegranates encircling the capital. The same was true of the second pillar with its netting.

¹⁸ Then the captain of the guard took away Seraiah the chief *kohen*, Zephaniah the deputy *kohen*, and the three doorkeepers. ¹⁹ From the city he took an official who had been overseeing the soldiers and five of the royal advisers who were found in the city, and the scribe of the army captain who mustered the people of the land, and 60 men of the common people that were found in the city. ²⁰ Nebuzaradan the captain of the 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. Thus Judah was exiled from its land.

²² Now as for the people that were left in the land of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had left, he appointed over them Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan. ²³ Now when all the captains of the

troops, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah as governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite—they and their men. ²⁴ Gedaliah swore to them and to their men and said to them, “Don’t be afraid of the Chaldean officials. Stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well for you.”

²⁵ But it came to pass in the seventh month that Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, of royal descent, came with ten men and assassinated Gedaliah, so he died along with the Judeans and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. ²⁶ So all the people, young

and old, and the captains of the troops, got up and fled to Egypt, for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

²⁷ Now it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month, that King Evil-Merodach of Babylon, in the year he became king, released King Jehoiachin of Judah from prison. ²⁸ He spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the throne of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹ So he changed his prison garments, and regularly ate bread in the king’s presence all the days of his life. ³⁰ As for his allowance, a regular allowance was granted to him by the king, an allotment for each day, all the days of his life.

1 Chronicles

1 & 2 Chronicles Introduction

The 1 and 2 books of Chronicles actually are the final books of the Hebrew canon. The Hebrew title of these works is, דברי הימים, meaning “the words of the days.” One can only speculate who was the author of Chronicles. Hebrew tradition asserts that Ezra was its author; other recent scholars view its author as an anonymous writer from the postexilic period. In addition, because of the genealogies, one can only assume its dating. Chronicles was not written until approximately one hundred years after the writing of the book of 1 Kings, yet practiced selectivity, in order to highlight God’s workings among His children.

Chronicles announces that God’s covenant and promises are still true. The chronicler did not attempt to re-write history in any way. The author sourced much content from the books of Kings. His focus was mainly on the reign of David, the reign of Solomon, and the Kingdom of Judah.

1 Chronicles chapters 1-9 are often passed over by readers, as deemed unimportant or boring. Yet, Judaism embraces this ‘tribal’ system even in the 21st century. These tribes denote the purity that God established with the children of Israel. Beginning with chapters 10 through 29 highlight the reign of King David. One can see the faithfulness of God throughout David’s life. 1 Chronicles 17:9 notes “[says] I will establish a place for My people Israel, and plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and shall tremble no more. Violent people will no longer wear them down, as they did formerly...”

The reign of Solomon is chronicled in the second book, chapters 1-9. As the Queen of Sheba noted in 2 Chronicles 9:6: “But I did not believe their reports until I came and saw with my own eyes. And behold, not even half of the greatness of wisdom was described to me – you surpass the report that I heard!” The splendor of Solomon was regally reported by the Chronicler, yet his focus was primarily on the construction of the Temple. One familiar verse is 2 Chronicles 7:14: “...when My people, over whom My Name is called, humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” The author heralds command to repentance as the prototype for blessing.

The second book of Chronicles is a portrayal of the Kingdom of Judah, chapters 10-36. The Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdoms were formed, yet the Chronicler focused on the Southern Kingdom of Judah. This book ends with the edict of Cyrus, the end of the exile and the return of the Jewish people to Jerusalem. God had indeed heard from heaven and had begun to heal the Land.

1 Chronicles Headings

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 Defeating the Ammonites
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 Census and Plague
 Preparing for the Temple
 Census of Levites
 Orders of Prophetic Levites
 Gatekeepers and Treasurers
 David's Officers
 Men and Materials
 David Commissions His Son
 Solomon Acclaimed King

From Adam to Abraham

¹ Adam, Seth, Enosh, ² Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, ³ Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech; ⁴ Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
⁵ The sons of Japheth:
 Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tuval, Meshech, and Tiras.
⁶ The sons of Gomer:
 Ashkenaz, Diphath, and Togarmah.
⁷ The sons of Javan:
 Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.
⁸ The sons of Ham:
 Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.
⁹ The sons of Cush:
 Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca.
 The sons of Raama:
 Sheba and Dedan.
¹⁰ Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first mighty warrior on the earth.
¹¹ Mizraim fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naph-tuhim, ¹² Pathrusim, Casluhim—from whom the Philistines came—and Caphtorim.
¹³ Canaan fathered Zidon his firstborn, Heth, ¹⁴ and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁵ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁶ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.
¹⁷ The sons of Shem:
 Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud;
 Aram: Uz, Chul, Geter, and Meshech.
¹⁸ Arpachshad fathered Shelah
 and Shelah fathered Eber.
¹⁹ To Eber were born two sons:
 the name of the one was Peleg †—for in his days the earth was divided—

† *Meaning division*

and his brother's name was Joktan.

²⁰ Joktan fathered:

Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah; ²¹ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²² Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, ²³ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

²⁴ Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah,

²⁵ Eber, Peleg, Reu,

²⁶ Serug, Nahor, Terah,

²⁷ Abram—that is Abraham.

Abraham's Descendants

²⁸ The sons of Abraham:

Isaac and Ishmael.

²⁹ These are their descendants:

the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth, then Kedar, Ad-beel, Mibsam, ³⁰ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, ³¹ Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.

³² The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine:
 she bore Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

The sons of Jokshan:

Sheba and Dedan.

³³ The sons of Midian:

Ephah, Epher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah.

All these were the sons of Keturah.

³⁴ Abraham also fathered Isaac.

The sons of Isaac:

Esau and Israel.

³⁵ The sons of Esau:

Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

³⁶ The sons of Eliphaz:

Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek.

³⁷ The sons of Reuel:

Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

³⁸ The sons of Seir:
Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan.

³⁹ The sons of Lotan:
Hori and Homam.
Lotan's sister was Timna.

⁴⁰ The sons of Shobal:
Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam.

The sons of Zibeon:
Aiah and Anah.

⁴¹ The sons of Anah:
Dishon.

The sons of Dishon:
Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran.

⁴² The sons of Etzer:
Bilhan, Zaavan, Jaakan.

The sons of Dishan:
Uz and Aran.

Edom's Rulers

⁴³ Now these were the kings who ruled in the land of Edom, before any king ruled over *Bnei-Yisrael*:
Bela the son of Beor, the name of his city was Dinhabah.

⁴⁴ When Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah ruled in his place.

⁴⁵ When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites ruled in his place.

⁴⁶ When Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, ruled in his place—the name of his city was Avith.

⁴⁷ When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah ruled in his place.

⁴⁸ When Samlah died, Shaul of Rehoboth-on-the-River ruled in his place.

⁴⁹ When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor ruled in his place.

⁵⁰ When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad ruled in his place—the name of his city was Pai, and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-Zahab. ⁵¹ Then Hadad died.

So the tribal 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.

Israel and Judah's Descendants

2 These are the sons of Israel:
Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, ² Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

³ The sons of Judah:
Er, Onan, and Shelah—the three were born to him by Bath-Shua the Canaanite woman. But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of *ADONAI*, so He put him to death. ⁴ Then Tamar his daughter-in-law bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

⁵ The sons of Perez:
Hezron and Hamul.

⁶ The sons of Zerah:
Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara, five in all.

⁷ The sons of Carmi:
Achar, the troubler of Israel who violated the ban of devoted things.

⁸ The sons of Ethan: Azariah.

⁹ The sons of Hezron who were born to him:
Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai.

¹⁰ Ram fathered Amminadab;
Amminadab fathered Nahshon, the leader of the children of Judah.

¹¹ Nahshon fathered Salma;
Salma fathered Boaz.

¹² Boaz fathered Obed;
Obed fathered Jesse.

¹³ Jesse fathered Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab was second, Shimea third, ¹⁴ Nethanel fourth, Raddai fifth, ¹⁵ Ozem sixth, and David seventh. ¹⁶ Their sisters were Zeruihah and Abigail. The three sons of Zeruihah were Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. ¹⁷ Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite.

¹⁸ Caleb son of Hezron fathered children by Azubah his wife and by Jerioth. These were her sons: Jeshur, Shobab, and Ardon. ¹⁹ When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. ²⁰ Hur fathered Uri and Uri fathered Bezalel.

²¹ Afterward Hezron had relations with the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead—he had married her when he was 60 years old—and she bore him Segub.

²² Segub fathered Jair, who had 23 cities in the land of Gilead. ²³ But Geshur and Aram took the towns of Jair from them, along with Kenath and its surrounding villages, 60 towns. All these were the sons of Machir the father of Gilead.

²⁴ After the death of Hezron in Caleb-Ephrath, Abijah, Hezron's wife, bore him Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

²⁵ Now the sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron: Ram the firstborn, then Bunah, Oren, Ozem and Ahijah. ²⁶ Jerahmeel had another wife whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.

²⁷ The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel:
Maaz, Jamin, and Eker.

²⁸ The sons of Onam:
Shammai and Jada.

The sons of Shammai:
Nadab and Abishur.

²⁹ The name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid.

³⁰ The sons of Nadab:
Seled and Appaim, but Seled died without children.

³¹ The sons of Appaim:
Ishi, who was the father of Sheshan.
Sheshan was the father of Ahlai.

³² The sons of Jada the brother of Shammai:
Jeter and Jonathan—Jeter died without sons.

³³ The sons of Jonathan:

Pelet and Zaza.

These were the sons of Jerahmeel.

³⁴ Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. But Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha. ³⁵ So Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant as a wife, and she bore him Attai. ³⁶ Then Attai fathered Nathan, and Nathan fathered Zabad. ³⁷ Zabad fathered Ephlal, and Ephlal fathered Obed. ³⁸ Obed fathered Jehu, and Jehu fathered Azariah. ³⁹ Azariah fathered Helez, and Helez fathered Eleasah. ⁴⁰ Eleasah fathered Sisamai, and Sisamai fathered Shallum. ⁴¹ Shallum fathered Jekamiah, and Jekamiah fathered Elishama.

⁴² Now the sons of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel: Meshah his firstborn, who was the father of Ziph, and his son Mareshah the father of Hebron.

⁴³ The sons of Hebron:

Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema.

⁴⁴ Shema fathered Raham, the father of Jorkeam. Rekem fathered Shammai. ⁴⁵ The son of Shammai was Maon and Maon was the father of Beth-Zur.

⁴⁶ Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; and Haran fathered Gazez.

⁴⁷ The sons of Jahdai:

Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.

⁴⁸ Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. ⁴⁹ She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheba the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibeon. The daughter of Caleb was Achsah.

⁵⁰ These were the descendants of Caleb.

The sons of Hur the firstborn of Ephrath:

Shobal the father of Kiriath-Jearim, ⁵¹ Salma the father of Beth-Lehem and Hareph the father of Beth-Gader.

⁵² Shobal the father of Kiriath-Jearim had sons:

Haroeh, half of the Menuhites. ⁵³ The clans of Kiriath-Jearim: the Itrites, the Puhtites, the Shumathites, the Mishraitites; from them came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites.

⁵⁴ The sons of Salma:

Beth-Lehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-Beth-Joab, half the Manathathites, the Zorites, ⁵⁵ and the clans of scribes who lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and the Sucathites. These were the Kenites who descended from Hammath, the father of the Rechabites.

David's Descendants

3 Now these were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite woman; second, Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelite woman; ² third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; ³ fifth, Shephatiah by Abital; the sixth, Ithream by his wife Eglah.

⁴ Six were born to him in Hebron. There he reigned seven years and six months; then in Jerusalem he reigned 33 years.

⁵ These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon. These four were from Bath-Shua † the daughter of Ammiel;

⁶ and the other nine were Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, ⁷ Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁸ Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet. ⁹ All these were sons of David, besides his sons by the concubines. Tamar was their sister.

¹⁰ Solomon's son was Rehoboam.

Abijah was his son,

Asa his son,

Jehoshaphat his son,

¹¹ Joram his son,

Ahaziah his son,

Joash his son,

¹² Amaziah his son,

Azariah his son,

Jotham his son,

¹³ Ahaz his son,

Hezekiah his son,

Manasseh his son,

¹⁴ Amon his son,

and Josiah his son.

¹⁵ The sons of Josiah:

Johanan the firstborn,

Jehoiakim the second,

Zedekiah the third,

and Shallum the fourth.

¹⁶ The sons of Jehoiakim:

Jeconiah was his son,

Zedekiah his son.

¹⁷ The sons of Jeconiah, the captive:

Shealtiel his son, ¹⁸ Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

¹⁹ The sons of Pedaiah:

Zerubbabel and Shimei.

The sons of Zerubbabel:

Meshullam and Hananiah; Shelomith was their sister, ²⁰ and five others:

Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushabhesed.

²¹ The sons of Hananiah:

Pelatiah and Jeshaiah, whose son was Rephaiah, whose son was Arnan, whose son was Obadiah, whose son was Shecaniah.

²² The descendants of Shecaniah:

Shemaiah and sons Hatush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat—six in all.

²³ The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam—three in all.

²⁴ The sons of Elioenai were Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelatiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani—seven in all.

† Also known as Bethsheba.

Judah's Descendants

4 The sons of Judah:

Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur and Shobal.

² Reaiah the son of Shobal fathered Jahath, and Jahath fathered Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites.

³ These were the sons of Etam:

Jezeel, Ishma, and Idbash. The name of their sister was Hazleponi.

⁴ Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These were the descendants of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Beth-Lehem.

⁵ Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah. ⁶ Naarah bore him Ahuzam, Hepher, Timeni, and Ahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.

⁷ The sons of Helah:

Zereth, Zohar, and Ethnan.

⁸ Koz fathered Anub and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel, the son of Harum.

Prayer of Jabez

⁹ Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers. His mother named him Jabez saying, "Because I bore him with pain." ¹⁰ Jabez called out to the God of Israel, saying, "If only You would greatly bless me, and enlarge my territory. Let Your hand be with me and keep me from harm so that I might not suffer pain." *ADONAI* granted what he asked.

Other Descendants of Judah

¹¹ Chelub, the brother of Shuhah, fathered Mehir, who was the father of Eshton. ¹² Eshton fathered Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-Nahash. These were the men of Recah.

¹³ The sons of Kenaz:

Othniel and Seraiah.

The sons of Othniel:

Hatath ¹⁴ and Meonothai, who fathered Ophrah.

Seraiah fathered Joab, the father of Ge-Harashim †, for they were craftsmen.

¹⁵ The sons of Caleb, son of Jephunneh:

Iru, Elah, and Naam.

The son of Elah:

Kenaz.

¹⁶ The sons of Jehallelel:

Ziph, Ziphah, Tiriah, and Asarel.

¹⁷ The sons of Ezrah:

Jether, Mered, Ephraim, and Jalon. She also bore Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa.

¹⁸ (His Judahite wife bore Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Soho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.) These were the sons of Bithiah, Pharaoh's daughter whom Mered married.

¹⁹ The sons of Hodiahs wife, the sister of Naham:

the father of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite.

²⁰ The sons of Shimon:

Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon.

The sons of Ishi:

Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth.

²¹ The sons of Shelah, son of Judah:

Er the father of Lecah, Ladah the father of Mareshah, the families of the linen workers at Beth-Ashbea, ²² and Jokim, the men of Cozeba, and Joash and Saraph, who had dominion in Moab and Jashubi-Lehem (the records are ancient). ²³ These were the potters and those who lived in Netaim and Gederah; they lived there while doing the king's work.

Descendants of Simeon

²⁴ The sons of Simeon:

Nemuel, Jamim, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul, ²⁵ his son Shalum, his son Mibsam, and his son Mishma.

²⁶ The descendants of Mishma:

Hammuel, Zaccur his son, and Shimei his son. ²⁷ Now Shimei had 16 sons and six daughters. But his brothers did not have many sons, so their family did not become as numerous as the sons of Judah. ²⁸ They dwelt in 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 towns until the reign of David, ³² together with their villages, Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan—five in all, ³³ along with all the villages that surrounded these towns as far as Baal. These were their habitations.

Registered in their genealogical records were:

³⁴ Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah the son of Amaziah, ³⁵ Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah, son of Seraiah, son of Asiel, ³⁶ Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshoaiyah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, ³⁷ and Ziza son of Shiphai, son of Al-lon, son of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah—³⁸ these mentioned by name were leaders in their families, and their clans increased greatly. ³⁹ Now they went to the entrance of Gedor, to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. ⁴⁰ They found rich and good pasture, and the land was spacious, quiet, and peaceful. The former inhabitants were Hamites. ⁴¹ Now those whose names are recorded came during the days of King Hezekiah of Judah. They attacked the encampments of the Hamites, as well as the Meunim who were found there, and utterly wiped them out to this very day. They settled in their place because there was pasture there for their flocks. ⁴² About 500 of them from the descendants of Simeon, led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, went to Mount Seir ⁴³ where they struck down the remaining Amalekites who had escaped, and they live there to this day.

† *Lit. the valley of the craftsmen*

Descendants of Reuben

5 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel—he was the firstborn, but when he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel—so he is not reckoned as the firstborn in the genealogical record. ² Though Judah was the strongest among his brothers, and a ruler came from him, [†] the birthright belonged to Joseph.

³ The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel:

Enoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

⁴ The descendants of Joel:

his son Shemaiah, his son Gog, his son Shimei, ⁵ his son Micah, his son Reaiah, his son Baal, ⁶ and his son Beerah whom Tillegath-Pilneser king of Assyria carried into exile. He was the leader of the Reubenites.

⁷ His kinsmen by their families, as listed in their genealogical records:

the leader Jeiel, Zechariah, ⁸ and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel.

They settled in Aroer as far as Nebo and Baal-Meon, ⁹ while in the east they settled as far as the entrance of the wilderness from this side of the river Euphrates, because their cattle had multiplied in the land of Gilead. ¹⁰ Now in the days of Saul they had made war with the Hagrites, who fell by their hand. So they lived in their encampments in the entire eastern area of Gilead.

¹¹ Now the sons of Gad lived opposite them in the land of Bashan as far as Salcah:

¹² Joel the leader, Shapham second, then Janai and Shaphat in Bashan. ¹³ Their kinsmen according to their ancestral families: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber—seven in all.

¹⁴ These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jehishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz. ¹⁵ Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni was leader of their ancestral families. ¹⁶ They lived in Gilead, in Bashan and its surrounding villages, and in all the pasturelands of Sharon, up to their borders. ¹⁷ All these were recorded by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

¹⁸ The sons of Reuben and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh had 44,760 warriors ready for war—men who carried shield and sword and drew the bow, and were skilled in battle. ¹⁹ So they made war with the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. ²⁰ They received help against them, so that the Hagrites and all who were with them were delivered into their hand, for they cried out to God during the battle. He answered their supplications, because they put their trust in Him. ²¹ They took away their livestock: 50,000 of their camels, 250,000 sheep, and 2,000 donkeys, as well as 100,000 people. ²² For many fell slain, because the war was of God. So they dwelt in their place until the exile.

[†] cf. Matt. 2:6.

Manesseh East of Jordan

²³ Now the children of the half-tribe of Manasseh settled in the land from Bashan to Baal-Hermon, Senir and Mount Hermon. They were numerous. ²⁴ These were the heads of their clans: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, Jahdiel. They were mighty men of valor, famous men, heads of their clans.

²⁵ But they were unfaithful to the God of their fathers, and prostituted themselves to the gods of the peoples of the land whom God had destroyed before them. ²⁶ So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of King Pul of Assyria—the spirit of Tillegath-Pilneser king of Assyria—and he carried away the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and to the river of Gozan, to this day.

Descendants of Levi

²⁷ (6:1) The sons of Levi:

Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

²⁸ (6:2) The sons of Kohath:

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

²⁹ (6:3) The children of Amram:

Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.

The sons of Aaron:

Nadav and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

³⁰ (6:4) Eleazar fathered Phinehas and Phinehas fathered Abishua. ³¹ (6:5) Abishua fathered Bukki, and Bukki fathered Uzzi. ³² (6:6) Uzzi fathered Zerachiah and Zerachiah fathered Meraioth. ³³ (6:7) Meraioth fathered Amariah and Amariah fathered Ahitub. ³⁴ (6:8) Ahitub fathered Zadok and Zadok fathered Ahimaaz.

³⁵ (6:9) Ahimaaz fathered Azariah and Azariah fathered Johanan. ³⁶ (6:10) Johanan fathered Azariah, who served as *kohen* in the House that Solomon built in Jerusalem. ³⁷ (6:11) Azariah fathered Amariah, and Amariah fathered Ahitub. ³⁸ (6:12) Ahitub fathered Zadok, and Zadok fathered Shallum. ³⁹ (6:13) Shallum fathered Hilkiah, and Hilkiah fathered Azariah, ⁴⁰ (6:14) and Azariah fathered Seraiah, and Seraiah fathered Jehozadak. ⁴¹ (6:15) Jehozadak went into captivity when ADONAI exiled Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

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6 (16) The sons of Levi:
Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.

² (17) These are the names of the sons of Gershom:

Libni and Shimei.

³ (18) The sons of Kohath:

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

⁴ (19) The sons of Merari:

Mahli and Mushi.

These are the families of the Levites according to their clans.

⁵ (20) Of Gershom:

Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son, ⁶ (21) Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son and Jeatherai his son.

⁷ (22) The sons of Kohath:

Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son, ⁸ (23) Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son, ⁹ (24) Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uziah his son, and Shaul his son.

¹⁰ (25) The sons of Elkanah:

Amasai and Ahimoth, ¹¹ (26) his son Elkanah, Zophai his son, Nahath his son, ¹² (27) Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.

¹³ (28) The sons of Samuel:

his first-born Vashni, then Abiah.

¹⁴ (29) The sons of Merari:

Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son, ¹⁵ (30) Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

¹⁶ (31) Now these are the men David appointed to be in charge of the singing in the House of *ADONAI*, after the Ark came to rest. ¹⁷ (32) They ministered with song in front of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting, until Solomon built the House of *ADONAI* in Jerusalem. They carried out their *avodah* according to their regulations.

¹⁸ (33) These are the ones who took their station, with their sons.

Of the sons of the Kohathites:

Heman the singer, son of Joel, son of Samuel, ¹⁹ (34) son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah, ²⁰ (35) son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai, ²¹ (36) son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah, ²² (37) son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, ²³ (38) son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel.

²⁴ (39) His kinsman Asaph stood on his right—Asaph son of Berechiah, son of Shimea, ²⁵ (40) son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchijah, ²⁶ (41) son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah, ²⁷ (42) son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei, ²⁸ (43) son of Jahath, son of Gershom, son of Levi.

²⁹ (44) On the left hand their kinsmen the sons of Merari: Ethan son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch, ³⁰ (45) son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son of Hilkiyah, ³¹ (46) son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer, ³² (47) son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, son of Levi.

³³ (48) Their fellow Levites were appointed for all the *avodah* of the tabernacle of the House of God. ³⁴ (49) But Aaron and his sons were the ones presenting offerings on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, for all the service of the Holy of Holies, and to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

³⁵ (50) Now these are the sons of Aaron:

Eleazar his son, Phineas his son, Abishua his son, ³⁶ (51) Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, ³⁷

(52) Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, ³⁸ (53) Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

Towns and Lands for Levites

³⁹ (54) Now these are their dwelling places according to their encampments in their territories. To Aaron's sons of the Kohathite families (for theirs was the first lot), ⁴⁰ (55) to them they assigned Hebron in the land of Judah, and the open land around it; ⁴¹ (56) but the fields of the city and the villages, they gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh. ⁴² (57) To sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge: Hebron, also Libnah with its open land, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its open land, ⁴³ (58) Hilen with its open land, Debir with its open land, ⁴⁴ (59) Ashan with its open land, and Beth-Shemesh with its open land. ⁴⁵ (60) From the tribe of Benjamin: Geba with its open land, and Alemeth with its open land, and Anathoth with its open land. They had 13 cities in all among their families.

⁴⁶ (61) To the rest of the sons of Kohath ten cities were assigned by lot from the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh. ⁴⁷ (62) To the sons of Gershom, according to their families, 13 cities were assigned from the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from tribe of Naphtali and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁴⁸ (63) To the sons of Merari, 12 cities were assigned by lot, according to their families, from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad and from the tribe of Zebulun.

⁴⁹ (64) So *Bnei-Yisrael* gave to the Levites the cities with their open land. ⁵⁰ (65) They also assigned by lot from the tribe of the children of Judah, from the tribe of the children of Simeon, and from the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities that were mentioned by name.

⁵¹ (66) Some of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their territory from the tribe of Ephraim. ⁵² (67) They assigned to them as cities of refuge: Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim with its open land, Gezer also with its open land, ⁵³ (68) Jokmeam with its open land, Beth-Horon with its open land ⁵⁴ (69) Aijalon with its open land, and Gath-Rimmon with its open land. ⁵⁵ (70) Also from the half-tribe of Manasseh: Aner with its open land and Bileam with its open land, for the rest of the family of the sons of Kohath. ⁵⁶ (71) To the sons of Gershom were assigned, from the family of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its open land and Ashtaroth with its open land, ⁵⁷ (72) and from the tribe of Issachar, Kedesh with its open land, Dobrath with its open land, ⁵⁸ (73) Ramoth with its open land, and Anem with its open land, ⁵⁹ (74) and from the tribe of Asher, Mashal with its open land, Abdon with its open land, ⁶⁰ (75) Hukok with its open land, Rehob with its open land, ⁶¹ (76) and from the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with its open land, Hammon with its open land and Kiriathaim with its open land. ⁶² (77) To the rest—the sons of Merari—were assigned, from the tribe of Ze-

bulun, Rimmono with its open land, Tabor with its open land, ⁶³ (78) and beyond the Jordan at Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with its open land, Jahaz with its open land, ⁶⁴ (79) Kedemoth with its open land, and Mephaath with its open land ⁶⁵ (80) and from the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its open land, Mahanaim with its open land, ⁶⁶ (81) Heshbon with its open land, and Jazer with its open land.

Descendants of Other Tribes

7 The sons of Issachar:

Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron—four.

² The sons of Tola were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their clans. The descendants of Tola were mighty men of valor; their number in the days of David was 22,600.

³ The son of Uzzi was Izrahiah, and the sons of Izrahiah:

Michael, Obadiah, Joel, Isshiah—all five of them were leaders.

⁴ Along with them, by their generations after their clans were 36,000 troops of the army for battle, for they had many wives and sons. ⁵ Their kinsmen among all the families of Issachar by genealogical records were mighty men of valor—87,700.

⁶ The sons of Benjamin:

Bela, Becher, and Jediael—three.

⁷ The sons of Bela:

Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri—five. They were heads of clans, mighty men of valor; by genealogical records they were 22,034.

⁸ The sons of Becher:

Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth—all sons of Becher. ⁹ According to their genealogical records, their descendants were heads of their clans, 22,200 mighty men of valor.

¹⁰ Finally the sons of Jediael:

Bilhan.

The sons of Bilhan:

Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Alishahar. ¹¹ All these were sons of Jediael, heads of their clans, mighty men of valor, 17,200 who were able to go out in the army for war. ¹² Shuppim and Huppim were sons of Ir; Hushim was the son of Aher.

¹³ The sons of Naphtali were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhan.

¹⁴ One of the sons of Manasseh was Asriel, whom she bore; his Aramean concubine bore Machir the father of Gilead. ¹⁵ Machir took a wife from Huppim and Shuppim. His sister's name was Maacah. The name of the second was Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had daughters.

¹⁶ Machir's wife Maacah bore a son and she named him Peresh. His brother's name was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rekem. ¹⁷ Ulam's son was Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead son of Machir, son of

Manasseh. ¹⁸ His sister Hammolecheth bore Ish-Hod, Abiezer and Mahlah. ¹⁹ Shemida's sons were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

²⁰ The descendants of Ephraim:

Shuthelah, Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son, ²¹ Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, also Ezer and Elead. The native-born men of Gath killed them because they came down to raid their cattle. ²² Their father Ephraim mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. ²³ Then he went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son and he called him Beriah †, because evil had befallen his house. ²⁴ His daughter was Sheerah, who built both lower and upper Beth-Horon, and also Uzen-Sheerah. ²⁵ Rephah was his son, Resheph his son, Telah his son, Tahan his son, ²⁶ Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, ²⁷ Nun his son, and Joshua his son.

²⁸ Their possessions and settlements were Beth-El and its villages, and to the east Naaran, and to the west Gezer with its villages, as well as Shechem and its villages, as far as Aiah and its villages, ²⁹ and along the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth-Shean and its villages, Taanach and its villages, Megiddo and its villages, Dor and its villages. In these lived the children of Joseph son of Israel.

³⁰ The sons of Asher:

Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah.

³¹ The sons of Beriah:

Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith.

³² Heber fathered Japhlet, Shomer, and Hotham, and their sister Shua.

³³ The sons of Japhlet were Pasach, Bimhal, and Asvath. These were the children of Japhlet.

³⁴ The sons of Shemer:

Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram.

³⁵ The sons of his brother Helem:

Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal.

³⁶ The sons of Zophah:

Suah, Harnepher, Shaul, Beri, Imrah, ³⁷ Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera.

³⁸ The sons of Jether:

Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara.

³⁹ The sons of Ulla:

Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. ⁴⁰ All these were the descendants of Asher, heads of the clans, choice and mighty men of valor, chief of the princes. The number of them recorded by genealogy for service in war was 26,000 men.

Descendants of Benjamin

8 Benjamin fathered Bela his firstborn, Ashbel second, Ahrah third, ² Nohah the fourth, and Rapha fifth.

³ Bela's sons were:

Addar, Gera, Abihud, ⁴ Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, ⁵ Gera, Shephuphan, and Hiram.

† *Meaning Excellent*

⁶ These were the sons of Ehud—the heads of clans of the inhabitants of Geba, who were taken captive to Manahath:

⁷ Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera—he took them captive and fathered Uzza and Ahihud.

⁸ Shahraraim fathered children in the country of Moab after divorcing his wives Hushim and Baara. ⁹ By his wife Hodesh he fathered Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, ¹⁰ Jeuz, Sachiah, and Mirmah. These were his sons, family leaders.

¹¹ By Hushim he fathered Abitub and Elpaal.

¹² The sons of Elpaal:

Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its villages; ¹³ Beriah and Shema, leaders of the clans living in Aijalon and who drove out the inhabitants of Gath.

¹⁴ Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, ¹⁵ Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, ¹⁶ Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah.

¹⁷ Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber ¹⁸ Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were sons of Elpaal.

¹⁹ Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, ²⁰ Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, ²¹ Adahiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were sons of Shimei.

²² Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, ²³ Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, ²⁴ Hananiah, Elam, Anthothiah, ²⁵ Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak.

²⁶ Shamsherai, Shechariah, Athaliah, ²⁷ Jareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were sons of Jeroham. ²⁸ These were leaders of the clans listed in their genealogies. These lived in Jerusalem.

²⁹ Now the father of Gibeon dwelt in Gibeon. His wife's name was Maacah, ³⁰ and his firstborn son was Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, ³¹ Gedor, Ahio, and Zecher ³² and Mikloth who fathered Shimeah. They lived with their relatives in Jerusalem, opposite their relatives.

³³ Ner fathered Kish and Kish fathered Saul. Saul fathered Jonathan, Malchi-Shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

³⁴ Jonathan's son was Merib-Baal and Merib-Baal fathered Micah.

³⁵ Micah's sons:

Pithon, Melech, Taarea, and Ahaz.

³⁶ Ahaz fathered Jehoaddah, Jehoaddah fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri, and Zimri fathered Moza, ³⁷ Moza fathered Binea; Raphah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.

³⁸ Azel had six sons and these were their names:

Azrikam, Bocru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan—all these were sons of Azel.

³⁹ The sons of his brother Eshek:

Ulam his firstborn, Jeush second, and Eliphelet third. ⁴⁰ Now the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valor, archers, and had many sons and grandsons—150. All these were descendants of Benjamin.

Kohanim and Levites in Nehemiah's Day

9 So all Israel were registered by genealogies—behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel.

Judah was carried away captive to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness. ² The first to settle on their property in their towns were Israelites, *kohanim*, Levites, and the Temple servants. ³ Those from the children of Judah, the children of Benjamin, and the children of Ephraim and Manasseh who settled in Jerusalem were: ⁴ Uthai son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, who was a descendant of Perez son of Judah.

⁵ From the Shilonites:

Asaiah the firstborn and his sons.

⁶ From the sons of Zerah: Jeuel and their kinsmen—690.

⁷ From the sons of Benjamin:

Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hasenuah; ⁸ Ibneiah son of Jeroham; and Elah son of Uzzi, son of Michri; and Meshullam son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibneiah, ⁹ and their kinsmen, according to their genealogies—956. All these men were leaders of their clans.

¹⁰ From the *kohanim* :

Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin, ¹¹ Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the ruler of the House of God; ¹² Adahiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malchijah and Maa-sai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer, ¹³ and their kinsmen, heads of their clans 1,760 very able men for the work of *avodah* in the House of God.

¹⁴ From the Levites:

Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, from the sons of Merari; ¹⁵ Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph; ¹⁶ Obadiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun; and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Ne-tophathites.

¹⁷ The gatekeepers:

Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their brothers. Shallum was the leader; ¹⁸ he serves to this day at the king's gate to the east. These were the gatekeepers for the camp of the descendants of Levi. ¹⁹ Shallum son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and his kinsmen from his ancestral clan, the Korahites, were assigned to guard the gates of the Tent. Their ancestors had been responsible for guarding the entrance to the dwelling of *ADONAI* ²⁰ when Phinehas, son of Eleazar had been ruler over them in time past and *ADONAI* was with him. ²¹ Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was gatekeeper of the door of the Tent of Meeting.

²² All these chosen to be gatekeepers at the gates were 212. These were registered in the genealogical records of their villages. David and Samuel the seer had appointed them to their offices. ²³ They and their sons were guards of the gates of the House of *ADONAI*, that is, the Tabernacle. ²⁴ The gatekeepers were posted on the four sides, toward the east, west, north, and south. ²⁵ Their kinsmen in their villages were to come

from time to time and serve with them for seven days. ²⁶ For the four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, were entrusted over the chambers and over the treasuries in the House of God. ²⁷ They would spend the night around the House of God, because they were assigned to guard it and were in charge of opening it morning by morning.

²⁸ Now some of them had charge of the utensils for *avodah*, for by count they brought them in and by count they took them out. ²⁹ Some of them were appointed over the equipment and over all the utensils of the sanctuary, as well as over the fine flour, the wine, the oil, the frankincense, and the spices. ³⁰ But some of the sons of the *kohanim* prepared the mixture of spices. ³¹ Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, was in charge of preparing the flat cakes. ³² Some of the relatives of Kohathites were in charge of preparing the rows of bread every *Shabbat*.

³³ Now these were the singers, patriarchal leaders of the Levites, who stayed in the chambers and were exempt from other service, for they were on duty day and night. ³⁴ These were heads of the Levite families, chiefs in their genealogical records. These lived in Jerusalem.

³⁵ Jeiel, the father of Gibeon, lived in Gibeon. His wife's name was Maacah. ³⁶ His firstborn son was Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, ³⁷ Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth. ³⁸ Mikloth fathered Shimeam. They also lived with their kinsmen in Jerusalem, opposite their kinsmen.

³⁹ Ner fathered Kish and Kish fathered Saul. Saul fathered Jonathan, Malchi-Shua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

⁴⁰ The son of Jonathan was Merib-Baal and Merib-Baal fathered Micah.

⁴¹ The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melech, Taharea, and Ahaz.

⁴² Ahaz fathered Jarah and Jarah fathered Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri.

Zimri fathered Moza ⁴³ and Moza fathered Binea; Rephaiah was his son, Eleasah his son and Azel his son.

⁴⁴ Azel had six sons:

Azrikam, Bocru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.

Saul Dies on Mount Gilboa

10 Now the Philistines fought against Israel. The men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ² The Philistines pursued Saul and his sons. The Philistines killed Saul's sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchi-Shua. ³ The battle raged around Saul and the archers spotted him and he was wounded by the archers.

⁴ Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, so that these uncircumcised will not come and torture me."

But his armor-bearer refused to do it, because he was terrified. Therefore Saul took the sword and fell on it. ⁵ When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died. ⁶ So Saul and his three sons died; his whole household died together. ⁷ Now when all the men of Israel who were in the valley saw that they had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their towns and fled. The Philistines then came and lived in them.

⁸ The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ They stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines proclaiming the good news to their idols and to the people. ¹⁰ They put his armor in the house of their gods, and hung his head in the house of Dagon.

¹¹ Now when all Jabesh-Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the valiant men arose and retrieved the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons and brought them to Jabesh. They buried their bones under the oak tree in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

¹³ So Saul died because of his unfaithful acts that he committed against the word of *ADONAI*, which he did not keep, and he even consulted a medium for guidance ¹⁴ rather than inquire of *ADONAI*. So He put him to death and transferred the kingdom to David the son of Jesse.

David's Rise and Capture of Zion

11 Then all Israel gathered to David at Hebron, saying: "Behold, we are your own flesh and blood. ² In the past, even when Saul was king, you were the one that led out and brought in Israel. *ADONAI* your God also said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel and you shall be ruler over My people Israel.'"

³ When all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, David made a covenant with them in Hebron before *ADONAI*. They anointed David king over Israel, in keeping with the word of *ADONAI* by the hand of Samuel.

⁴ Then David and all Israel went to Jerusalem—that is Jebus, where the Jebusite inhabitants of the land lived. ⁵ Now the residents of Jebus said to David, "You cannot get in here!" Nevertheless David captured the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David.

⁶ David had said, "Whoever strikes down the Jebusites first will be commander-in-chief." So Joab son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became commander. ⁷ David lived in the stronghold; for this reason it is called the city of David. ⁸ He fortified the city all around, from the Millo to the surrounding walls, and Joab repaired the rest of the city. ⁹ David grew more and more powerful because *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* was with him.

David's Mighty Men

¹⁰ Now these were chiefs of David's mighty men, who strongly supported him in his kingdom, together with all Israel to make him king, according to the word of *ADONAI*, over Israel. ¹¹ This is the list of David's mighty men: Jashobeam the son of Hachmoni, was the chief of the 30; he wielded his spear against 300 and slew them all at one time. ¹² After him was Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite, who was one of the three mighty men. ¹³ He was with David at Pas-Dammim, when the Philistines assembled there for battle. There was a plot of ground full of barley where the army retreated from before the Philistines, ¹⁴ but they took a stand in the middle of the plot; they defended it and struck down the Philistines. *ADONAI* delivered a great victory.

¹⁵ Three of the 30 leaders went down to David at the rock at the cave of Adullam, while a band of the Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

¹⁶ At that time, David was in the stronghold, while the garrison of the Philistines was in Beth-Lehem. ¹⁷ David had a craving and said, "If only someone would give me water to drink from the cistern by the gate in Beth-Lehem!" ¹⁸ So the three broke through the Philistine camp and drew water from the cistern by the gate in Beth-Lehem and carried it back to David. But David refused to drink it. He poured it out to *ADONAI* ¹⁹ and said: "Far be it for me that I should do this before my God! Can I drink the blood of these men who risked their lives?"—for they brought it at the risk of their lives and he would not drink it. Such were the exploits of the Three mighty men.

²⁰ Abishai, Joab's brother, was chief of the Three. He once wielded his spear against 300 and slew them. Thus he won a name among the Three. ²¹ Of the Three, he was more highly esteemed than the other two and became their commander, even though he was not one of the three.

²² Beniah son of Jehoiada was a valiant man from Kabzeel who had done mighty deeds. He killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab, and went down and killed a lion inside a pit on a snowy day. ²³ He also killed the giant Egyptian man who was five cubits tall. In his hand the Egyptian had a spear like a weaver's beam, yet Beniah attacked him with a club. He snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.

²⁴ These were the exploits of Beniah son of Jehoiada, who gained renown among the three mighty men.

²⁵ Behold, he was more honorable than the 30, yet he was not one of the Three. Nevertheless, David set him over his bodyguard.

²⁶ The mighty men were:

Asael Joab's brother,

Elhanan son of Dodo from Beth-Lehem,

²⁷ Shammoth the Harorite,

Helez the Pelonite,

²⁸ Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,

Abiezer the Anathothite,

²⁹ Sibbecai the Hushathite,

Ilai the Ahohite,

³⁰ Mahrai the Netophathite,

Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,

³¹ Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeath of the children of Benjamin,

Benaiah the Pirathonite,

³² Hurai of Nahale-Gaash,

Abiel the Arbathite,

³³ Azmaveth the Baharumite,

Eliabba the Shaalbonite,

³⁴ the sons of Hashem the Gizonite,

Jonathan son of Shageh the Hararite,

³⁵ Ahiam son of Sacar the Hararite,

Eliphai son of Ur,

³⁶ Hephher the Meherathite,

Ahijah the Pelonite,

³⁷ Hezro the Carmelite,

Naarai the son of Ezbai,

³⁸ Joel the brother of Nathan,

Mibhar son of Hagri,

³⁹ Zelek the Ammonite,

Nahrai the Berothite, the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah,

⁴⁰ Ira the Ithrite,

Gareb the Ithrite,

⁴¹ Uriah the Hittite,

Zabad son of Ahlai,

⁴² Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, a chief of the Reubenites, and 30 with him,

⁴³ Hanan son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,

⁴⁴ Uzzijah the Ashterathite,

Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotam the Aroerite,

⁴⁵ Jedaiah son of Shimri and Joha his brother the

Tizite,

⁴⁶ Eliel the Mahavite,

Jeribai and Joshaviah, sons of Elnaam,

and Ithmah the Moabite;

⁴⁷ Eliel, Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

All Israel Rallies to David

12 Now these are the men who came to David at Ziklag when he was banished from the presence of Saul son of Kish. They were among the warriors who assisted him in battle. ² They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left to sling stones and shoot arrows from the bow. They were Saul's kinsmen from Benjamin. ³ Their chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite, Jeziel and Pelet, sons of Azmaveth, and Beracah, Jehu the Anathothite, ⁴ (4a) Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the 30 and leading the 30, ⁵ (4b) Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad the Gederathite, ⁶ (5) Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah the Hariphite, ⁷ (6) Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer and Jashobeam, the Korahites, ⁸ (7) Joelah and Zebadiah, sons of Jeroham from Gedor.

⁹ (8) Some of the Gadites there withdrew to follow David to the stronghold in the wilderness. They were valiant men trained for battle, armed with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions and were as swift as the gazelles on the mountains. ¹⁰ (9) Ezer the chief, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, ¹¹ (10) Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, ¹² (11) Attai the sixth, Eiel the seventh, ¹³ (12) Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, ¹⁴ (13) Jeremiah the tenth, Machbannai the eleventh. ¹⁵ (14) These were the Gadites, leaders of the army. The least was equal to 100 and the greatest to 1,000. ¹⁶ (15) These were the ones who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it was overflowing its banks, routing all those in the valleys to the east and to the west.

¹⁷ (16) Some of the children of Benjamin and also from Judah came to David at the stronghold. ¹⁸ (17) David went out to meet them and answered them saying, "If you come to me in peace to support me, then my heart will be united with you. But if it is to betray me to my adversaries, when my hands have done no wrong, then may the God of our fathers take notice and judge."

¹⁹ (18) Then a spirit came upon Amasai, leader of the 30,

"We are yours, David,
on your side, son of Jesse.
Shalom, *shalom* to you,
and *shalom* to him who helps you,
for your God supports you!"

So David welcomed them and made them leaders of the troops.

²⁰ (19) Some from Manasseh went over to David when he went with the Philistines to battle against Saul. But they did not help them because the Philistine rulers after consultation sent him away, saying: "It would cost us our heads if he defected to his master Saul."

²¹ (20) When he went to Ziklag, these from Manasseh joined him—Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, Zillethai, the leaders of thousands that were from Manasseh. ²² (21) They helped David against the raiding bands, for all of them were valiant warriors and they were officers in the army. ²³ (22) Day by day men came to David to help him until there was a great army like the army of God.

²⁴ (23) These are the numbers of the heads of those armed for war who came to David in Hebron to transfer Saul's kingdom to him, according to the word of *ADONAI*:

²⁵ (24) The sons of Judah that bore shield and spear were 6,800, armed for war;

²⁶ (25) from the sons of Simeon, 7,100 brave warriors ready for war;

²⁷ (26) from the sons of Levi 4,600; ²⁸ (27) Jehoiada the leader of the Aaronides and with him 3,700; ²⁹ (28) Zadok, a young mighty man of valor, with 22 commanders from his clan;

³⁰ (29) from the sons of Benjamin, Saul's kinsmen, 3,000 for up to that time the majority of them had kept their allegiance to Saul's house;

³¹ (30) from the sons of Ephraim 20,800 valliant warriors, famous men in their clan; ³² (31) from the half-tribe of Manasseh 18,000 who were designated by name to come and make David king;

³³ (32) from the sons of Issachar—men who know how to interpret the signs of the times to determine what Israel should do—200 chiefs with all their kinsmen under their command;

³⁴ (33) from Zebulun 50,000 warriors prepared for battle, arrayed with all types of weapons of war, and ready to give their undivided loyalty;

³⁵ (34) from Naphtali 1,000 officers, along with 37,000 with shield and spear;

³⁶ (35) from the Danites, 28,600 equipped for battle;

³⁷ (36) from Asher 40,000 experienced warriors arrayed for battle;

³⁸ (37) and from beyond the Jordan, from the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh 120,000 armed with every type of weapons of war.

³⁹ (38) All these fighting men, prepared for the battle line, came to Hebron with a whole heart to make David king over all Israel. All the rest of Israel were also of one heart to make David king. ⁴⁰ (39) So they were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their kinsmen had given them provision. ⁴¹ (40) Moreover those who were near to them, from as far as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen. There was flour, pressed figs, raisins, wine, oil, cattle, and sheep in abundance—for indeed, there was joy in Israel.

Ark Retrieved from Kiriath-Jearim

13 Then David consulted with the officers of the thousands and of the hundreds, with every leader. ² David said to the entire assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you, and is from *ADONAI Eloheinu*, let us spread the word to our kinsmen who remain in all the regions of Israel, along with the *kohanim* and Levites in their towns and pasturelands to come and join us. ³ Let us bring the Ark of our God back to us—for we did not inquire of it in the days of Saul." ⁴ The entire assembly agreed to do so, for the proposal seemed right in the eyes of all the people.

⁵ So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor of Egypt to the entrance of Hamat, to bring the Ark of God from Kiriath-Jearim. ⁶ David and all Israel went up to Baalah, to Kiriath-Jearim, that was in Judah to bring up from there the Ark of God, *ADONAI* who sits enthroned above the *cheruvim*, which is called by His Name.

⁷ They transported the Ark of God upon a new cart from the house of Abinadab. Uzza and Ahio guided the cart ⁸ while David and all Israel celebrated before God with all their might, with songs, lyres, harps, tim-

brels, cymbals, and trumpets. ⁹ But when they came to the threshing-floor of Hidon, Uzza reached out his hand to hold the Ark, because the oxen stumbled.

¹⁰ The anger of *ADONAI* burned against Uzza, and He struck him down, because he reached out his hand and touched the Ark. He died there before God.

¹¹ David was angry because *ADONAI* had burst out against Uzza. So he called that place Perez-Uzza as it is to this day.

¹² David feared God that day, saying, "How can I ever bring the Ark of God to me?"

¹³ So David did not take the Ark with him to the City of David, but left it in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. ¹⁴ So the Ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house three months; *ADONAI* blessed the house of Obed-Edom and everything that he had.

14 Now King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, as well as cedar logs, stonemasons and carpenters, to build a palace for him. ² Then David knew that *ADONAI* had established him king over Israel, for his kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of His people Israel.

³ David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David fathered more sons and daughters. ⁴ These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ⁵ Ibhah, Elishua, Elpelet, ⁶ Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁷ Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

David Breaks through at Baal-Perazim

⁸ When the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David, but David heard of it and went out before them. ⁹ Now the Philistines had come and raided the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁰ So David inquired of God, asking, "Should I go up against the Philistines? Will You give them over into my hand?"

Then *ADONAI* said to him, "Go up! I will give them over into your hand."

¹¹ So they came up to Baal-Perazim, where David defeated them. David said, "God burst out against my enemies by my hand, like waters burst out!" Therefore they called the name of that place Baal-Perazim [†].

¹² They abandoned their gods there, so David ordered and they were burned with fire.

¹³ But the Philistines again raided the valley. ¹⁴ So David again inquired of God, and God said to him, "Do not go up after them, but circle around behind them and come against them in front of the baca trees ^{††}.

¹⁵ As soon as you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the baca trees, then go out to battle. For God has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines."

[†] Meaning the lord who breaks through ^{††} Meaning is unclear; sometimes translated as balsam trees, mulberry tree, or shrubs.

¹⁶ David did just as God commanded him, and they struck down the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer.

¹⁷ So the fame of David spread throughout every land, and *ADONAI* brought the fear of him upon all nations.

Ark Enters Jerusalem

15 David built houses made for himself in the City of David; he then prepared a place for the Ark of God and pitched a tent for it. ² Then David said, "No one should carry the Ark of God except the Levites, for *ADONAI* has chosen them to carry the Ark of *ADONAI* and to serve Him forever." ³ David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring the Ark of *ADONAI* up to its place that he had prepared for it. ⁴ David gathered together the sons of Aaron and the Levites:

⁵ from the sons of Kohath:

Uriel the leader and 120 of his kinsmen;

⁶ from the sons of Merari:

Asaiah the leader and 220 of his kinsmen;

⁷ from the sons of Gershon:

Joel the leader with 130 of his kinsmen;

⁸ from the sons of Elizaphan:

Shemaiah the leader with 200 of his kinsmen;

⁹ from the sons of Hebron:

Eliel the leader with 80 of his kinsmen;

¹⁰ from the sons of Uzziel:

Amminadab the leader and 112 of his kinsmen.

¹¹ David summoned Zadok and Abiathar the *kohanim*, along with the Levites, Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. ¹² He told them, "You are the heads of the Levitical families. Sanctify yourselves, you and your kinsmen, so that you may bring up the Ark of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. ¹³ Because you were not there the first time, *ADONAI* our God burst out upon us, for we did not seek Him regarding the prescribed way."

¹⁴ So the *kohanim* and the Levites sanctified themselves in order to bring up the Ark of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ¹⁵ The Levites carried the Ark of God on their shoulders with poles, just as Moses commanded according to the word of *ADONAI*.

¹⁶ David ordered the leaders of the Levites to appoint their kinsmen, the singers, with musical instruments, harps, lyres, and cymbals, to joyfully make their voices heard. ¹⁷ So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; from his brothers, Asaph son of Berechiah; from their brothers the descendants of Merari, Ethan son of Kushaiah; ¹⁸ and with them their relatives second in rank: Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphalehu, and Mikneiahu, and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel.

¹⁹ The singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound the bronze cymbals; ²⁰ Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to alamothe [‡], ²¹ but Mattithiah, Eliphalehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jehiel, and

Azariah were to lead with lyres, according to the *Sheminith* †. ²²Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, was to direct the music because he was a master. ²³Berechiah and Elkanah were gatekeepers for the Ark. ²⁴The *kohanim* Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezez were to blow the trumpets before the Ark of God. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were gatekeepers for the Ark.

²⁵So David and the elders of Israel and the commanders of the thousands went to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* out of the house of Obed-Edom with rejoicing. ²⁶Because God helped the Levites who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI*, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. ²⁷Now David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who were carrying the Ark, and as were the singers and Henaniah the leader of the songs of the singers. David also wore a linen ephod. ²⁸Thus all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* with shouting, with the sound of the *shofar*, trumpets, and cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps.

²⁹As the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* came to the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked out the window. When she saw King David dancing and celebrating, she despised him in her heart.

Worship in David's Tent

16 They brought the Ark of God and set it in the middle of the tent that David had pitched for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. ²After David finished offering the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the Name of *ADONAI*. ³He then distributed to everyone in Israel—man and woman alike—to each a loaf of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake.

⁴He appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the Ark of *ADONAI*, to petition, to thank, and to praise *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ⁵Asaph was the chief and second to him were Zechariah, Jehiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jehiel. They were to play harps and lyres; Asaph was to sound the cymbals, ⁶and the *kohanim* Benaiah and Jahaziel were to blow trumpets continually before the Ark of the Covenant of God.

⁷On that day David first appointed Asaph and his kinsmen to give thanks to *ADONAI*:

⁸Give thanks to *ADONAI*,
call upon His Name.

Make His deeds known
among the peoples.

⁹Sing to Him! Sing praises to Him!

Tell of all His wonderful acts.

¹⁰Glory in His holy Name!

‡ Meaning unknown; is thought to be a musical term, although some have speculated it might have meant soprano

† Meaning unknown; also thought to be a musical term, some have also speculated it to mean bass alamo

Let the heart of those who seek *ADONAI* rejoice.

¹¹Seek *ADONAI* and His strength.

Seek His face always.

¹²Remember the wonders He has done,

His signs and judgments of His mouth,

¹³O descendants of Israel His servant,

O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones!

¹⁴He is *ADONAI* our God;

His judgments are in all the earth.

¹⁵Remember His covenant forever,

the word that He commanded for a thousand generations—

¹⁶that He made with Abraham,

swore to Isaac,

¹⁷and confirmed in a decree with Jacob

to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

¹⁸saying: "To you I give the land of Canaan

as your allotted inheritance."

¹⁹When you were but a few in number,

very few, and strangers in it,

²⁰and wandered from nation to nation,

from one kingdom to another,

²¹He allowed no one to oppress them,

but for their sake He reprov'd kings:

²²"Touch not My anointed ones,

and do My prophets no harm."

²³Sing to *ADONAI*, all the earth!

Proclaim His salvation from day to day.

²⁴Declare His glory among the nations,

His wondrous works among all the peoples.

²⁵For great is *ADONAI* and greatly to be praised.

He is to be feared above all gods.

²⁶For all the gods of the peoples are idols,

but *ADONAI* made the heavens.

²⁷Splendor and majesty are before Him;

strength and joy are in His place.

²⁸Ascribe to *ADONAI*, O families of the peoples,

ascribe to *ADONAI* glory and strength.

²⁹Ascribe to *ADONAI* the glory due to His Name.

Bring an offering and come before Him.

Worship *ADONAI* in the splendor of holiness.

³⁰Tremble before Him, all the earth!

The world is firmly established—it will not be moved.

³¹Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice!

Let them say among the nations: " *ADONAI* reigns!"

³²Let the sea roar and all that is in it.

Let the field rejoice and all that is in it.

³³Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before

ADONAI,

for He comes to judge the earth.

³⁴Give thanks to *ADONAI* for He is good,

for His mercy endures forever.

³⁵Declare, "Save us, O God of our salvation!

Gather and rescue us from the nations,

that we may give thanks to Your holy Name,

that we may glory in Your praise."

³⁶Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of Israel,

from everlasting to everlasting.

Then all the people said "Amen," and "Praise *ADONAI*."

³⁷ So David left Asaph and his kinsmen there before the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI*, to minister before the Ark continually, according to each day's requirements, ³⁸ including Obed-Edom and his 68 kinsmen. Obed-Edom son of Jeduthun and Hosah were gatekeepers. ³⁹ Also he left Zadok the *kohen* and his fellow *kohanim* before the Tabernacle of *ADONAI* in the high place that was at Gibeon ⁴⁰ to offer burnt offerings to *ADONAI* on the altar of burnt offering, regularly morning and evening, according to all that is written in the *Torah* of *ADONAI* that He commanded Israel. ⁴¹ Along with them were Heman and Jeduthun and the rest who were chosen, designated by name to give thanks to *ADONAI*—for His mercy endures forever. ⁴² Heman and Jeduthun had trumpets and cymbals for music and other instruments for praising God. The sons of Jeduthun were to be at the gate.

⁴³ Then all the people departed each one to his home, and David returned to bless his household.

Covenant Promise to David

17 After David settled in his place, David said to Nathan the prophet, "Look! I am living in a house of cedar, while the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* is under a tent."

² Then Nathan said to David, "Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you."

³ But that same night the word of God came to Nathan, saying: ⁴ "Go and tell David My servant, thus says *ADONAI*, 'You are not to build Me a house in which to dwell. ⁵ For I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought Israel out to this day. I have gone from tent to tent, and from one dwelling to another. ⁶ Wherever I went throughout all Israel, did I ever speak a word to any of the judges of Israel whom I commanded to shepherd My people, saying, "Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?"'

⁷ "So now, say this to My servant David, 'Thus says *ADONAI Tzva'ot*, I took you from the pasture and from following the sheep, to be prince over My people Israel. ⁸ I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your name like the names of the great ones that are in the earth. ⁹ I will establish a place for My people Israel, and plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and shall tremble no more. Violent people will no longer wear them down, as they did formerly, ¹⁰ from the days I ordered judges to be over My people Israel. I will subdue all your enemies.'

"Moreover, I declare to you that *ADONAI* will build you a house. ¹¹ It will be that when your days are fulfilled to go with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹² He will build a house for Me and I will establish his throne forever. ¹³ I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me, [†] I will not with-

draw My lovingkindness from him, as I withdrew it from the one who ruled before you. ¹⁴ I will appoint him over My House and My kingdom forever, and his throne will be established forever."

¹⁵ According to all these words and according to all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

¹⁶ Then King David went in and sat before *ADONAI*, and said, "Who am I, *ADONAI Elohim*, and what is my family, that You have brought me thus far? ¹⁷ And this was not enough in Your eyes, O God! You have spoken about the future of Your servant's household. You have regarded me as the most distinguished of men, *ADONAI Elohim* .

¹⁸ "What more can David say to You for honoring Your servant? For You know Your servant. ¹⁹ *ADONAI*, for the sake of Your servant and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to reveal all Your greatness.

²⁰ " *ADONAI*, there is none like You and there is no other god besides You, as we have heard with our own ears. ²¹ And who is like Your people Israel—the one nation on earth whom God went out to redeem as a people for Himself and to make a Name for Yourself by great and awesome deeds, by driving out nations from before Your people, whom You redeemed from Egypt? ²² You made Your people Israel Your own people forever, and You, *ADONAI*, became their God.

²³ "Now, *ADONAI*, may the word that You have spoken concerning Your servant and his house be confirmed forever. Do as You have spoken ²⁴ so that it might be established and Your Name might be magnified forever, saying, ' *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel, is Israel's God.' Then the house of David Your servant will be established before You.

²⁵ "You, my God, have revealed to Your servant that You will build a house for him. So Your servant has found courage to pray before You. ²⁶ Now, *ADONAI*, You are God! You have promised this good thing to Your servant. ²⁷ Now You are willing to bless the house of Your servant, so that it may continue forever before You, for it is You, *ADONAI* who have blessed, and it is blessed forever!"

King David's Rule Expands

18 In the course of time, David defeated the Philistines and subdued them. He took Gath and its villages from the hand of the Philistines. ² He also defeated Moab, and the Moabites became vassals to David and brought tribute.

³ Moreover, David defeated King Hadadezer of Zobah at Hamath, when he went to establish his dominion to the Euphrates River. ⁴ David captured from him 1,000 chariots, 7,000 horsemen, and 20,000 infantrymen. David hamstringed all the chariot horses but reserved 100 of them for chariots.

⁵ When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 of the Arameans. ⁶ David put garrisons in Aram of

† cf. Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Heb. 1:5.

Damascus and the Arameans became subject to David and brought tribute. *ADONAI* gave David victory wherever he went. ⁷ David took the gold shields that were on Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ From Tibhath and from Kun, Hadadezer's cities, David took a very large quantity of bronze, which Solomon used to make the bronze sea, pillars, and bronze vessels.

⁹ When King Tou of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of King Hadadezer of Zobah, ¹⁰ he sent his son Hadoram to King David to greet and bless him because he fought against Hadarezer and defeated him—for Hadadezer had many wars with Tou. He also sent all kinds of articles of gold, silver, and bronze.

¹¹ King David dedicated these articles to *ADONAI*, along with the silver and gold that he had taken from all the nations: from Edom and Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.

¹² Abishai son of Zeruiah struck down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. ¹³ Then he put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became vassals to David. So *ADONAI* gave David victory wherever he went.

¹⁴ David reigned over all Israel and he administered justice and righteousness to all his people. ¹⁵ Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was secretary. ¹⁶ Zadok son of Ahitub and Abimelech son of Abiathar were *kohanim*, and Shavsha was scribe. ¹⁷ Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and Pelethites, and David's sons were chief officials in the service of the king.

Defeating the Ammonites

19 Now in the course of time Nahash king of the Ammonites died and his son became king in his place. ² David said: "I will show lovingkindness to Hanun son of Nahash, because his father dealt loyally with me."

So David sent messengers to console him concerning his father. But when David's emissaries came to Hanun in the land of the Ammonites to console him, ³ the Ammonite officials said to Hanun, "Do you really think that David is honoring your father, by sending messengers to express sympathy? Have not his servants come to you to explore and spy out the country to overthrow it?" ⁴ So Hanun took David's emissaries and shaved them. He cut off their garments in the middle at the buttocks and sent them away.

⁵ When some people came and told David about the men, he sent messengers to meet them for the men were thoroughly humiliated. The king said: "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow and then return."

⁶ When the children of Ammon realized they had made themselves a stench to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent 1,000 talents of silver to hire chariots and charioteers from Aram-Naharaim [†], Aram-Maacah

and Zobah. ⁷ So they hired 32,000 chariots along with the king of Maacah and his people, who came and camped before Medeba. The children of Ammon also assembled from their cities and moved out to the battle.

⁸ On hearing this, David sent Joab and the entire army of mighty men. ⁹ The children of Ammon came out and took up battle formation at the city gate, while the kings who had come were by themselves in the field. ¹⁰ When Joab saw that there was a battle line against him both in front and rear, he selected some of Israel's best men and deployed them against the Arameans. ¹¹ He put the rest of the people under the command of his brother Abishai, and arrayed them against the Ammonites. ¹² He said: "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you will help me, but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will help you. ¹³ *Chazak!* Take courage for the sake of our people and the cities of our God! *ADONAI* will do what is good in His eyes."

¹⁴ So Joab and the people who were with him advanced to battle against the Arameans, and they fled before him. ¹⁵ When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans had fled, they likewise fled before his brother Abishai and withdrew into the city. Then Joab went to Jerusalem.

¹⁶ After the Arameans saw that they had been routed by Israel, they sent messengers and had the Arameans brought from across the River ^{††} with Shophah the commander of Hadadezer's army leading them.

¹⁷ When David was informed he gathered all Israel and crossed the Jordan. He came against them and took up positions against them. David took up positions against the Arameans in battle and they fought with him. ¹⁸ But the Arameans fled before Israel. David killed 7,000 Aramean charioteers and 40,000 infantrymen. He also killed Shophah the commander of the army.

¹⁹ Now when Hadadezer's vassals saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and served him. Thus the Arameans were no longer willing to help the Ammonites.

Clearing out the Giants

20 At the turn of the year, the season when kings go out to war, Joab led out the army and devastated the land of the Ammonites. He went and besieged Rabbah, while David remained in Jerusalem. Joab smote Rabbah and left it in ruins. ² David took the crown from the head of their king—its weight was found to be a talent [‡] of gold and it was set with precious stones—and it was placed on David's head. He took a vast amount of spoils from the city. ³ Furthermore, he removed the people who were in it and set them to work with saws, sharp iron tools, and axes.

[†] Or northern Mesopotamia

^{††} That is the Euphrates [‡] About 70 pounds.

Thus he did to all the Ammonite cities. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

⁴ Now it came about after this, that war broke out with the Philistines at Gezer. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Sippai, one of the descendants of the Rephaim, and they were subdued. ⁵ Again there was war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair killed Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear had a shaft like a weaver's beam. ⁶ Once again there was a battle at Gath, where there was a man of great stature who had 24 fingers and toes, six on each hand and six on each foot. He too also descended from the giants. ⁷ When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimea, David's brother, struck him down.

⁸ These were descendants of the giants in Gath; they fell by the hand of David and his servants.

Census and Plague

21 Then *satan* stood up against Israel and incited David to count Israel. ² So David told Joab and the leaders of the people, "Go, count Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan. Then bring me a report so I may know their number."

³ But Joab said, "May *ADONAI* multiply His people 100 times over! But my master the king, are they not all my master's servants? Why does my master require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt to Israel?"

⁴ Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. So Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and finally came back to Jerusalem.

⁵ Joab gave the number of the census of the people to David: in all Israel there were 1,100,000 sword-wielding men; Judah had 470,000 sword-wielding men. ⁶ But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's word was detestable to Joab.

⁷ But God was displeased with this thing and He struck Israel.

⁸ Then David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. But now, I entreat you, take away the guilt of Your servant for I have behaved very foolishly."

⁹ Then *ADONAI* spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying: ¹⁰ "Go and speak to David, saying, 'Thus says *ADONAI*, "I offer you three things; choose one of them and I will bring it upon you.'"

¹¹ So Gad went to David and said to him, "Thus says *ADONAI*: 'Select for yourself ¹² either three years of famine, or three months being swept away from before your adversaries and the sword of your enemies overtaking you, or three days of the sword of *ADONAI*, pestilence in the land and the angel of *ADONAI* ravaging throughout all the territories of Israel. Now, consider what I should reply to the one who sent me.'"

¹³ David said to Gad, "I am in a great anguish! Let me fall into the hand of *ADONAI* for His compassion is very great. But do not let me fall into the hand of man."

¹⁴ So *ADONAI* sent a plague upon Israel, and 70,000 men of Israel fell. ¹⁵ And God sent an angel to

Jerusalem to destroy it, but while he was doing so, *ADONAI* saw and was grieved over the calamity. He said to the destroying angel, "Enough! Now withdraw your hand!"

The angel of *ADONAI* was then standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁶ David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of *ADONAI* standing between the earth and the heaven with a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. ¹⁷ David said to God, "Was it not I who commanded to count the people? I alone am the one who sinned and behaved wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let Your hand, *ADONAI* my God, be against me and against my father's house, but do not let the plague be on Your people."

¹⁸ So the angel of *ADONAI* told Gad to instruct David that David should go up and build an altar to *ADONAI* on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁹ So David went up by the word of Gad, which he spoke in the Name of *ADONAI*. ²⁰ While Ornan was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the angel. His four sons who were with him hid themselves. ²¹ When David came to Ornan, Ornan looked up and saw David. He went out from the threshing floor and bowed to David with his face to the ground.

²² Then David said to Ornan: "Give me the site of this threshing floor that I may build an altar to *ADONAI*. Sell it to me for full price, so the plague on the people may be stopped."

²³ Then Ornan said to David, "Take it! Let my lord the king do whatever seems good in his eyes. Look, I will give the oxen for burnt offerings, the threshing sledges for wood, and the wheat for the grain offering. I will give all this."

²⁴ King David said to Ornan, "No, I insist on buying it for the full price. For I will not take for *ADONAI* what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that cost me nothing."

²⁵ So David gave Ornan 600 shekels of gold by weight for the place. ²⁶ David built there an altar to *ADONAI* and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. He called on *ADONAI* and He answered him with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering.

²⁷ Then *ADONAI* commanded the angel, and he put his sword back in its sheath.

²⁸ At that time, when David saw that *ADONAI* had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. ²⁹ For the Tabernacle of *ADONAI*, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon. ³⁰ But David could not go before it to seek God for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of *ADONAI*.

22 Then David said, "This is the place where the House of *ADONAI Elohim* will be, along with the altar for burnt sacrifices for Israel."

Preparing for the Temple

² David gave orders to assemble the foreigners in the land of Israel, and assigned them to be masons to quarry stones to build the House of God. ³ David supplied an abundance of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for the joints, so much bronze that it could not be weighed, ⁴ and cedar logs without number, for the Zidonians and the Tyrians brought an abundance of cedar logs to David.

⁵ David said, "Solomon my son is young and inexperienced and the House that is to be built for *ADONAI* must be exceedingly magnificent, famous, and glorious throughout all the nations. Therefore I will make preparation for it." So David made extensive preparations before his death.

⁶ Then He called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build a House for *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ⁷ David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a House for the name of *ADONAI* my God. ⁸ But the word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and fought many battles. You will not build a House for My Name because you have shed much blood before Me on the earth. ⁹ Behold, a son will be born to you who will be a man at rest. I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon and I will confer *shalom* and quietness on Israel in his days. ¹⁰ He will build a House for My name; he will be My son and I will be His Father. [†] I will establish his royal throne over Israel forever.'

¹¹ "Now, my son, may *ADONAI* be with you, and may you succeed in building the House of *ADONAI* your God as He spoke concerning you. ¹² Only may *ADONAI* give you insight and understanding when He gives you charge over Israel so that you may observe the *Torah* of *ADONAI* your God. ¹³ Then you will prosper, if you carefully observe the statutes and the ordinances that *ADONAI* commanded Moses concerning Israel. *Chazak!* And be courageous! Do not be afraid or dismayed.

¹⁴ "Now behold, with great pain I have provided for the House of *ADONAI* 100,000 talents of gold, a million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing for there is so much of it. I have also prepared wood and stone, and you must add to them. ¹⁵ Moreover, you have an abundance of workmen: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and every kind of craftsmen skilled in every kind of material— ¹⁶ in gold, silver, bronze, and iron—beyond number. Arise and work! May *ADONAI* be with you."

¹⁷ David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon his son, ¹⁸ "Is not *ADONAI* your God with you? Has He not given you rest on every side? For He has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand and the land is subdued before *ADONAI* and before His people. ¹⁹ Now set your hearts and souls to seek after *ADONAI* your God. Rise up and build the Sanctuary of

ADONAI Elohim so that you can bring the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* and the holy vessels of God into the House built for the Name of *ADONAI*."

Census of Levites

23 When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.

² He also gathered together all the leaders of Israel along with the *kohanim* and the Levites. ³ The Levites 30 years old or more were counted; their head count was 38,000 men. ⁴ Of these, there were 24,000 to oversee the work of the House of *ADONAI*, 6,000 officers and judges, ⁵ 4,000 gatekeepers, and 4,000 for praising *ADONAI* "with the instruments which I made for giving praise."

⁶ David organized them into divisions:

The sons of Levi:
Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

⁷ Of the Gershonites:

Ladan and Shimei.

⁸ The sons of Ladan:

Jehiel the leader, Zetham, and Joel—three.

⁹ The sons of Shimei:

Shelomith, Haziël, and Haran—three.

These were the heads of the clans of Ladan.

¹⁰ The sons of Shimei:

Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah.

These were the sons of Shimei—four.

¹¹ Jahath was the first and Zizah the second, but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they were enrolled together as a single clan.

¹² The sons of Kohath:

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel—four.

¹³ The sons of Amram:

Aaron and Moses.

Aaron, along with his descendants, was set apart to be consecrated as most holy forever, to burn incense before *ADONAI*, to minister to Him, and to bless in His name forever. ¹⁴ But as for Moses the man of God, his sons are named among the tribe of Levi.

¹⁵ The sons of Moses:

Gershom and Eliezer.

¹⁶ The sons of Gershom:

Shebuel, the leader.

¹⁷ The sons of Eliezer:

Rehabiah the chief. Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very numerous.

¹⁸ The sons of Izhar:

Shelomith the leader.

¹⁹ The sons of Hebron:

Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

²⁰ The sons of Uzziel:

Micah the first and Isshiah the second.

²¹ The sons of Merari:

Mahli and Mushi.

The sons of Mahli:

† cf. Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Heb. 1:5.

Eleazar and Kish. ²² Eleazar died having no sons but only daughters; the sons of Kish, their kinsmen, took them as wives.

²³ The sons of Mushi:

Mahli, Eder, and Yeremot—three.

²⁴ These were the sons of Levi by clans, with the heads of clans as they were enrolled and with a list of their names by heads who carried out the task of *avodah* in the House of *ADONAI* from 20 years old and upward. ²⁵ For David said: " *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, has given His people rest and He dwells in Jerusalem forever. ²⁶ Therefore, the Levites need not carry the Tabernacle and all the vessels for *avodah*." ²⁷ For according to David's final instructions, the Levites 20 years old and upward were counted.

²⁸ For their duty was to help the descendants of Aaron in the *avodah* of *ADONAI*'s House concerning the courtyards and rooms, the purification of all holy things and the performance of the *avodah* of God's House, ²⁹ the rows of bread, the fine flour for the grain offering, the *matzot*, the cake baked on the griddle or mixed, and every measure of capacity and length, ³⁰ and to stand every morning to thank and praise *ADONAI*. They also did this in the evening ³¹ and whenever burnt offerings were offered to *ADONAI* on *Shabbatot*, New Moons, and the *moadim*. They were to serve regularly before *ADONAI*, according to the proper number in the manner prescribed for them. ³² They were to keep watch over the Tent of Meeting, the Holy Place, and the sons of Aaron their kinsmen for *avodah* in the House of *ADONAI*.

24 Now these were the divisions of the sons of Aaron.

The sons of Aaron were Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ² But Nadab and Abihu died before their father and had no children, so Eleazar and Ithamar served as *kohanim*. ³ David, with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them into their offices according to their *avodah*. ⁴ More leading men were found among the sons of Eleazar than among the sons of Ithamar, so they divided them: the sons of Eleazar had 16 leaders of clans and the sons of Ithamar had eight leaders of clans. ⁵ Thus, they were impartially divided by lot for there were officials of the Holy Place and officials of God, both from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar.

⁶ The scribe Shemaiah, son of Nethanel from the Levites, recorded them in the presence of the king, the princes, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the leaders of the clans of the *kohanim* and of the Levites: one clan taken for Eleazar and one for Ithamar.

⁷ Now the first lot came 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 Heshbeab, ¹⁴ the fifteenth for Bilgah, the sixteenth for Immer, ¹⁵ the seventeenth for Hezir, the eighteenth for Hapizzez, ¹⁶ the nineteenth for Petahiah the twentieth for Jehezkel, ¹⁷ the twenty-first for Jachin, the twenty-second for Gamul, ¹⁸ the twenty-third for Delaiah, the twenty-fourth for Maaziah.

¹⁹ These were their duties for their *avodah* upon entering into the House of *ADONAI* according to the ordinance given to them by the hand of Aaron their father, just as *ADONAI* the God of Israel had commanded him.

²⁰ As for the rest of the sons of Levi:

from the sons of Amram: Shubael;

from the sons of Shubael: Jehdeiah.

²¹ As for Rehabiah, from the sons of Rehabiah Isshiah was the first.

²² From the Izharites: Shelomoth;

from the sons of Shelomoth: Jahath.

²³ The sons of Hebron: Jeriah, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.

²⁴ The sons of Uzziel: Micah;

from the sons of Micah: Shamir.

²⁵ The brother of Micah, Ishiah;

from the sons of Ishiah: Zechariah.

²⁶ The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi;

the sons of Jaaziah: Beno.

²⁷ The sons of Merari:

from Jaaziah: Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri.

²⁸ From Mahli:

Eleazar, who had no sons.

²⁹ From Kish, the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel.

³⁰ The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth.

These were the sons of the Levites by their clans.

³¹ These also cast lots even as their kinsmen the sons of Aaron did in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of the clans of the *kohanim* and the Levites—the families of the oldest just like those of his youngest brother.

Orders of Prophetic Levites

25 Moreover, David and the commanders of the army, set apart for *avodah* the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun who prophesied with lyres, harps, and cymbals. The list of those who performed this work according to their service was: ² from the sons of Asaph:

Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah. The sons of Asaph were under the supervision of Asaph, who prophesied under the hand of the king.

³ As for Jeduthun, from Jeduthun's sons:

Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah—six, under the charge of their father Jeduthun—who prophesied with the harp, giving thanks and praise to *ADONAI*.

⁴ As for Heman, from Heman's sons:

Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Haniah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-Ezer,

Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth. ⁵ All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer according to the promise of God to lift up a horn. God gave Heman 14 sons and three daughters.

⁶ All these were under the direction of their father for singing in the House of *ADONAI* with cymbals, harps, and lyres for the *avodah* of the House of God under the hand of the king. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman along with ⁷ with their kinsmen all trained and skillfull singers of *ADONAI*, numbered 288. ⁸ They cast lots for their divisions on the principal of small and great alike, teacher as well as student.

⁹ Now the first lot went to Asaph's son Joseph—12 the second to Gedaliah, his brothers and sons—12; ¹⁰ the third to Zaccur, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹¹ the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹² the fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹³ the sixth to Bukkiah, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁴ the seventh to Jesarelah, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁵ the eighth to Jeshaiiah, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁶ the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁷ the tenth to Shimei, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁸ the 11 to Azarel, his sons and his brothers—12; ¹⁹ the 12 to Hashabiah, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁰ the 13 to Shubael, his sons and his brothers—12; ²¹ the 14 to Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers—12; ²² the 15 to Jeremoth, his sons and his brothers—12; ²³ the 16 to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁴ the 17 to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁵ the 18 to Hanani, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁶ the 19 to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁷ the 20 to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁸ the 21 to Hothir, his sons and his brothers—12; ²⁹ the 22 to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers—12; ³⁰ the 23 to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers—12; ³¹ the 24 to Romamti-Ezer, his sons and his brothers—12.

Gatekeepers and Treasurers

26 The divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites: Meshelemiah son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph.

² Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, ³ Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth,

and Eliehoenai the seventh.

⁴ Obed-Edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, ⁵ Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, and Peullethai the eighth, (for God had blessed him).

⁶ To his son Shemaiah were born sons who were leaders of their clans, for they were men of great ability. ⁷ The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad. His brothers Elihu and Semachiah were also valiant men. ⁸ All these were descendants of Obed-Edom. They and their sons and their kinsmen were capable men with the strength to do the work—62 of Obed-Edom.

⁹ Meshelemiah had sons and brothers—18 able men.

¹⁰ Also Hosah, a descendant of Merari, had sons: Shimri the first (although he was not the firstborn, his father made him the first), ¹¹ Hilkiyah the second, Tebaliah the third, and Zechariah the fourth. All the sons and brothers of Hosah were 13.

¹² These divisions of the gatekeepers by their chief men had duties corresponding to their kinsmen for *avodah* in the House of *ADONAI*. ¹³ So they cast lots, small and great alike, by clans for each gate.

¹⁴ The lot for the east gate fell to Shelemiah. Then they cast lots for Zechariah his son, an insightful counselor, and his lot came out for the north gate. ¹⁵ To Obed-Edom the south gate and to his sons the storehouse. ¹⁶ To Shuppim and Hosah the east gate by the Shallecheth gate on the ascending highway.

Guard corresponded to guard. ¹⁷ There were six Levites on the east, four a day on the north, four a day on the south, and at the storehouse by pairs. ¹⁸ At the colonnade on the west, there were four on the road and two at the colonnade itself. ¹⁹ These were the divisions of the gatekeepers of the sons of Korah and the sons of Merari.

²⁰ And the Levites: Ahijah was over the treasuries of the House of God and the treasuries of the dedicated things. ²¹ The descendants of Ladan who were sons of Gershon through Ladan and were chiefs of the clans of Ladan the Gershonite were Jehieli, ²² the sons of Jehieli, Zetham, and Joel his brother. They were over the treasuries of the House of *ADONAI*.

²³ Of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, the Uzzielites:

²⁴ Shebuel son of Gershom son of Moses was officer over the treasuries. ²⁵ His relatives through Eliezer: Rehabiah his son, Jeshaiiah his son, Joram his son, Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son.

²⁶ This Shelomith and his kinsmen were over all the treasuries of the dedicated things that King David and the chiefs of the clans and the commanders over thou-

sands and hundreds, and other army commanders had dedicated. ²⁷ They dedicated some of the plunder taken in battles to maintain the House of *ADONAI*. ²⁸ All that Samuel the seer, Saul son of Kish, Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah had dedicated, and any other dedicated thing was in the care of Shelomith and his relatives.

²⁹ Of the Izharites: Henaniah and his sons were assigned outside duties as officers and judges over Israel.

³⁰ Of the Hebronites: Hashabiah and his brothers, 1,700 capable men, had oversight of Israel west of the Jordan for all the work of *ADONAI* and for the king's service. ³¹ As for the Hebronites: Jerijah was the chief of the Hebronites according to the genealogical records of their families. In the fortieth year of David's reign a search was made and found in them were valiant men in Jazer of Gilead. ³² His relatives, 2,700 men of valor, were heads of clans whom King David had appointed over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh in every matter pertaining to God and the affairs of the king.

David's Officers

27 The number of *Bnei-Yisrael*—heads of clans, officers of thousands and hundreds, and their officers who served the king in all matters of the divisions that came in and went out month by month throughout the year—each division had 24,000.

² Over the first division, for the first month, was Jashobeam son of Zabdiel. His division had 24,000.

³ He was a descendant of Perez, the head of all the officers of the army for the first month.

⁴ Over the division of the second month was Dodai the Ahohite. Mikloth was the chief officer and his division consisted of 24,000.

⁵ The third army commander, for the third month, was Benaiah son of Jehoiada the *kohen*. He was leader of his division, which consisted of 24,000. ⁶ This was Benaiah, who was a mighty man of the 30 and had charge over the 30. Ammizabad his son was over his division.

⁷ The fourth commander, for the fourth month, was Asahel brother of Joab. Zebadiah, his son, succeeded him. His division consisted of 24,000.

⁸ The fifth commander, for the fifth month, was Shamhuth the Izrahite. His division consisted of 24,000.

⁹ The sixth commander, for the sixth month, was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹⁰ The seventh commander, for the seventh month, was Heletz the Pelonite, from the children of Ephraim. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹¹ The eighth commander, for the eighth month, was Sibbc'ai the Hushathite from the Zerahites. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹² The ninth commander, for the ninth month, was Abiezer the Anathotite, of the Benjamites. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹³ The tenth commander, for the tenth month, was Maharai the Netophathite of the Zerahites. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹⁴ The eleventh commander, for the eleventh month, was Benaiah the Pirathonite a descendant of Ephraim. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹⁵ The twelfth commander, for the twelfth month, was Heldai the Netophathite of Othniel. His division consisted of 24,000.

¹⁶ Furthermore, over the tribes of Israel: of the Reubenites: Eliezer son of Zichri was the chief officer;

of the Simeonites: Shephatiah son of Maacah;

¹⁷ of Levi: Hashabiah son of Kemuel;

of Aaron: Zadok;

¹⁸ of Judah: Elihu, one of David's brothers;

of Issachar: Omri son of Michael;

¹⁹ of Zebulun: Ishmaiah son of Obadiah;

of Naphtali: Jerimoth son of Azriel;

²⁰ of the children of Ephraim: Hoshea son of Azaziah;

of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Joel son of Pedaiah;

²¹ of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead: Iddo son of Zechariah;

of Benjamin: Jaasiel son of Abner;

²² of Dan: Azarel son of Jeroham.

These were the officers of the tribes of Israel.

²³ But David did not count those 20 years old and under, because *ADONAI* had said He would multiply Israel as the stars of heaven. ²⁴ Joab the son of Zeruiah began to count them, but did not finish. Wrath came upon Israel for this and the number was not entered into the account in the chronicles of King David.

²⁵ Over the king's storehouses: Azmaveth son of Adiel.

Over the storehouses in the fields, in the cities, in the villages, and in the citadels: Jonathan son of Uziah;

²⁶ over the field laborers for tilling the ground: Ezri the son of Chelub;

²⁷ over the vineyards: Shimei the Ramathite;

over the produce of the vineyards for the wine cellars: Zabdi the Shiphmite;

²⁸ over the olive trees and the sycamore trees in the lowland: Baal-Hanan the Gederite;

over the cellars of oil: Joash;

²⁹ over the cattle grazing in Sharon: Shirtai the Sharonite;

over the cattle grazing in the valleys: Shaphat son of Adlai;

³⁰ over the camels: Obil the Ishmaelite;

over the donkeys: Jehdeiah the Meronothite;

³¹ and over the flocks: Jaziz the Hagrite.

All these were stewards over the property of King David.

³² Also Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counselor, learned man, and scribe. Jehiel son of Hachmoni tu-

tored the king's sons. ³³ Ahithophel was the king's counselor. Hushai the Arkite was the king's friend. ³⁴ Ahithophel was succeeded by Jehoiada son of Benaiah and by Abiatar. Joab was the commander of the king's army.

Men and Materials

28 Now David assembled all the leaders of Israel in Jerusalem—the tribal officers, the commanders of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands, and the commanders of hundreds, and the stewards over all the property and livestock of the king and of his sons, along with the high officials, the mighty warriors and all the men of valor.

² Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Listen to me, my brothers and my people! As for me, it was in my heart to build a resting place for the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* and for the footstool of our God. So I made the preparations for the building. ³ But God said to me, 'You will not build a House for My name because you are a man of war and have shed blood.'

⁴ Yet *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, has chosen me out of all my ancestral house to be king over Israel forever. For He chose Judah as ruler, and of the house of Judah, my father's house, and of my father's sons, He took pleasure in me to make me king over all Israel. ⁵ Moreover, of all my sons—for *ADONAI* has given me many sons—He has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of *ADONAI* over Israel.

⁶ "He said to me, 'Solomon your son will build My House and My courts for I have chosen him to be a son to Me and I will be a father to him. ⁷ I will establish his kingdom forever, if he resolutely observes My *mitzvot* and My ordinances as at this day.' ⁸ Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of *ADONAI* and in the hearing of our God, observe and seek all the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* your God so that you may possess this good land and may bequeath it to your children after you forever.

⁹ "Now you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and with a willing mind; for *ADONAI* searches all hearts and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever. ¹⁰ Consider now, for *ADONAI* has chosen you to build a House for the Sanctuary. *Chazak!* And do it!"

¹¹ Then David gave Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, its houses, its storerooms, its upper rooms, its inner rooms, and the place of atonement; ¹² and the plan of all that he had by the *Ruach* for the courts of the House of *ADONAI* and all the surrounding rooms, for the storehouses of the House of God and for the treasuries of the dedicated things; ¹³ also for the divisions of the *kohanim* and the Levites, for all the tasks of the *avodah* of the House of *ADONAI*, and for all the vessels of *avodah* in the House of *ADONAI*. ¹⁴ For gold, the weight of gold for all vessels of every kind of *avo-*

dah, and silver, the weight of silver for all vessels for every type of *avodah*; ¹⁵ and the weight for the gold *menorot* and their gold lamps, including the weight of each *menorah* and its lamps, for the silver *menorot*, including the weight of each *menorah* and its lamps according to the use of each *menorah*; ¹⁶ also the weight of gold for the tables of the rows of bread, for every table, and silver for the silver tables; ¹⁷ and the forks, the basins, and the pitchers of pure gold, and for the golden bowls with the weight for every bowl, and for the silver bowls with the weight for every bowl; ¹⁸ and for the altar of incense with the weight of refined gold; and gold for the form of the chariot—the *cheruvim*—that spread out their wings covering the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI*.

¹⁹ "All this I put in writing is from the hand of *ADONAI* upon me as He gave me insight regarding the plan of all the works."

²⁰ Also David said to his son Solomon: " *Chazak!* And be courageous, and do it! Do not be afraid or dismayed, for *ADONAI Elohim* my God is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the *avodah* of the House of *ADONAI* is finished. ²¹ Now behold, here are the divisions of the *kohanim* and the Levites for all the *avodah* of the House of God, and with you in all the work are willing men, skilled in all types of tasks. Also the officials and all the people are at your command."

David Commissions His Son

29 Then King David said to the entire assembly: "My son Solomon, the one whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced and the task is great, for the palace is not for man but for *ADONAI Elohim*. ² Now I have made every effort to prepare for the House of my God gold for the golden objects, silver for silver, copper for copper, iron for iron, and wood for wood; onyx stones and inlay stones, stones of anti-mony and varigated colors—every kind of precious stones and marble in abundance. ³ Moreover, in my devotion to the House of my God, I have given over my private treasure of gold and silver to the House of my God, in addition to all that I have already supplied for the holy House: ⁴ 3,000 gold talents of gold from Ophir, and 7,000 talents of refined silver to overlay the walls of the houses— ⁵ gold for golden objects and silver for silver for all the work—into the hands of craftsmen. Who then will offer willingly, consecrating himself this day to *ADONAI*?"

⁶ Then the leaders of the clans, the officials of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and hundreds and the supervisors over the king's work contributed willingly. ⁷ They gave for the service of the House of God: 5,000 talents and 10,000 darics of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze, and 100,000 talents of iron. ⁸ Whoever possessed stones gave them to the treasury of the House of *ADONAI* in the care of Jehiel the Gershonite. ⁹ Then the people re-

joined over their freewill offerings because with a whole heart they offered willingly to *ADONAI*. King David also rejoiced with great joy.

¹⁰ David blessed *ADONAI* before the whole congregation saying,

"Blessed are You, *ADONAI*,
God of Israel our father,
from eternity to eternity!

¹¹ Yours, *ADONAI*, is the greatness, the power
and the splendor, and the victory, and the majesty,
indeed everything in heaven and earth.

Yours is the kingdom, *ADONAI*
and You are exalted above all.

¹² Both riches and honor come from You.
You rule over everything.

In Your hand is power and might,
in Your hand, to magnify and give strength to all.

¹³ Now, our God, we give you thanks
and praise Your glorious Name.

¹⁴ "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For everything comes from You, and from Your hand we have given to You. ¹⁵ For we are sojourners before You, mere transients like our fathers. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, without security. ¹⁶ *ADONAI Eloheinu*, all this abundance that we have laid aside to build You a House for Your holy Name is from Your hand; it all belongs to You. ¹⁷ I know, my God, that You search the heart and take pleasure in uprightness. With integrity of heart I have willingly offered all these things. And now I have seen with joy Your people who are present here willingly contribute to You. ¹⁸ *ADONAI*, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel our fathers, preserve forever such motives and thoughts in the heart of Your people and make their heart constant toward You. ¹⁹ As for my son Solomon, give him a whole heart to keep Your *mitzvot*, Your decrees, and Your statutes,

and to fulfill them all and to build the Temple for which I have made provision."

²⁰ Then David said to the whole congregation, "Now bless *ADONAI* your God."

So the whole congregation blessed *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers. They bowed down and fell prostrate before *ADONAI* and the king.

Solomon Acclaimed King

²¹ The next day, they sacrificed sacrifices to *ADONAI* and offered burnt offerings to *ADONAI*; 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, and 1,000 lambs, along with their drink offerings and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. ²² So they ate and drank before *ADONAI* on that day with great joy.

Then they designated Solomon the son of David as king a second time, anointing him before *ADONAI* as ruler and Zadok as *kohen*. ²³ So Solomon sat on the throne of *ADONAI* as king instead of his father David. He prospered and all Israel obeyed him. ²⁴ All the officials and mighty men, as well as all the sons of King David, pledged their hand in support of King Solomon. ²⁵ *ADONAI* highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had never been on any king before him in Israel.

²⁶ Now David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. ²⁷ The length of his reign over Israel was 40 years. He reigned in Hebron seven years and he reigned in Jerusalem 33 years. ²⁸ He died at a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor, and his son Solomon became king in his place.

²⁹ Now the acts of King David, the first and the last, behold, are written in the chronicles of Samuel the seer, in the chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the chronicles of Gad the seer ³⁰ together with all his reign, his power, and the events that involved him, Israel, and all the kingdoms of the lands.

2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles Headings

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Solomon Asks for Wisdom at Gibeon

¹ Now Solomon the son of David firmly established himself over his kingdom. For *ADONAI* his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

² Solomon spoke to all Israel—to the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges and to every leader in all Israel, the leading patriarchs—³ and Solomon and the whole assembly with him went to the high place that was at Gibeon, for the Tent of Meeting of God was there, which Moses the servant of *ADONAI* had made in the wilderness. ⁴ Now David had brought up the Ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it because he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem. ⁵ But the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur had made was there in front of the Tabernacle of *ADONAI*, and Solomon and the assembly inquired of Him there. ⁶ So Solomon went up before *ADONAI* to the bronze altar that was at the Tent of Meeting and offered 1,000 burnt offerings on it.

⁷ That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask! What should I give you?"

⁸ Solomon answered God, "You have shown great lovingkindness to my father David and now You have made me king in his place. ⁹ Now, *ADONAI Elohim*, let Your word to my father David be fulfilled for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. ¹⁰ Now give me wisdom and knowledge that I may go out and come in before this people. For who can govern this great people of Yours?"

¹¹ Then God said to Solomon, "Since this was in your heart and you have not asked for riches, possessions or honor, nor for the life of those who hate you and have not even asked for long life but have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself—so you can govern My people over whom I have made you king—¹² wisdom and knowledge will be given to you. Moreover, I will give you riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you ever had and none after you will have."

¹³ Then Solomon went to Jerusalem from the high place that was at Gibeon, from in front of the Tent of Meeting. So he reigned over Israel.

Horses and Chariots from Egypt

¹⁴ Solomon accumulated chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ¹⁵ The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the foothills. ¹⁶ Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Keve—the king's merchants purchased them from Keve at a price. ¹⁷ They imported a chariot from Egypt for 600 talents of silver and a horse for 150. So by the same means they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

Solomon Prepares to Build

¹⁸ (2:1) Then Solomon vowed to build a House for the Name of *ADONAI*, as well as a royal palace for himself.

² (2) Solomon recruited 70,000 men as carriers, 80,000 as stonecutters in the mountains and 3,600 supervisors over them.

² (3) Then Solomon sent word to Hiram the king of Tyre saying, "Deal with me as you did with my father David when you sent him cedars to build a house to dwell in. ³ (4) Behold, I am about to build a House for the Name of *ADONAI* my God and to dedicate it to Him for burning fragrant incense before Him, for regular arrangement of the Bread of the Presence, and for burnt offerings every morning and evening as well as on *Shabbatot*, New Moons, and *moadim* of *ADONAI Eloheinu*. Upon Israel this is forever.

⁴ (5) "The House that I am about to build will be great, because our God is greater than all the gods. ⁵ (6) But who is able to build Him a House, since the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain Him? Who then am I that I should build Him a House—except to burn incense before Him?"

⁶ (7) "So now, send me a man skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue yarn, and experienced in engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem with the skilled men who are with me, whom my father David provided. ⁷ (8) Send

me also cedar, evergreen, and algum logs from Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting timber in Lebanon. Indeed my servants will work with yours ⁸ (9) to prepare an abundance of timber for me, because the House that I am about to build will be large and magnificent. ⁹ (10) Now, behold, I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut the timber, 20,000 measures [†] of ground wheat, 20,000 measures of barley, 20,000 vats of wine and 20,000 vats ^{††} of oil.”

¹⁰ (11) Then King Hiram of Tyre, replied in a letter that he sent to Solomon, “Because *ADONAI* loves His people, He has made you king over them.” ¹¹ (12) Then Hiram continued, “Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth. He gave King David a wise son, endowed with insight and understanding, who will build a House for *ADONAI* and a royal house for himself. ¹² (13) So now I am sending Hiram-Abi—a skilled man endowed with understanding ¹³ (14) who is the son of a woman from the daughters of Dan and whose father was a man from Tyre—a man skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood, in purple and blue, fine linen and crimson, and to engrave all kinds of engraving, and who can execute any design given to him. He will work with your skilled men and with the skilled men of my lord David your father. ¹⁴ (15) Now let my lord send to his servants the wheat and barley, the oil, and wine he has promised ¹⁵ (16) and we will cut as many logs from Lebanon as much as you need, and float them in rafts by sea to Jaffa. You can then take them up to Jerusalem.”

¹⁶ (17) Solomon counted all the foreign men in the land of Israel, like the census that his father David had taken, and 153,600 were found. ¹⁷ (18) He appointed 70,000 of them to carry loads, 80,000 to quarry stones in the mountains, and 3,600 overseers to supervise the people working.

Solomon Builds the Temple in Jerusalem

3 Then Solomon began to build the House of *ADONAI* in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah—where *ADONAI* appeared to his father David—at the place that David prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ² He began to build on the second day of the second month in the fourth year of his reign. ³ Now the foundation Solomon laid for the building of the House of God was 60 cubits long and 20 cubits wide, according to the old standard. ⁴ The porch in front of the House along its width was 20 cubits and its height was 120 cubits, and the inside was overlaid with pure gold. ⁵ He paneled the main hall with cypress wood, which he overlaid with fine gold and embossed on it palm trees and chains. ⁶ He adorned the House with precious stones and the gold he used was gold from Parvaim. ⁷ Furthermore He overlaid the beams, thresholds,

walls, and doors of the House with gold and carved *cheruvim* on the walls.

⁸ He made the Holy of Holies, its length corresponding to the width of the House—20 cubits long and 20 cubits wide. He overlaid it with 600 talents of fine gold. ⁹ The weight of the nails was 50 shekels of gold. He also overlaid the upper rooms with gold. ¹⁰ Next he made two sculptured *cheruvim* in the Holy of Holies and overlaid them with gold. ¹¹ The wingspan of the *cheruvim* was 20 cubits. One wing of the first *cheruv* was five cubits long and touched the wall of the House, while the other wing, also five cubits long, touched the wing of the other *cheruv*. ¹² Similarly, one wing of the second *cheruv* was five cubits long and touched the wall of the House, while the other wing, also five cubits long, touched the wing of the other *cheruv*. ¹³ Thus the wingspan of these *cheruvim* was 20 cubits. They stood on their feet facing the main hall. ¹⁴ Furthermore, he made the veil of blue, purple, crimson yarn, and fine linen with *cheruvim* worked into it.

¹⁵ In the front of the House he made two pillars 35 cubits high, each with a capital on the top measuring five cubits. ¹⁶ He made interwoven chains for the inner Sanctuary and put them on top of the pillars. He also made 100 pomegranates and attached them to the chains. ¹⁷ He erected the pillars in front of the Temple, one to the south and the other to the north. The one to the south he named Jachin and the one to the north Boaz.

The Temple Furnishings

4 Moreover, he made a bronze altar 20 cubits long, 20 cubits wide and ten cubits high. ² He also made the Sea of cast metal ten cubits across from brim to brim, perfectly round. It was five cubits high and its circumference was 30 cubits.

³ Beneath it, figures like bulls were set all around it, ten cubits encircling the Sea. The bulls were in two rows, cast in one piece with it. ⁴ The Sea stood on 12 bulls, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east. The Sea rested upon them and their hindquarters were all turned inward. ⁵ It was a handbreadth thick, and the brim was like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom. It held 3,000 vats. ⁶ He also made ten basins for washing and placed five on the right side and five on the left. In them the items used for the burnt offering were rinsed, but the *kohanim* washed in “the Sea.”

⁷ Next he made the ten *menorot* [‡] of gold in the manner prescribed for them and set them in the Temple, five on the right hand and five on the left. ⁸ He also made ten tables and placed them in the Temple, five on the right side and five on the left. He also made 100 gold bowls.

⁹ Then he made the courtyard of the *kohanim* and the great courtyard and doors for the courtyard. He

[†] A kor

^{††} A vat was a little over 5 gallons.

[‡] Plural for *menorah*

overlaid the doors with bronze. ¹⁰ He set the Sea on the south side at the southeast corner.

¹¹ Hiram-Abi also made the pots, the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram-Abi finished the work that he had undertaken for King Solomon in the House of God:

¹² the two pillars, the bowls and the two capitals on the top of the pillars, and the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars, ¹³ and the 400 pomegranates for the two latticeworks (two rows of pomegranates for each latticework to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were upon the top of the pillars). ¹⁴ He also made the stands, the basins upon the stands, ¹⁵ and the one Sea with the 12 bulls under it, ¹⁶ as well as the pots, the shovels, and the meat hooks. All the utensils Hiram-Abi made for King Solomon for the House of *ADONAI* were of polished bronze. ¹⁷ The king had them cast with clay earth from the Jordan Valley between Succoth and Zeredah. ¹⁸ Solomon made all these utensils in such great quantities that the weight of the bronze could not be determined.

¹⁹ Solomon also made all the furnishings that were in the House of God, including the golden altar, the tables on which was the Bread of Presence, ²⁰ the *menorot* with their lamps of pure gold to burn in front of the inner sanctuary as prescribed ²¹ with the flowers and the lamps and the tongs of gold, the purest gold, ²² and the snuffers, the bowls, the spoons, and the fire-pans of pure gold, and the doors of the House—the inner doors for the Holy of Holies and the doors of the House, that is, the Temple—were of gold.

⁵ When all the work that Solomon undertook for the House of *ADONAI* was finished, Solomon brought in the things David his father consecrated—the silver, gold, and all the furnishings—and put them in the treasuries of the House of God.

Consecration of the Temple

² Then Solomon gathered to Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes, and the patriarchal leaders of *Bnei-Yisrael*, in order to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* from the city of David, which is Zion. ³ All the men of Israel gathered together to the king at the feast that is in the seventh month.

⁴ So all the elders of Israel came and the Levites took up the Ark ⁵ and brought up the Ark and the Tent of Meeting along with all the sacred furnishings that were in the Tent. The Levitical *kohanim* brought them up. ⁶ Meanwhile, King Solomon and the entire congregation of Israel who gathered with him before the Ark, were sacrificing so many sheep and bulls that they could not be counted or numbered.

⁷ The *kohanim* brought in the Ark of the Covenant of *ADONAI* to its place, into the inner Sanctuary of the House, into the Holy of Holies under the wings of the *cheruvim*. ⁸ The *cheruvim* spread their wings over the place of the Ark so that the *cheruvim* covered the Ark and its poles from above. ⁹ Now the poles were so long

that the ends of the poles extending from the Ark could be seen in front of the inner Sanctuary, though they could not be seen from outside; and they are there to this day. ¹⁰ There was nothing in the Ark except the two tablets that Moses had placed there at Horeb, where *ADONAI* made a covenant with *Bnei-Yisrael* when they came out of Egypt.

God's Glory Fills the Temple

¹¹ And it came to pass, when the *kohanim* came out of the Holy Place—for all the *kohanim* that were present had consecrated themselves, without regard to divisions— ¹² all the Levite singers—Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, their sons, and their relatives—dressed in fine linen with cymbals, harps, and lyres, were standing at the east end of the altar and with them were 120 *kohanim* blowing trumpets. ¹³ Then it came to pass that when the trumpeters and singers joined as one to extol and praise *ADONAI*, and when the sound of the trumpets, cymbals, and musical instruments and the praise of *ADONAI*—"For He is good, for His mercy endures forever"—grew louder, the Temple, the House of *ADONAI*, was filled with a cloud. ¹⁴ The *kohanim* could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of *ADONAI* filled the House of God.

ADONAI Has Chosen Jerusalem

⁶ Then Solomon declared, "*ADONAI* has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud; ² I have built You a magnificent House and a place for You to dwell forever."

³ Then, while all the congregation of Israel was standing the king turned his face and blessed the whole congregation of Israel. ⁴ He said: "Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, who with His hands has fulfilled what He spoke with His mouth to my father David, saying: ⁵ 'Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a House that My Name might be there. Nor did I choose any man to be a leader over My people Israel. ⁶ But I have chosen Jerusalem that My Name would abide there and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.'

⁷ "Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a House for the Name of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel.

⁸ But *ADONAI* said to David my father: 'As for you wanting in your heart to build a House for My Name, you did well that this was in your heart. ⁹ Nevertheless, you will not build the House. Rather your son who will be born to you, he will build the House for My Name.'

¹⁰ "Now *ADONAI* has confirmed His promise that He spoke. I have succeeded my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, just as *ADONAI* promised, and I have built the House for the Name of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ¹¹ There have I set the Ark in which is the Covenant of *ADONAI* that He made with *Bnei-Yisrael*."

Solomon's Prayer

¹² Then he stood before the altar of *ADONAI* in front of the entire congregation of Israel and spread forth his hands. ¹³ For Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high and placed it in the midst of the court. He stood on it and knelt down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven ¹⁴ and he said,

" *ADONAI*, God of Israel, there is no God like You in the heavens or in the earth, keeping covenant and showing mercy to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart. ¹⁵ You have kept the promise You made to Your servant David, my father. Surely You spoke with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand—as it is today.

¹⁶ "Now therefore, *ADONAI*, God of Israel, keep for Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him saying: " 'For you will never be cut off, you will not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne—if only your sons pay attention to their way, to walk in My *Torah* as you have walked before Me.' †

¹⁷ "Now therefore, *ADONAI* God of Israel, let Your word, which You spoke to Your servant David, be confirmed.

¹⁸ "But will God indeed dwell with mankind on the earth? Behold—heaven even the highest heaven—cannot contain You. How much less this House that I have built! ¹⁹ Yet attend to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, *ADONAI* my God, to hear the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You ²⁰ that Your eyes may be open toward this House day and night, toward the place where You have said You would put Your Name there, to listen to the prayer which Your servant will pray toward this place. ²¹ Hear the supplications of Your servant and Your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from Your dwelling place, from heaven, and when You hear, forgive.

²² "If a man sins against his neighbor and is required to swear an oath, and he comes and takes an oath before Your altar in this House, ²³ then hear from heaven and act. Judge Your servants, repaying the wicked by bringing down on his own head what he has done and vindicating the righteous by rewarding him according to his righteousness. ††

²⁴ "If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, yet when they return and confess Your Name, praying and making supplication before You in this House, ²⁵ then hear from heaven, forgive the sin of Your people Israel and bring them back to the land which You gave to them and to their fathers.

²⁶ "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, if they pray toward this place and confess Your Name, turning

from their sin because You afflicted them, ²⁷ then may You hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel. Indeed, may You teach them the good way in which they should walk. Send rain upon Your land that You have given to Your people for an inheritance.

²⁸ "When there is famine in the land, when there is pestilence, blight, mildew, locust, or grasshopper, when their enemies besiege them in the land by their gates, whatever plague or sickness may come, ²⁹ and any prayer or plea is offered by any individual or by all Your people Israel—each acknowledging his own afflictions and pain, even spreading his hands toward this House— ³⁰ then may You hear from heaven, Your dwelling place and forgive. May You give to every man according to all his ways, as You know his heart—for You alone know the hearts of the children of men— ³¹ so that they will fear You and walk in Your ways all the days that they live in the land that You gave to our fathers.

³² "Moreover, concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel but comes from a distant land for the sake of Your great Name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this House, ³³ then may You hear from heaven, Your dwelling place and do whatever the foreigner asks of You. Then all the peoples of the earth will acknowledge Your Name and revere You, as Your people Israel do, and they will know that this House which I have built is called by Your Name.

³⁴ "When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, wherever You send them, and they pray to You toward this city that You have chosen and the House that I have built for Your Name, ³⁵ then hear from heaven their prayer and their petition, and uphold their cause.

³⁶ "When they sin against You—for there is no man that does not sin ‡—and You become angry with them and hand them over to the enemy who takes them captive to a land far off or near, ³⁷ when they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and they repent and seek You in the land of their captivity saying,

"We have sinned,
we have committed iniquity,
we have acted wickedly,"

³⁸ "and they return to You with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken captive, and they pray toward their land which You gave to their fathers and the city which You have chosen and toward the House which I have built for Your Name, ³⁹ then may You hear from heaven, Your dwelling place, their prayer and their petitions and uphold their cause, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.

⁴⁰ "Now my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open, and let Your ears be attentive to the prayer made in this place.

† cf. Luke 1:32-33. †† cf. Matt. 16:23.

‡ cf. Rom. 3:10; Eph. 2:3; 1John 1:8-10.

⁴¹ "Now arise, *ADONAI Elohim*, to Your resting place, You and the Ark of Your might. May Your *kohanim*, *ADONAI Elohim*, be clothed with salvation, and may Your godly ones rejoice in goodness. ⁴² *ADONAI Elohim*, do not reject Your anointed one. Remember the loyalty of Your servant David."

Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret

7 Now when Solomon finished praying the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of *ADONAI* filled the House. ² The *kohanim* could not even enter into the House of *ADONAI* because the glory of *ADONAI* filled the House of *ADONAI*. ³ When all *Bnei-Yisrael* saw the fire come down and the glory of *ADONAI* above the House, they bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, prostrating themselves and praising *ADONAI*,

"For He is good and His mercy endures forever."

⁴ Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before *ADONAI*. ⁵ King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the House of God. ⁶ The *kohanim* stood at their posts, as did the Levites with the musical instruments of *ADONAI* that King David had made for praising *ADONAI*—"for His mercy endures forever"—whenever David offered praise by their hand. Opposite them were the *kohanim* who sounded trumpets while all Israel was standing.

⁷ Moreover, Solomon consecrated the middle of the courtyard that was before the House of *ADONAI*, because there he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings, since the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to contain the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the fat. ⁸ At that time, Solomon observed the feast for seven days and all Israel with him—a very great assembly from Lebo-Hamath to the Brook of Egypt.

⁹ On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the feast for seven days. ¹⁰ On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their tents, joyful and glad of heart for the goodness that *ADONAI* had done for David, Solomon and Israel His people.

ADONAI's Promise to Solomon

¹¹ Thus Solomon finished the House of *ADONAI* and the king's palace. Indeed, all that Solomon had on his heart to accomplish in the House of *ADONAI* and in his own palace, he successfully completed.

¹² Then *ADONAI* appeared to Solomon at night and said to him: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself for a House of sacrifice. ¹³ If I

shut up heaven that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴ when My people, over whom My Name is called, humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵ Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place. ¹⁶ For now I have chosen and consecrated this House so that My Name may be there forever. My eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually.

¹⁷ "As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, doing all that I have commanded you, keeping My statutes and My ordinances, ¹⁸ then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David saying, 'You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.' ¹⁹ But if you turn away and forsake My decrees and My *mitzvot* that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, ²⁰ then I will uproot them from My land which I gave them, and this House which I have consecrated for My Name I will cast out of My sight. I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. ²¹ As for this House, which is so exalted, every one passing by it shall be appalled and say, 'Why has *ADONAI* done this to this land and to this House?' ²² And they will answer, 'Because they have forsaken *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and clung to other gods, worshiping and serving them. Therefore He has brought all this misery upon them.'"

Solomon's Exploits throughout the Land

8 It came to pass at the end of 20 years, during which Solomon built the House of *ADONAI* and his own palace, ² that he built the cities which Hiram had given to him and settled *Bnei-Yisrael* there. ³ Then Solomon marched against Hamath-Zobah and overpowered it. ⁴ He built up Tadmor in the wilderness and all the store cities that he built in Hamath. ⁵ He also built upper Beth-Horon and lower Beth-Horon as fortified cities with walls, gates and bars, ⁶ as well as Baalath and all his store cities, and cities for his chariots and cities for his horsemen—every thing that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem and in Lebanon and in all the land that he ruled.

⁷ All the people that were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, who were not of Israel, ⁸ that is, those of their descendants that were left after them in the land, whom *Bnei-Yisrael* did not destroy—these Solomon conscripted for forced labor, as it is to this day. ⁹ But Solomon did not make slaves of *Bnei-Yisrael* for his work. Rather, they were his soldiers, his chief officers and commanders of his chariots and horsemen. ¹⁰ These were the chief officers of King Solomon, 250 who ruled over the people.

¹¹ Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house that he had built for her, for

he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the palace of King David of Israel, because the places where the Ark of *ADONAI* has entered are holy."

¹² At that time, Solomon offered burnt offerings to *ADONAI* on the altar of *ADONAI* which he had built before the porch, ¹³ according to the daily requirement for offerings commanded by Moses for *Shabbatot*, for New Moons, and for the *moadim* three times a year—at the Feast of *Matzot*, at the Feast of *Shavuot*, and at the Feast of *Sukkot*. ¹⁴ Following the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the *kohanim* for their *avodah* and the Levites for their duties—to praise and minister alongside the *kohanim* according to the daily assignment—and the gatekeepers by their divisions at every gate, because this is what David the man of God had commanded. ¹⁵ They did not depart from the king's commandment to the *kohanim* and Levites in any matter, including the treasures.

¹⁶ Thus all Solomon's work was carried out from the day of the foundation of the House of *ADONAI* until it was finished. So the House of *ADONAI* was completed.

¹⁷ Then Solomon went to Ezion-Geber and to Elat on the coast of the land of Edom. ¹⁸ And Hiram sent him ships commanded by his servants and servants that knew the sea. They went with Solomon's servants to Ophir and obtained from there 450 talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba Visits Jerusalem

9 When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions. [†] Accompanied by a large caravan train, including camels carrying an abundance of spices and gold, and precious stones, she came to Solomon and spoke with him about all that was in her heart. ² Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from Solomon which he did not explain to her.

³ When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the palace he had built, ⁴ as well as the food on his table, the seating of his courtiers, the service and attire of his attendants, his cupbearers and their attire, and his procession with which he went up to the House of *ADONAI*, it took her breath away.

⁵ She said to the king: "The report that I heard in my own land about your achievements and your wisdom is true. ⁶ But I did not believe their reports until I came and saw with my own eyes. And behold, not even half of the greatness of your wisdom was described to me—you surpass the report that I heard! ⁷ How blessed are your men, how blessed are your courtiers who continually stand in your presence and hear your wisdom. ⁸ Blessed be *ADONAI* your God who delighted in you, setting you on His throne as king before *ADONAI* your God. Because your God loved Israel, establish-

ing them forever, He made you king over them to execute justice and righteousness."

⁹ Then she gave the king 120 gold talents, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. There had never been such quantities of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. ¹⁰ The servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir also brought al gumwood and precious stones. ¹¹ From the sandalwood the king made ramps for the House of *ADONAI* and for the royal palace, and lyres and harps for the singers—nothing like them had ever been seen before in the land of Judah. ¹² King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for—more than what she had brought to the king. Then she with her courtiers, returned, going back to her own land.

Solomon Exceeds All the Earth's Kings

¹³ Now the weight of gold that Solomon received in one year was 666 gold talents, ¹⁴ besides what the traders and merchants brought and the gold and silver that all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the region brought to Solomon. ¹⁵ King Solomon made 200 shields of beaten gold, 600 shekels of beaten gold for each shield, ¹⁶ and also 300 shields of beaten gold, 300 shekels of gold for each shield. The king put them in the palace of the Lebanon Forest. ¹⁷ Furthermore, the king made a large ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁸ The throne had six steps and a golden footstool attached to it, and arms on each side of the seat. Two lions stood beside the arms ¹⁹ and 12 lions stood on the six steps, one at each end of each step. None like it was ever made for any kingdom. ²⁰ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold and all the vessels of the palace of the Lebanon Forest were of pure gold—silver was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon. ²¹ Because the king's ships sailed to Tarshish with Hiram's servants once every three years, the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

²² So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²³ And all the kings of the earth sought an audience with Solomon to listen to the wisdom that God had put in his heart. ²⁴ Everyone brought his tribute—vessels of silver, vessels of gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules—in the due amount each year.

²⁵ Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen that he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. ²⁶ And he ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines, and as far as the border of Egypt.

²⁷ The king made silver as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as the sycamore trees that are in the foothills. ²⁸ Horses were brought for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries.

[†] cf. Matt. 13:43; Luke 11:31.

Solomon Buried in David's City

²⁹ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, the beginning and the end, are they not written in the chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Jedo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? ³⁰ Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel 40 years. ³¹ Then Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David, and Rehoboam his son became king in his place.

The Revolt against Rehoboam at Shechem

10 Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ² Now it came to pass that when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard this—for he was in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon—Jeroboam returned from Egypt. ³ So they sent and summoned him; and Jeroboam and all Israel came to Rehoboam and spoke to Rehoboam saying, ⁴ “Your father made our yoke grievous but now lighten the harsh labor of your father and his heavy yoke that he put on us—then we will serve you.”

⁵ He answered them, “Come back to me in three days.” So the people departed.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?”

⁷ They answered him saying, “If you will be kind to this people and please them and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

⁸ But he disregarded the counsel that the elders had given him and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him. ⁹ He said to them, “How do you advise me to answer this people who have spoken to me saying, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?’”

¹⁰ The young men that grew up with him answered him saying: “Speak thus to the people who spoke to you saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us’. Thus shall you say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins. ¹¹ Now, whereas my father laid a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will do so with scorpions.’”

¹² Then Jeroboam and all the people returned to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had said to them saying, “Come back to me on the third day.” ¹³ The king answered them harshly. King Rehoboam ignored the counsel of the elders ¹⁴ and spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men saying, “I will make your yoke heavy—I will make it even heavier. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions.”

¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of events was from God so that *ADONAI* might es-

tablish His word that He had spoken through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

¹⁶ When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king saying, “What portion do we have in David?”

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse!

To your tents, O Israel!

Now look after your own house, David!”

So all Israel departed to their tents. ¹⁷ But Rehoboam continued to reign over *Bnei-Yisrael* who lived in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was over the forced labor, but men of Israel pelted him to death with stones. King Rehoboam, however, managed to mount his chariot and to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

11 Now when Rehoboam arrived at Jerusalem, he assembled the House of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against Israel in order to restore the kingdom back to Rehoboam.

² But the word of *ADONAI* came to Shemaiah the man of God saying: ³ “Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin saying, ⁴ ‘Thus says *ADONAI*, You shall not go up nor fight against your kinsmen. Let everyone return to his house for this matter is of Me.’” So they listened to the words of *ADONAI* and returned from marching against Jeroboam.

Reign of Rehoboam

⁵ Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built fortified cities for defense in Judah.

⁶ He built up Beth-lehem, Etam, Tekoa, ⁷ Beth-Zur, Socco, Adullam, ⁸ Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, ⁹ Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, ¹⁰ Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, which are fortified cities in Judah and in Benjamin. ¹¹ He also strengthened the fortified towns and put commanders in them, along with stores of food, oil, and wine. ¹² He also put shields and spears in every town, and made them very strong. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

¹³ Moreover, the *kohanim* and the Levites from all their territories throughout Israel presented themselves to him. ¹⁴ The Levites even abandoned their pastures and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem because Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them as *kohanim* to *ADONAI*, ¹⁵ and had appointed his own priests for the high places, for the he-goats and for the calves that he had made. ¹⁶ Those from all the tribes of Israel, who had set their hearts to seek *ADONAI*, followed the Levites to Jerusalem to sacrifice to *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers. ¹⁷ So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

¹⁸ Rehoboam married Mahalat the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David and of Abihail the daughter of

Eliab the son of Jesse. ¹⁹ She bore him sons: Jeush and Shemariah and Zaham. ²⁰ After her he took Maacah the daughter of Absalom and she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. ²¹ Now Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom more than all his wives and concubines—for he took 18 wives and 60 concubines and fathered 28 sons and 60 daughters.

²² Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as chief and commander among his brothers, for he intended to make him king. ²³ He also wisely dispersed some of his sons throughout the territories of Judah and Benjamin to all the fortified cities and he gave them plenty of food and sought many wives for them.

Shishak Attacks Jerusalem

12 Now it came to pass, when the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and he had become strong, that he and all Israel with him forsook the *Torah* of *ADONAI*. ² It so happened that in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem—because they had been unfaithful to *ADONAI*—³ with 1,200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen, and innumerable troops that came with him from Egypt: Lybians, Sukkites, and Cushites. ⁴ He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem.

⁵ Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the officers of Judah who had gathered in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, “Thus says *ADONAI*:

“You have abandoned Me—
so I also have abandoned you
into the hand of Shishak.”

⁶ Then the officers of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, “*ADONAI* is just.”

⁷ But when *ADONAI* saw that they humbled themselves, the word of *ADONAI* came to Shemaiah saying: “Since they have humbled themselves, I will not destroy them but grant them some measure of deliverance, and My wrath will not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. ⁸ However, they will become subjects to him so that they may learn the difference between serving Me and serving the kings of the earth.”

⁹ So Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem and took away the treasures of the House of *ADONAI* and the treasures of the king’s palace. He took away everything; he even took away the golden shields that Solomon had made. ¹⁰ So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them and entrusted them to the hands of the captains of the royal guard that guarded the entrance to the royal palace. ¹¹ Whenever the king entered into the House of *ADONAI*, the guards would carry them and then bring them back into the guard chamber. ¹² Because Rehoboam humbled himself, the anger of *ADONAI* turned from him and He did not destroy him completely. Indeed there were good things in Judah.

¹³ So King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned as king. Rehoboam was 41 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 17 years in Jerusalem—the city that *ADONAI* had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put His Name there. His mother’s name was Naamah, the Ammonite. ¹⁴ But he did evil because he had not set his heart to seek *ADONAI*.

¹⁵ Now the acts of Rehoboam, from beginning to end, are they not written in the chronicles of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer for genealogies? There were continuous wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ¹⁶ Then Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David. Then his son Abijah became king in his place.

Abijah’s Bold Speech

13 In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah began to reign over Judah. ² He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Micaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. ³ Abijah went into battle with an army of valiant warriors, 400,000 chosen men, while Jeroboam arranged for battle against him 800,000 chosen men, mighty warriors.

⁴ Abijah stood on top of Mount Zemaraim, which is a hill of Ephraim, and said, “Listen to me Jeroboam and all Israel! ⁵ Don’t you know that *ADONAI*, God of Israel, has given kingship over Israel to David forever—to him and his sons by a covenant of salt? ⁶ Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master. ⁷ Riffraff and scoundrels gathered around him and pressed hard on Rehoboam son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted and could not stand up to them.

⁸ “So now, do you intend to oppose the kingdom of *ADONAI*, which is in the hand of David’s descendants? Are you indeed a great multitude—and with you the golden calves that Jeroboam made for you as gods? ⁹ Have you not banished the *kohanim* of *ADONAI*, the sons of Aaron, as well as the Levites, and then appointed your own priests—just as the peoples of the lands do? Can whoever comes to consecrate himself with a bull from a young cow and seven rams become a priest—for gods of nothing?

¹⁰ “But as for us, *ADONAI* is our God! And we have not forsaken Him. We have the sons of Aaron ministering as *kohanim* to *ADONAI* and the Levites in their work.

¹¹ Every morning and evening they burn to *ADONAI* burnt offerings and sweet incense. They set the rows of bread on the pure table and they light the golden *menorah* with its lamps burning every evening—for we keep the service of *ADONAI Eloheinu*—but you have forsaken Him. ¹² So look, God is with us at our head, and His *kohanim* with the signal trumpets to sound an alarm against you. O men of Israel, do not

fight against *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers—for you will not succeed!”

¹³ But Jeroboam had commanded the ambush to go around and come from the rear. So while they were in front of Judah, the ambush was behind them. ¹⁴ When Judah turned around, behold, the battle was before and behind them. They cried out to *ADONAI* and the *kohanim* blew the trumpets. ¹⁵ Then the men of Judah raised a battle cry, and as the men of Judah shouted, God struck down Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. ¹⁶ Then men of Israel fled before Judah and God delivered them into their hand. ¹⁷ So Abijah and his people defeated them with a great slaughter, and 500,000 chosen men of Israel fell slain. ¹⁸ Thus men of Israel were subdued at that time, while the children of Judah prevailed—because they relied upon *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers.

¹⁹ Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured towns from him: Beth-El with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages, and Ephron with its villages. ²⁰ Jeroboam could not muster strength again in the days of Abijah. Finally *ADONAI* struck him and he died.

²¹ But Abijah grew powerful and took to himself 14 wives and fathered 22 sons and 16 daughters. ²² Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, his ways and his sayings, are written in the chronicles of the prophet Iddo. ²³ (14:1) Then Abijah slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David. His son Asa became king in his place. During his days the land was untroubled for ten years.

Asa's Reforms Bring *ADONAI*'s Rest

14 (2) Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of *ADONAI* his God. ² (3) He removed the foreign altars and the high places, smashed the pillars and cut down the Asherah poles. ³ (4) He commanded Judah to seek *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers, and to obey the *Torah* and the *mitzvah*. ⁴ (5) He also removed the high places and the incense stands out of all the cities of Judah. So the kingdom remained untroubled under him. ⁵ (6) He built up fortified cities in Judah, for the land was untroubled and he was not engaged in warfare during those years because *ADONAI* had given him rest.

⁶ (7) Then he said to Judah, “Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is still ours because we have sought *ADONAI Eloheinu*. We sought Him and He has given us rest all around.” So they built and were successful.

Appeal to Defeat the Cushites

⁷ (8) Now Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah who bore shields and spears and 280,000 from Benjamin who bore shields and drew bows. All of these were valiant warriors.

⁸ (9) Then Zerah the Cushite marched against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots. When he arrived at Mareshah, ⁹ (10) Asa went out to meet him and they arrayed for battle in the valley of Zephath at Mareshah.

¹⁰ (11) Then Asa cried to *ADONAI* his God and said, “*ADONAI*, there is no one like You to help in battle between the mighty and the powerless. Help us, *ADONAI Eloheinu*, for we rely on You and in Your Name we have come against this multitude. You are *ADONAI Eloheinu*! Let no man prevail against You.”

¹¹ (12) So *ADONAI* struck down the Cushites before Asa and before Judah. The Cushites fled ¹² (13) and Asa and the people who were with him pursued them to Gerar. So many of the Cushites fell that they could not recover because they were shattered before *ADONAI* and before His army. They carried away very much spoil. ¹³ (14) They destroyed all the cities around Gerar, for the terror from *ADONAI* came on them. They plundered all the cities, for there was much spoil in them. ¹⁴ (15) They also attacked the tents of herdsmen and carried off many sheep and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

Prophets Encourage Further Reforms

15 The *Ruach Elohim* came upon Azariah the son of Oded. ² He went out to meet Asa, and said to him, “Listen to me Asa, all Judah and Benjamin. *ADONAI* is with you as long as you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, He will spurn you. ³ For many days Israel was without the true God, without a teaching *kohen* and without *Torah*. ⁴ But in their distress they turned to *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, and sought Him, and He was found by them. ⁵ In those times there was no *shalom* for anyone coming or going, for there were many conflicts among all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶ Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress. ⁷ But you, *chazak*! Do not let your hands be slack for there is reward for your labor.”

⁸ When Asa heard these words as well as the prophecy of the prophet Oded, he took courage and removed the abominations from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns that he had seized in the hill country of Ephraim. He also repaired *ADONAI*'s altar that was in front of *ADONAI*'s entryway. ⁹ He gathered all Judah and Benjamin, as well as those dwelling with them from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon—for many had defected to him from Israel when they saw that *ADONAI* his God was with him. ¹⁰ So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. ¹¹ On that day they sacrificed to *ADONAI* 700 bulls and 7,000 sheep from the spoil that they had brought. ¹² They entered into a covenant to seek *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and soul. ¹³ Whoever would not seek *ADONAI*, God of Israel, would be put to death, whether small or

great, man or woman. ¹⁴ They also made an oath to *ADONAI* with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets and with *shofarot*. ¹⁵ All Judah rejoiced over the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with all their will and He was found by them. Then *ADONAI* gave them rest all around. ¹⁶ He also deposed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from being queen because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. Asa cut down her abominable image, crushed it, and burned it in the Kidron Valley.

¹⁷ Though the high places were not removed from Israel, still Asa's heart was completely committed to *ADONAI* all his days. ¹⁸ He brought into the House of God his father's consecrated articles, as well as his consecrated articles of silver and gold, and utensils. ¹⁹ So there was no war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.

Asa Backslides

16 In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, King Baasha of Israel marched against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent anyone from leaving or coming to King Asa of Judah.

² In response, Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the House of *ADONAI* and from the royal palace, and sent them to King Ben-Hadad of Aram who lived in Damascus saying, ³ "Let there be a covenant between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. Look, I have sent you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with King Baasha of Israel so that he may withdraw from me."

⁴ So Ben-Hadad consented to King Asa's request and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. They ravaged Ijon, Dan, Abelmaim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali. ⁵ When Baasha heard, he stopped building Ramah and stopped his work. ⁶ Then King Asa took up all of Judah to carry away the stones of Ramah and the timber with which Baasha had been building—with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah.

⁷ At that time the seer Hanani came to King Asa of Judah and said to him: "Because you have depended on the king of Aram, and not depended on *ADONAI* your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand. ⁸ Were not the Cushites and the Libyans a mighty army with many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on *ADONAI*, He delivered them into your hand. ⁹ For the eyes of *ADONAI* range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are wholly His. You have acted foolishly in this matter. Indeed, from now on you will have wars."

¹⁰ Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the prison for he was enraged at him for this. Also, Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time. ¹¹ Behold, the acts of Asa, from beginning to end, are written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

¹² Now in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet. His illness was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek *ADONAI* but physicians.

¹³ Finally Asa slept with his fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign. ¹⁴ He was buried in his own tomb, which he had hewn out for himself in the city of David. They laid him in his resting place, which was filled with sweet spices and various blended perfumes and they made a very large fire for him.

Jehoshaphat Restores Judah to Torah

17 Jehoshaphat his son became king in his place and took firm hold of his position against Israel. ² He stationed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah and set garrisons throughout the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had captured.

³ *ADONAI* was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baalim ⁴ but sought the God of his father, and walked in His *mitzvot* rather than the deeds of Israel. ⁵ So *ADONAI* established the kingdom in his hand, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat so that he had great riches and honor. ⁶ His heart was devoted to the ways of *ADONAI*. Furthermore he removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah.

⁷ Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials—Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micahiah—to teach in the towns of Judah. ⁸ With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah and with them Elishama and Jehoram the *kohanim*. ⁹ They taught throughout Judah, having with them a *Torah* scroll of *ADONAI*. They went throughout all the towns of Judah and taught the people.

¹⁰ Now the fear of *ADONAI* fell on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, so that they did not make war with Jehoshaphat. ¹¹ Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents and silver for tribute. The Arabs also brought him flocks—7,700 rams and 7,700 he-goats.

¹² So Jehoshaphat became more and more powerful. He built forts and storage cities in Judah ¹³ and carried out extensive work in the cities of Judah. He had men of war, valiant warriors, in Jerusalem.

¹⁴ These were their appointees according to their clans. From Judah, captains of thousands: Adnah the commander with 300,000 valiant warriors; ¹⁵ and next to him Jehohanan the commander with 280,000; ¹⁶ and next to him, Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself to *ADONAI* with 200,000 valiant warriors.

¹⁷ From Benjamin: Eliada a valiant warrior with 200,000 men armed with bow and shield; ¹⁸ and next to him Jehozabad with 180,000 equipped for war.

¹⁹ These were the men who served the king besides those whom the king stationed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

Prophecy of the Deceiving Spirit

18 Now Jehoshaphat had wealth and honor in abundance but he allied himself with Ahab by marriage. ² Some years later he went down to visit Ahab in Samaria. Ahab slaughtered many sheep and bulls for him and the people with him, and urged him to march with him against Ramoth-Gilead.

³ King Ahab of Israel asked King Jehoshaphat of Judah, "Will you go with me against Ramoth-Gilead?"

He replied, "I am as you are and my people as your people, and we will be with you in battle."

⁴ Jehoshaphat then said to the king of Israel, "Please, let us seek, today, the word of *ADONAI*."

⁵ So the king of Israel assembled the prophets—400 men—and asked them, "Should we go to war against Ramoth-Gilead, or should I hold off?"

They answered, "Go up, for God will give it into the king's hand!"

⁶ But Jehoshaphat asked, "Isn't there another prophet of *ADONAI* here of whom we should inquire?"

⁷ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man through whom we can inquire of *ADONAI*—but I hate him, because he has never prophesied anything good about me but always evil. He is Micaiah son of Imlah."

But Jehoshaphat said, "May the king never say such a thing."

⁸ So the king of Israel called an official and said, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah quickly!"

⁹ Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah, wearing their robes, were sitting on their thrones on the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria with all the prophets prophesying before them. ¹⁰ Zedekiah son of Henaanah made for himself iron horns and declared, "Thus says *ADONAI*, 'With these you will gore the Arameans until they are exterminated!'"

¹¹ All the other prophets were prophesying similarly, saying "March against Ramoth-Gilead and succeed, for *ADONAI* will give it into the hand of the king."

¹² Now the messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, "Look, the words of the prophets are unanimously favorable to the king. So please let your word be like one of them and speak favorably."

¹³ But Micaiah replied, "As *ADONAI* lives, what my God says that is what I will say."

¹⁴ When he came to the king, the king asked him, "Micaiah, should we go to war against Ramoth-Gilead, or should I hold off?"

He replied, "March and be victorious! They will be given into your hand!"

¹⁵ But the king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the Name of *ADONAI*?"

¹⁶ So he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, † and *ADONAI* said, 'These have no master—let each man return home in *shalom*!'"

¹⁷ So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Didn't I tell you that he never prophesies good about me, only evil?"

¹⁸ Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of *ADONAI*. I saw *ADONAI* sitting on His throne with the whole host of heaven standing on His right and on His left. ¹⁹ And *ADONAI* said: 'Who will entice Ahab king of Israel to go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?'"

"Then one said this and another said that, ²⁰ until a spirit came forward and stood before *ADONAI* and said, 'I will entice him.'"

"So *ADONAI* said to him, 'How?'"

²¹ "He answered, 'I will go and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.'"

"Then He said, 'You will entice him and you will also succeed. Go and do so.'"

²² "So now, behold, *ADONAI* has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours and *ADONAI* has decreed disaster against you."

²³ Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah approached Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek and said, "How did the spirit of *ADONAI* pass over me to speak to you?"

²⁴ Micaiah replied, "Behold, you will see on the day that you go to hide in an inner room."

²⁵ Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and turn him over to Amon, governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son, ²⁶ and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this fellow in prison and make him eat the bread and water of affliction—until I return in *shalom*.'"'"

²⁷ Then Micaiah said, "If you ever return in *shalom*, *ADONAI* has not spoken through me." He added: "Listen, all you people!"

Ahab Dies in Battle

²⁸ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah marched against Ramoth-Gilead. ²⁹ Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and they went into the battle.

³⁰ Now the king of Aram had already ordered his chariot commanders saying: "Don't attack anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel alone."

³¹ So when the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat they thought, "This is the king of Israel." So they turned to attack him but Jehoshaphat cried out. *ADONAI* helped him and God diverted them from him.

³² When the chariot commanders realized that he was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

† cf. Matt. 9:36; Mark 6:34.

³³ But a man drew his bow aimlessly and struck the king of Israel between the lower armor and the breastplate. The king said to the charioteer, "Turn around and take me out of the battle, for I am wounded."

³⁴ The battle raged that day and the king of Israel remained propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans until dusk. Then at sunset he died.

Jehoshaphat's Judicial Reforms

19 Then King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem. ² Jehu son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate *ADONAI*? Because of this, wrath from before *ADONAI* is against you. ³ Nevertheless, good things are found in you, for you have removed the Asherah poles out of the land and have set your heart to seek God."

⁴ Jehoshaphat dwelt in Jerusalem and he went out again among the people from Beer-Sheba over to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers. ⁵ He also appointed judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city. ⁶ He said to the judges. "Consider what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for *ADONAI* who is with you when you pass judgment. ⁷ Now then, let the fear of *ADONAI* be upon you. Be very careful what you do, for there is no injustice or favoritism or bribe-taking with *ADONAI Eloheinu*."

⁸ In Jerusalem also, Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites, *kohanim*, and the leading patriarchs of Israel to render the judgment of *ADONAI* and to settle disputes among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

⁹ He charged them saying, "This is how you shall act: in the fear of *ADONAI*, faithfully and wholeheartedly. ¹⁰ When any dispute comes to you from your kinsmen who live in their cities, whether bloodshed, or concerning *Torah*, *mitzvot*, statutes, or ordinances, you must warn them so that they will not be guilty before *ADONAI*. Otherwise wrath will come upon you and your kinsmen. Act accordingly and you will not be guilty.

¹¹ "Behold, Amariah the chief *kohen* will be over you in all matters pertaining to *ADONAI*, and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the House of Judah, in all the matters pertaining to the king. Also the Levites will serve as officials before you. Act courageously and may *ADONAI* be with the good."

Jehoshaphat's Prayer and the Valley of *Bracha*

20 Now it happened after this that the Moabites and the Ammonites together with other Ammonites came to make war against Jehoshaphat.

² Some came and reported to Jehoshaphat saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Aram, and are already in Hazazon-Tamar" (that is En-Gedi).

³ Jehoshaphat was afraid so he resolved to seek *ADONAI*, and he proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴ Judah assembled to seek help from *ADONAI*; indeed, they came from all the cities of Judah to seek *ADONAI*.

⁵ Then Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the House of *ADONAI* in front of the new courtyard ⁶ and said:

"*ADONAI*, 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 no one can stand against You. ⁷ Are You not our God who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and gave it to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever? ⁸ They settled in it and built You a Temple there for Your Name saying, ⁹ 'If calamity comes upon us—the sword of judgment, pestilence or famine—we will stand before this House and before You—for Your Name is in this House—and cry to You in our distress and You will hear and deliver us.'

¹⁰ "Now behold, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir—whose land You did not allow Israel to invade when they came from the land of Egypt, instead they turned aside from them and did not destroy them— ¹¹ now behold, how they repay us by coming to drive us out of Your possession that You gave us as an inheritance. ¹² Our God, will You not execute judgment on them? For we have no power to face this great multitude that is attacking us. We do not know what to do—but our eyes are on You."

¹³ All Judah was standing before *ADONAI* with their infants, their wives, and their children.

¹⁴ Then in the midst of the congregation, the *Ruach ADONAI* came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah the Levite, of the sons of Asaph, ¹⁵ and he said:

"Listen all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat. Thus *ADONAI* says to you, 'Do not be afraid or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. ¹⁶ Tomorrow go down against them as they come up the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷ You will not fight in this battle. Take your positions, stand and see the salvation of *ADONAI* with you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or be dismayed. Tomorrow go out to face them, for *ADONAI* is with you.'"

¹⁸ Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before *ADONAI* to worship *ADONAI*. ¹⁹ Levites, from the sons of Kohath and the sons of Korah, stood up to praise *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

²⁰ Early in the morning they arose and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in *ADONAI* your God and you will be confirmed. Trust in His prophets and

you will succeed.”²¹ After consulting with the people, he appointed singers to *ADONAI* praising the splendor of His holiness, as they went out before the army saying,

“Praise *ADONAI*,
for His mercy endures forever.”

²² As they began singing and praising, *ADONAI* set ambushes against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir who had come against Judah, and they were defeated. ²³ For the Ammonites and Moabites rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to exterminate and annihilate them. When they had exterminated the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

²⁴ When Judah came to the lookout in the wilderness and looked for the multitude, behold, only corpses were lying on the ground—no one had escaped.

²⁵ When Jehoshaphat and his people went to take the plunder, they found an abundance of goods, clothing, and precious articles, which they pillaged, more than they could carry away. For three days they were taking the plunder because there was so much. ²⁶ On the fourth day they assembled in the valley of *Bracha*[†] where they blessed *ADONAI*. That is why the name of that place is called the Valley of *Bracha* to this day.

²⁷ Then every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat at their head, returned joyfully to Jerusalem for *ADONAI* had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸ They came to Jerusalem to the House of *ADONAI* with harps, lyres, and trumpets. ²⁹ So the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of the region because they heard that *ADONAI* had fought against the enemies of Israel. ³⁰ So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was untroubled for his God gave him rest all around.

Jehoshaphat's Last Days

³¹ Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was 35 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for 25 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shlihi. ³² He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not stray from it, doing what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI*. ³³ However, the high places were not removed, nor did the people direct their hearts to the God of their fathers.

³⁴ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from beginning to end, behold, they are written in the annals of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is included in the book of the kings of Israel.

³⁵ Afterward, King Jehoshaphat of Judah allied himself with King Ahaziah of Israel, thereby acting wickedly. ³⁶ He joined with him to construct ships to go to Tarshish, and they constructed the ships in Ezion-Geber.

³⁷ Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, “Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, *ADONAI* will break up your

works.” So the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

Jehoram Slays His Brothers

21 Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. Jehoram his son became king in his place. ² His brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat, were Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah—all these were the sons of King Jehoshaphat of Israel. ³ Their father had given them great gifts of silver, gold, and precious things, along with fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn.

⁴ Now when Jehoram had risen over his father's kingdom and made himself strong, he slew all his brothers with the sword, along with some of the officers of Israel. ⁵ Jehoram was 32 years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. ⁶ He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did (for Ahab's daughter was his wife), and he did evil in the eyes of *ADONAI*. ⁷ However, *ADONAI* was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant He had made with David, and since He had spoken a word to give a lamp to him and his sons always.

⁸ In his days Edom rebelled against Judah's rule and set up a king over themselves. ⁹ So Jehoram crossed over with his officers and all his chariots with him. He rose up by night and struck the Edomites who were surrounding him and the chariot commanders. ¹⁰ Thus Edom has been in rebellion against Judah to this day. Then Libnah also revolted from under his hand at that time—because he had forsaken *ADONAI*, the God of his fathers. ¹¹ Moreover, he built high places on the mountains of Judah and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray.

Elijah's Letter of Judgment

¹² A letter from Elijah the prophet came to him saying:

“Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of your father David: Since you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, ¹³ but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, leading Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into prostitution just as the house of Ahab committed prostitution and you have also slain your brothers—your own family, who were better than you—¹⁴ behold, *ADONAI* is going to strike your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions with a monumental catastrophe. ¹⁵ You yourself will be stricken by multiple illnesses of your intestines, day after day, until your intestines drop out because of the illness.”

¹⁶ Then *ADONAI* stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabs that neighbored the Cushites. ¹⁷ They rose up against Judah, invaded it, and carried away all the possessions found in the royal

† i.e., blessing

palace, as well as his sons and his wives. No son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest.

¹⁸ After all this, *ADONAI* smote his intestines with an incurable disease, ¹⁹ and it continued day after day for two years, so that at the end his bowels fell out because of his sickness and he died in great agonies. His people made no fire in his honor like the fire of his fathers. ²⁰ He was 32 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years and he passed away, to no one's regret. He was buried in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

Ahaziah Falls with Ahab

22 Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place for the troops that invaded the camp with the Arabians had slain all the older ones. Thus Ahaziah the son of Jehoram became king over Judah. ² Ahaziah was 22 years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem one year. His mother's name was Athaliah the daughter of Omri. ³ He too walked in the ways of the house of Ahab for his mother counseled him to do evil. ⁴ He did evil in the sight of *ADONAI*, like the house of Ahab, for they were his counselors after his father's death—to his destruction. ⁵ He also followed their counsel when he went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to wage war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth-Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram, ⁶ so he returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought Hazael king of Aram. Then Azariah, the son of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he had been wounded.

⁷ Now through his coming to Joram, God brought about Ahaziah's downfall. Upon his arrival, Ahaziah went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom *ADONAI* had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab. ⁸ So it came to pass that when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, he came upon the officers of Judah and Ahaziah's relatives, who had been attending Ahaziah, and slew them. ⁹ He then searched for Ahaziah who was caught hiding in Samaria. Then they brought him to Jehu, put him to death and buried him, for they said, "He is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought *ADONAI* with all his heart." Then there was no one in the house of Ahaziah to hold power over the kingdom.

Athaliah and Joash

¹⁰ Now when Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, saw that her son had died, she arose and destroyed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah. ¹¹ But Jehoshebeath, the king's daughter, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being slain, and put him and his nurse in the bedroom. Because Jehoshebeath, daughter of King Jehoram and wife of Jehoiada the *kohen*, was the sister of

Ahaziah, she could hide him from Athaliah so she could not kill him. ¹² He remained hidden with them in the House of God for six years while Athaliah reigned over the land.

23 Now in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself and brought the officers of hundreds—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—into a covenant with him. ² They went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah and the leading patriarchs of Israel. They came to Jerusalem ³ and the entire congregation made a covenant with the king in the House of God. Then he said to them:

"Behold, the king's son! He must reign as *ADONAI* promised concerning David's sons. ⁴ This is what you should do: a third of you, *kohanim* and Levites coming on duty on *Shabbat* will keep watch at the gates, ⁵ a third of you shall be in the royal palace, and a third at the Foundation Gate, and all the people shall be in the courtyard, and all the people should be in the courtyard of the House of *ADONAI*. ⁶ But let no one enter into the House of *ADONAI* except the *kohanim* and the ministering Levites. They may come in, for they are *kadosh*, and let all the people observe the service of *ADONAI*. ⁷ The Levites will surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand, and whoever enters the House, let him be killed. Stay close to the king in his comings and goings."

⁸ So the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the *kohen* commanded. Each took his men, those that were on duty on *Shabbat* and those who went off duty on *Shabbat*, for Jehoiada the *kohen* had not dismissed any of the divisions. ⁹ And Jehoiada the *kohen* delivered to the officers of hundreds King David's spears, shields and bucklers that were in the House of God. ¹⁰ Then he stationed all the people, each man with his weapon in his hand around the king—from the south side of the House to the north side of the House by the altar and by the House.

¹¹ Then they brought out the king's son and placed upon him the crown and the insignia. They proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and declared, "Long live the king!"

¹² When Athaliah heard the shouting of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people to the House of *ADONAI*. ¹³ She looked, and behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance and the officers and the trumpeters were beside the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing the trumpets, and the singers with their musical instruments were leading the praise. So Athaliah tore her clothes and said, "Treason, treason!"

¹⁴ Jehoiada the *kohen* brought out the officers of hundreds who were set over the army, and said to them, "Bring her out from between the ranks and put to the sword anyone who follows her."

For the *kohanim* said, “Do not put her to death in the House of *ADONAI*.”

¹⁵ So they seized her as she arrived at the entrance of the Horse Gate of the royal palace and killed her there.

¹⁶ Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, all the people and the king to be the people of *ADONAI*.

¹⁷ All the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down, smashed its altars and images into pieces, and slew Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars.

¹⁸ Then Jehoiada placed the oversight of the House of *ADONAI* under the authority of the Levitical *kohanim*, whom David had assigned over the House of *ADONAI* to offer the burnt offerings of *ADONAI*, as it is written in the *Torah* of Moses, accompanied by rejoicing and singing as ordered by David. ¹⁹ He also stationed gatekeepers at the gates of the House of *ADONAI* so that no one who was ritually impure for any reason could enter. ²⁰ He took the officers of hundreds, the nobles, the rulers of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the House of *ADONAI*. They came through the upper gate of the royal house and seated the king upon the royal throne, ²¹ and all the people of the land rejoiced. The city was quiet for Athaliah had been slain with the sword.

Joash Repairs the Temple

24 Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem 40 years. His mother’s name was Zibiah of Beer-Sheba. ² Joash did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI* all the days of Jehoiada the *kohen*.

³ Jehoiada took two wives by whom he fathered sons and daughters. ⁴ It came to pass after this that Joash had a heart to renovate the House of *ADONAI*. ⁵ He assembled the *kohanim* and the Levites and told them, “Go out to the cities of Judah and collect money from all Israel year by year to repair the House of your God. Do this quickly!”

However, the Levites did not act quickly. ⁶ So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief and asked him, “Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and from Jerusalem the tax of Moses the servant of *ADONAI* on the congregation of Israel for the Tent of the Testimony?”

⁷ For the sons of wicked Athaliah had broken into the House of God, and had even used all the sacred things of the House of *ADONAI* for the Baalim †. ⁸ So the king commanded that a box be made and placed outside the gate of the House of *ADONAI*. ⁹ A proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring in to *ADONAI* the tax of Moses, God’s servant, upon Israel in the wilderness. ¹⁰ All the officers and all the people rejoiced, and brought in and cast into the chest until it was full. ¹¹ Whenever the chest was brought by the Levites to the king’s officers and when they saw that it was full of money, the royal scribe and the officer of the *kohen gadol* would come and empty the box and

† Plural for Baal gods

take it back to its place. Thus they did daily and gathered much money. ¹² The king and Jehoiada gave it to workmen who carried out the work for the House of *ADONAI*. They hired masons and carpenters to renovate the House of *ADONAI*, as well as craftsmen in iron and bronze to repair the House of *ADONAI*. ¹³ So the workmen labored and the renovation work progressed in their hands. They restored the House of God to its original design, and strengthened it.

¹⁴ When they had finished, they brought the remainder of the money before the king and Jehoiada and they made it into vessels for the House of *ADONAI*—vessels for *avodah* and for burnt offering, pans, and utensils of gold and silver. Then they offered burnt offerings in the House of *ADONAI* continually all the days of Jehoiada.

¹⁵ When Jehoiada reached a ripe old age, he died. He was 130 years old when he died. ¹⁶ So he was buried in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good things in Israel and toward God and His House.

Joash Betrays the Righteous Kohen

¹⁷ Now after the death of Jehoiada, the chiefs of Judah came and bowed down to the king. Then the king listened to them. ¹⁸ They forsook the House of *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherah poles and the idols. Wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for their guilt. ¹⁹ *ADONAI* sent prophets to them to bring them back to Him and although they admonished them, they would not listen.

²⁰ Then the *Ruach Elohim* came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the *kohen*. ^{††} He stood above the people and said to them, “Thus says God, ‘Why do you transgress the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI*? You will not succeed. Because you have forsaken *ADONAI*, He has also forsaken you.’”

²¹ But they conspired against him, and by order of the king, they stoned him to death in the courtyard of the House of *ADONAI*. ²² Thus King Joash disregarded the loyalty which his father Jehoiada had shown to him—and slew Jehoiada’s son. As he was dying, he said: “May *ADONAI* see and avenge!”

Judgment on Joash and His Chieftains

²³ It came to pass that at the turn of the year, the Aramean army came up against him. They invaded Judah and Jerusalem and massacred all the chieftains of the people, and sent all their plunder to the king of Damascus. ²⁴ Although the Aramean army came with only a small number of men, *ADONAI* gave over a much larger army into their hands, because they had forsaken *ADONAI*, God of their fathers. So they executed judgment upon Joash. ²⁵ When they withdrew from him—for they left him very sick—his own servants plotted against him because of the blood of the sons

†† cf. Luke 4:29; Acts 7:58; 10:44; 11:15.

of Jehoiada the *kohen*, and assassinated him on his bed. He died and was buried in the city of David—but not in the tombs of the kings. ²⁶ These men conspired against him: Zabad son of Shimiath the Ammonitess and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabite.

²⁷ Now concerning his sons and the many prophecies against him and the rebuilding of the House of God, behold, they are written in the commentary of the book of the kings. And Amaziah his son became king in his place.

Amaziah Begins Well

25 Amaziah was 25 years old when he became king and reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem. ² Now he did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI*, but not wholeheartedly. ³ Once he had the kingdom firmly secured under him, he executed his courtiers who had assassinated his father the king. ⁴ He did not put their children to death, but acted according to what is written in the *Torah*, in the book of Moses, which *ADONAI* commanded saying,

"Parents should not die for the children, neither should the children die for the parents, but every person should die for his own sin."

⁵ Amaziah gathered together the people of Judah and assigned them according to their clans to officers of thousands and officers of hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin. He mustered those from 20 years old and upward, and found 300,000 chosen men, able to go to war, able to handle spear and shield. ⁶ He also hired 100,000 valiant warriors from Israel for 100 talents of silver.

⁷ But a man of God came to him saying, "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for *ADONAI* is not with Israel—not with any of the children of Ephraim. ⁸ For if you go and fight courageously in battle, God will overthrow you before the enemy, for God has power to help and to bring down."

⁹ But Amaziah said to the man of God, "And what is to be done about the 100 talents that I have given to the Israelite troops?"

The man of God answered, "*ADONAI* is able to give you much more than that."

¹⁰ So, Amaziah dismissed the troops who had come to him from Ephraim to go back to their homes. Their anger burned greatly against Judah and they returned home in a rage.

¹¹ Amaziah then took courage and leading his army, marched to the Valley of Salt. He struck down 10,000 men of Seir. ¹² The army of Judah also captured 10,000 alive, and brought them to the top of the cliff. They threw them down from the top of the cliff and everyone fell to their death.

¹³ Meanwhile the troops that Amaziah had sent back and not allowed to go with him to battle raided the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-Horon. They

struck down 3,000 of them and took considerable spoils.

Idolatry and Defiance

¹⁴ Now after Amaziah returned from slaughtering the Edomites, he had the gods of the men of Seir brought and installed as his gods. He prostrated himself before them and burned incense to them. ¹⁵ The anger of *ADONAI* burned against Amaziah, and He sent a prophet to him, who said to him, "Why have you sought after the gods of the people who could not deliver their own people from your hand?"

¹⁶ But while he was still speaking to him, the king said to him, "Have we appointed you a counselor to the king? Stop! Why should you be struck down?"

So the prophet stopped after he said, "Now I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have acted this way and have not listened to my counsel."

¹⁷ Then Amaziah king of Judah took counsel and sent this message to Joash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel saying, "Come, let us meet face to face."

¹⁸ Joash king of Israel replied to Amaziah king of Judah saying: "The thorn bush in Lebanon sent a message to the cedar in Lebanon saying, 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' Then a wild beast of Lebanon passed by and trampled the thorn bush.

¹⁹ You say, 'Behold, I have defeated Edom.' So now your heart has become arrogant and proud. Stay home! Why ask for trouble and cause your own downfall and that of Judah with you?"

²⁰ However, Amaziah would not listen, for it was from God in order that He might deliver them into the hand of Joash because they had sought the gods of Edom.

²¹ So King Joash of Israel attacked. He and King Amaziah of Judah confronted one another at Beth-Shemesh, which belonged to Judah. ²² Then Judah was routed before Israel, and every man fled to his tent. ²³ King Joash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah—son of Joash, son of Jehoahaz—in Beth-Shemesh. Then Joash brought him to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim gate to the Corner Gate, 400 cubits. ²⁴ He took all the gold and silver and all the vessels that were found in the House of God with Obed-Edom, together with the treasuries of the king's palace and the hostages, and returned to Samaria.

²⁵ Amaziah the son of King Joash of Judah lived 15 years after the death of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel. ²⁶ Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, the first and the last, behold, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel? ²⁷ From the time that Amaziah turned away from following *ADONAI*, they conspired against him in Jerusalem, so he fled to Lachish. But they sent men after him to Lachish and put him to death there. ²⁸ Then they brought him back on horses and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

Uzziah Strengthens Judah's Defenses

26 Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was 16 years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah. ² He built Eloth and restored it to Judah after the king slept with his fathers. ³ Uzziah was 16 years old when he became king, and he reigned 52 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah from Jerusalem. ⁴ He did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI* just as his father Amaziah had done. ⁵ He continued to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the visions of God. As long as he sought *ADONAI*, God made him prosper.

⁶ He went out and fought the Philistines and breached the wall of Gath, the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod. He built cities in Ashdod and among the Philistines. ⁷ God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabs who dwelt in Gur-Baal, and against the Meunites. ⁸ The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread abroad even to the border of Egypt, for he became exceedingly strong.

⁹ Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, the Valley Gate, and at the Angle, and fortified them. ¹⁰ He also built towers in the wilderness and dug out many cisterns because he had much livestock, and he had farmers in the foothills and in the plain and vinedressers in the mountains and in the fertile fields—for he loved the soil.

¹¹ Uzziah also had a well-trained army ready to go out to battle by divisions, according to the numbers mustered by the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the official, under Hananiah, one of the king's chiefs. ¹² The total number of family leaders over the fighting men was 2,600, ¹³ and under their command was an army of 307,500 trained for war with mighty power to support the king against the enemy. ¹⁴ Uzziah provided shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows, and slingstones for the entire army. ¹⁵ In Jerusalem he made machines designed by skillful men to be used on the towers and on the corners to shoot arrows and hurl large stones. So his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped until he became strong.

Uzziah Usurps the *Kohanim*

¹⁶ But when he became strong, his heart grew so haughty that he acted corruptly. For he trespassed against *ADONAI* his God by entering into the Temple of *ADONAI* to burn incense upon the altar of incense. ¹⁷ Then Azariah the *kohen* with 80 valiant *kohanim* of *ADONAI* followed him in. ¹⁸ They opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to *ADONAI*, but for the *kohanim*, the descendants of Aaron, who have been consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the Sanctuary, for you have acted unfaithfully. You will have no honor from *ADONAI Elohim*."

¹⁹ Then Uzziah, who had a censer in his hand ready to burn incense, became angry. While he was raging at the *kohanim*, *tzara'at* broke out on his forehead right in front of the *kohanim* in the House of *ADONAI*, beside the incense altar. ²⁰ When Azariah the chief *kohen* and all the other *kohanim* stared at him, behold, his forehead had *tzara'at*! So they rushed him out of there. Indeed, he himself hurried to get out because *ADONAI* had smitten him.

²¹ King Uzziah had *tzara'at* until the day of his death. He lived in a separate house with *tzara'at*, for he was cut off from the House of *ADONAI*. Jotham his son was in charge of the king's house and governed the people of the land.

²² Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from beginning to end, were recorded by the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz. ²³ So Uzziah slept with his fathers and they buried him with his fathers in the field of burial that belonged to the kings, for they said: "He had *tzara'at*." Then Jotham his son became king in his place.

Good King Jotham Prospers

27 Jotham was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah the daughter of Zadok. ² He did what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI*, just as his father Uzziah had done. But unlike his father, he did not enter into the Temple of *ADONAI*. The people, however, acted corruptly. ³ He rebuilt the upper gate of the House of *ADONAI* and did extensive building on the wall of Ophel. ⁴ He also built towns in the Judean hills and forts and towers in the forests.

⁵ Jotham also fought the king of the Ammonites and prevailed against them. That year the Ammonites paid him 100 talents of silver, 10,000 measures of wheat, and 10,000 of barley. The Ammonites brought him the same amount also in the second and third years.

⁶ Jotham became powerful because he ordered his ways before *ADONAI* his God. ⁷ Now the rest of the acts of Jotham and all his wars and his ways, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. ⁸ He was 25 years old when he became king and reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. ⁹ Jotham slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David. Ahaz his son became king in his place.

Ahaz's Sin in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom

28 Ahaz was 20 years old when he became king, and he reigned 16 years in Jerusalem. But he did not do what was right in the eyes of *ADONAI* as his father David had done, ² but followed the ways of the kings of Israel, and even made molten images for the Baalim. ³ Moreover, he burned incense in the valley of Ben-Hinnom and burned his children in the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom *ADONAI* had driven out before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ⁴ He of-

ferred sacrifices and burned incense in the high places, on the hills and under every leafy tree.

⁵ Therefore *ADONAI* his God gave him into the hand of the king of Aram who defeated him and took away from him many prisoners and brought them to Damascus. He was also given into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted many casualties on him. ⁶ In one day, Pekah the son of Remaliah killed 120,000 valiant soldiers of Judah—because they had forsaken *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers.

Mercy Shown to Judah's Captives

⁷ Also Zichri, a warrior from Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, Azrikam the official in charge of the palace, and Elkanah the second to the king. ⁸ Men of Israel carried away captive 200,000 of their kinsmen, women, sons, and daughters. They also took away a great deal of plunder from them that they brought to Samaria.

⁹ But a prophet of *ADONAI* named Oded was there and he went out to meet the army on its return to Samaria. He said to them, "Behold, because *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, He has given them into your hand and you have slaughtered them in a rage that reaches to heaven. ¹⁰ So now you intend to bring into bondage the children of Judah and Jerusalem as your male and female slaves? Are you not also guilty of transgressions against *ADONAI* your God? ¹¹ So now, listen to me. Send back the prisoners you have captured from your kinsmen—for the fierce wrath of *ADONAI* is upon you!"

¹² Then some of the leaders of the sons of Ephraim—Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai—confronted those coming from the campaign, ¹³ and said to them, "Do not bring the captives in here, for that would cause us to trespass against *ADONAI*. Do you intend to add to our sins and our guilt? For our guilt is already great, and his fierce anger is already against Israel."

¹⁴ So the soldiers released the captives and the plunder in the presence of the chieftains and the entire congregation. ¹⁵ Then the men designated by name stood up and took the captives, and they clothed all who were naked from the plunder. They gave them clothes and sandals, food and drink, anointed them, led all the feeble ones on donkeys, and brought them back to their kinsmen at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

Ahaz Leads Judah into Idolatry

¹⁶ About that time King Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria for help. ¹⁷ Once again the Edomites had come and invaded Judah and taken captives, ¹⁸ while the Philistines had raided the towns in the foothills and in the south of Judah. They captured and occupied Beth-Shemesh, Aijalon, and Gederot, as well as Soho, Tim-

nah, and Gimzo with their villages. ¹⁹ For *ADONAI* humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he threw off restraint in Judah and trespassed against *ADONAI*. ²⁰ Tilgat-Pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him—²¹ even though Ahaz plundered the House of *ADONAI*, the house of the king and the princes, and gave it to the king of Assyria—it did not help him.

²² In his time of distress, this same King Ahaz acted even more unfaithfully to *ADONAI*. ²³ He even sacrificed to the gods of Damascus after he had been defeated, for he said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them and they will help me." But they caused the downfall of him and all Israel.

²⁴ Ahaz even collected the utensils of the House of God and cut the utensils of the House of God into pieces. He shut the doors of the House of *ADONAI* and made himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem. ²⁵ In every town of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods—provoking *ADONAI*, the God of his fathers.

²⁶ Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, the first and the last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷ Then Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of Jerusalem, but he was not brought into the tombs of the kings of Israel. Hezekiah his son became king in his place.

Hezekiah Restores the Temple

²⁹ Hezekiah became king when he was 25 years old, and he reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah the daughter of Zechariah. ² He did right in the eyes of *ADONAI*, just as his father David had done. ³ In the first month of the first year of his reign, he opened the doors of the House of *ADONAI* and repaired them. ⁴ He brought in the *kohanim* and the Levites and assembled them into the eastern square.

⁵ Then he said to them: "Listen to me, Levites! Sanctify yourselves, and sanctify the House of *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers, and remove the defilement out of the holy place. ⁶ Our fathers acted unfaithfully and did evil in the sight of *ADONAI Eloheinu* and have forsaken Him. They turned their faces away from *ADONAI*'s dwelling place and turned their backs on Him. ⁷ They also shut the doors of the porch and put out the lamps. They did not burn incense or offering any burnt offerings in the Holy Place to the God of Israel. ⁸ Therefore, the wrath of *ADONAI* was upon Judah and Jerusalem. He has made them an object of horror, dread, and scorn, as you are seeing with your own eyes. ⁹ Behold, for this our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, daughters, and wives are in captivity.

¹⁰ "Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, so that His fierce anger may

turn away from us. ¹¹ My sons, now do not be negligent, for *ADONAI* has chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and to be His ministers and to burn incense to Him."

¹² Then these Levites arose: from the sons of Kohath, Mahath son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah; from the sons of Merari, Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehallelel; from the sons of Gershon, Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah; ¹³ from the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; from the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; ¹⁴ from the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and from the sons of Jeduthun, She-maiah and Uzziel.

¹⁵ When they had gathered their brothers and sanctified themselves, they went in, as the king ordered according to the words of *ADONAI*, to cleanse the House of *ADONAI*.

¹⁶ So the *kohanim* went into the inner part of the House of *ADONAI* to purify it. They brought out to the courtyard of the House of *ADONAI* every impure thing that they found in the temple of *ADONAI*. Then the Levites received it and carried it out to Kidron Valley. ¹⁷ They began the consecration on the first day of the first month, and by the eighth day of the month they reached the porch of *ADONAI*. For eight days they consecrated the House of *ADONAI* and finished on the sixteenth day of the first month.

¹⁸ Then they went in to King Hezekiah and said, "We have purified the entire House of *ADONAI*—the altar of burnt offering with all its vessels, the table of the rows of bread with all the vessels. ¹⁹ We have also prepared and consecrated all the articles that King Ahaz discarded in his unfaithfulness, while he was king. Behold, they are now before the altar of *ADONAI*."

²⁰ Then King Hezekiah arose early, gathered the leaders of the city, and went up to the House of *ADONAI*.

²¹ They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven he-goats as a sin offering for the kingdom, the sanctuary, and Judah, and he commanded the *kohanim*—the sons of Aaron—to offer them on the altar of *ADONAI*. ²² So they slaughtered the bulls and the *kohanim* took the blood and sprinkled it against the altar; next they slaughtered the rams and sprinkled the blood against the altar; then they slaughtered the lambs and sprinkled the blood against the altar. ²³ The he-goats for the sin offering were brought before the king and the congregation, and they laid their hands on them. ²⁴ The *kohanim* then slaughtered them and purified the altar with their blood to make atonement for all Israel, for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

²⁵ He stationed the Levites in the House of *ADONAI* with cymbals, harps, and lyres, according to the command of David, of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet. For the command was by the authority of *ADONAI* through His prophets. ²⁶ So the Levites stood

with David's instruments and the *kohanim* with the trumpets.

²⁷ Then Hezekiah gave the order to sacrifice the burnt offering on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song of *ADONAI* also began with the trumpets, together with the instruments of King David of Israel. ²⁸ The entire congregation prostrated themselves, while the singers sang and the trumpeters played. All this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

²⁹ Now at the completion of the burnt offering, the king and all who were present with him knelt down and worshiped. ³⁰ Moreover, King Hezekiah and the officials ordered the Levites to sing praises to *ADONAI* with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with gladness and bowed down and worshiped.

³¹ Then Hezekiah responded and said, "You have now consecrated yourselves to *ADONAI*. Come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the House of *ADONAI*." The congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings, and all whose hearts were willing brought burnt offerings.

³² The number of the burnt offerings that the congregation brought was 70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 lambs—all of these as a burnt offering to *ADONAI*.

³³ The animals consecrated as sacrifices were 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep. ³⁴ The *kohanim*, however, were too few to flay all the burnt offerings, so their kinsmen, the Levites, helped them until the work was completed, and until other *kohanim* had consecrated themselves. For the Levites had been more conscientious to consecrate themselves than the *kohanim*. ³⁵ There were also a great many burnt offerings, along with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offering at every burnt offering.

Thus the *avodah* of the House of *ADONAI* was reestablished. ³⁶ Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because of what God had enabled the people to accomplish, because it happened so suddenly.

Hezekiah and all Israel Celebrate *Pesach*

30 Hezekiah then sent word to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come to the House of *ADONAI* at Jerusalem to keep the Passover for *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ² The king and his officials and the entire congregation in Jerusalem had decided to celebrate Passover in the second month. ³ For they were not able to celebrate it at the regular time, since not enough *kohanim* had consecrated themselves, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem. ⁴ The matter seemed right in the eyes of the king and of the entire community. ⁵ So they decided to issue a decree and to proclaim it throughout all Israel from Beer-Sheba to Dan, calling the people to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover for *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. For it had not been celebrated as prescribed for a long time.

⁶ At the king's command, the couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officials saying:

"You men of Israel, turn back to *ADONAI*, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, and He will return to the remnant of you who escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷ Do not be like your fathers and brothers who acted unfaithfully against *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers, so that He made them a horror as you see. ⁸ Do not stiffen your neck as your fathers did, but reconcile to *ADONAI*, and come to His Temple, which He has consecrated forever, and worship *ADONAI* your God that His burning anger may turn away from you. ⁹ For if you return to *ADONAI*, your brothers and children will receive compassion before their captors, and will return to this land. For *ADONAI* your God is compassionate and merciful; He will not turn His face away from you if you return to Him."

¹⁰ As the couriers traveled from town to town through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh and as far as Zebulun, they were scorned and mocked. ¹¹ Nevertheless some men from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.

¹² The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the officials commanded by the word of *ADONAI*.

¹³ Now a very large assembly gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of *Matzot* in the second month.

¹⁴ They arose and removed the altars and all the incense altars that were in Jerusalem, and threw them into the Kidron Valley. ¹⁵ Then they slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. The *kohanim* and the Levites were ashamed and consecrated themselves and brought burnt offerings into the House of *ADONAI*. ¹⁶ They stood at their post as prescribed in the *Torah* of Moses, the man of God. The *kohanim* sprinkled the blood that they received from the hand of the Levites. ¹⁷ For there were many in the congregation that had not consecrated themselves, therefore the Levites were in charge of slaughtering the Passover lambs for everyone that was not ceremonially clean in order to consecrate them to *ADONAI*. ¹⁸ Although a great multitude of the people—many of them from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun—had not purified themselves, they still ate the Passover lamb contrary to what is written.

But Hezekiah prayed for them saying: "May *ADONAI* who is good, atone for ¹⁹ every one who prepares his heart to seek *ADONAI*, the God of his fathers, even though he is not pure according to rules of the sanctuary." ²⁰ *ADONAI* heard Hezekiah and healed the people.

²¹ So the children of Israel who were present in Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of *Matzot* for seven days with great gladness. The Levites and the *kohanim* were praising *ADONAI* every day with loud instruments for *ADONAI*. ²² Then Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who demonstrated good understanding

of the service of *ADONAI*. For seven days they ate their assigned portions while sacrificing peace offerings and praising *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers.

²³ Then the whole congregation decided to celebrate seven more days—so for another seven days they celebrated with gladness. ²⁴ Hezekiah king of Judah contributed 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep to the congregation, and the officials contributed 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep to the congregation, and great numbers of *kohanim* consecrated themselves. ²⁵ The entire assembly of Judah rejoiced with the *kohanim* and the Levites, and all who had assembled from Israel, both the strangers coming from the land of Israel and the residents of Judah. ²⁶ There was great joy in Jerusalem, for nothing like this had happened in Jerusalem since the time of Solomon son of David king of Israel.

²⁷ Then the Levitical *kohanim* arose and blessed the people, and *ADONAI* heard their voice, for their prayer reached heaven, His holy dwelling place.

Restoring the *Kohanim* and Levites

31 When all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the towns of Judah and smashed the pillars, smashed the Asherah poles, and demolished the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, as well as throughout Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all *Bnei-Yisrael* returned to their towns, each to their own property.

² Then Hezekiah reestablished the divisions of the *kohanim* and the Levites together with their divisions, each of the *kohanim* and Levites according to his service: for burnt offerings, peace offerings, to minister, to praise, or to sing praises in the gates of the courts of *ADONAI*. ³ The king also contributed a portion of his own assets for the burnt offerings: the morning and the evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for *Shabbatot*, the New Moons, and the *moadim*, as it is written in the *Torah* of *ADONAI*. ⁴ Moreover, he commanded the people, the residents of Jerusalem, to give the portion allotted to the *kohanim* and the Levites, so that they might devote themselves to the *Torah* of *ADONAI*. ⁵ As soon as the word spread, *Bnei-Yisrael* gave generously the firstfruits of their grain, wine, oil, honey, and all the produce of the field, as well as tithe of all the abundance. ⁶ The children of Israel and Judah who lived in the towns of Judah, also brought in the tithe of bulls and sheep, and the tithe of the sacred things consecrated to *ADONAI* their God. They piled them in heaps. ⁷ In the third month the heaps began to accumulate and finished in the seventh month. ⁸ When Hezekiah and the officials came and saw the heaps, they blessed *ADONAI* and His people Israel.

⁹ Hezekiah asked the *kohanim* and the Levites about the heaps. ¹⁰ Azariah the chief *kohen* from the house of Zadok, replied to him saying, "Ever since the gifts began to be brought into the House of *ADONAI*, we

† cf. Luke 1:5.

have had enough to eat and more than enough, for *ADONAI* has blessed His people with plenty left over.”

¹¹ Then Hezekiah ordered them to prepare store-rooms in the House of *ADONAI*, and they prepared them. ¹² They faithfully brought in the offerings and the tithes and the consecrated gifts. Conaniah the Levite was the leader in charge over them and Shimei his brother was next in rank. ¹³ Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah were supervisors under Conaniah and Shimei his brother, by the appointment of Hezekiah the king and Azariah the leader in charge of the House of God. ¹⁴ Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, keeper of the East Gate, was over the freewill offerings of God, distributing the offering of *ADONAI* and the consecrated gifts. ¹⁵ Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah faithfully assisted him in the towns of the *kohanim*, making allocations to their brothers by divisions—to great and little alike, ¹⁶ only considering genealogical records, to the males three years old and upward—to all who entered into the House of *ADONAI*, to perform the daily duties according to their responsibilities and their divisions— ¹⁷ to the *kohanim* who were genealogically registered by their ancestral houses, as well as to the Levites 20 years old and upward, according to their duties and their divisions. ¹⁸ The genealogical registry included all their little ones, their wives and sons and daughters of the entire assembly. Thus in their faithfulness they consecrated themselves as holy.

¹⁹ As for the sons of Aaron, the *kohanim*, who lived in the fields of the common lands of their towns—in every town—men were designated by name to distribute portions to all the males among the *kohanim* and to all who were genealogically registered among the Levites. ²⁰ Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah. He did what was good, right, and true before *ADONAI* his God. ²¹ Every work he undertook in the service of the House of God and in the *Torah* and the *mitzvot* to seek his God, he did wholeheartedly and succeeded.

The Assyrian's Failed Siege of Jerusalem

32 After these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah. He encamped against the fortified cities, intending to break into them for himself. ² When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to wage war against Jerusalem, ³ he consulted with his officers and warriors about blocking the waters of the springs outside the city, and they supported him. ⁴ Many people assembled and blocked off all the springs and the raging wadi in the land saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come and find plenty of water?” ⁵ Then he took courage and rebuilt the entire wall that had been broken down, raised up the towers, added another outer wall, fortified the Millo in the city of David, and made plenty of weapons and shields.

⁶ He also appointed military officers over the people and assembled them before him in the square at the city gate, and encouraged them saying, ⁷ “*Chazak!* Be courageous! Do not be afraid or dismayed by the king of Assyria and the whole horde that is with him—for we have more with us than he has with him! ⁸ With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is *ADONAI Eloheinu* to help us and to fight our battles.” So the people were encouraged by the words of King Hezekiah of Judah.

⁹ After this, when King Sennacherib of Assyria, while he and all his forces with him were besieging Lachish, sent his servants to Jerusalem to Hezekiah king of Judah and to all Judah who were in Jerusalem, saying:

¹⁰ “Thus says King Sennacherib of Assyria, ‘What are you relying on that you would stay in Jerusalem, under siege? ¹¹ Is not Hezekiah misleading you, to let you die by famine and thirst, saying, “*ADONAI Eloheinu* will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria?’” ¹² Has not the same Hezekiah removed His high places and His altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem saying, “You shall worship before one altar and upon it you shall burn incense?” ¹³ Do not you know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of the lands ever able to deliver their land out of my hand? ¹⁴ Who among all the gods of these nations—which my fathers utterly destroyed—could deliver his people from my hand? How then is your God able to deliver you from my hand? ¹⁵ So now, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you like this. Do not believe him, for no god of any nation or any kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand and from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you from my hand!”

¹⁶ His servants spoke further against *ADONAI Elohim* and against His servant Hezekiah. ¹⁷ Sennacherib also wrote letters reviling *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, speaking against Him saying, “Just as the gods of the nations of the lands have not delivered their people from my hand, so the God of Hezekiah shall not deliver His people from my hand.” ¹⁸ Then they cried out loudly in Hebrew to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall to terrify and frighten them, in order to capture the city. ¹⁹ They spoke against the God of Jerusalem as of the gods of the peoples of the earth made by human hands.

²⁰ Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz prayed about this and cried out to heaven.

²¹ Then *ADONAI* sent an angel who annihilated every mighty warrior, commander, and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he withdrew in disgrace to his own land. When he entered the house of his god some of his own children struck him down with the sword. ²² Thus *ADONAI* delivered Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all, and helped them in every way. ²³ Many brought offerings

to *ADONAI* in Jerusalem and valuable gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah. From then on he was highly regarded in the eyes of all the nations.

Hezekiah's Pride and Humility

²⁴ In those days Hezekiah became deathly ill, but he prayed to *ADONAI* who responded to him and gave him a sign. ²⁵ But Hezekiah did not respond according to the favor done to him. His heart became haughty, so wrath came upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem. ²⁶ Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride in his heart—both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem—so that the wrath of *ADONAI* did not fall upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

²⁷ Now Hezekiah had very abundant riches and honor. He even made treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and for all kinds of valuables, ²⁸ and storehouses for the harvest of grain, wine and oil, and stalls for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds for the flocks. ²⁹ Moreover, he built towns and acquired flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him very many possessions.

³⁰ It was also Hezekiah who stopped the upper spring of the waters of Gihon and channeled them downward to the west side of the city of David. Hezekiah succeeded in all that he did. ³¹ But when the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon were sent to him to inquire about the wonder that had happened in the land, God left him alone to test him, to know all that was in his heart.

Hezekiah's Death and Honor

³² Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his good deeds, behold, they are written in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. ³³ So Hezekiah slept with his fathers and they buried him in the upper section of the tombs of the sons of David. All Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his death. His son Manasseh became king in his place.

King Manasseh's Transgressions

33 Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king, and he reigned 55 years in Jerusalem. ² He did evil in the sight of *ADONAI*, just like the abominations of the nations that *ADONAI* had driven out before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ³ For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had demolished, he reerected altars for the Baalim, made Asherah poles, and bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them. ⁴ He built altars in the House of *ADONAI*—of which *ADONAI* had said, "My Name will be in Jerusalem forever." ⁵ He also built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courtyards of the House of *ADONAI*. ⁶ Furthermore, he made his children pass through the fire in the valley of Ben-Hinnom and practiced witchcraft, divination, and sorcery, and consulted ghosts and spiritists. He did

much evil in the sight of *ADONAI*, provoking Him to anger.

⁷ Then he placed the carved image of the idol that he had made in the House of God—of which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this House and in Jerusalem that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My Name forever. ⁸ I will never again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for their fathers, if only they will observe to do all that I have commanded them—all the *Torah*, the statutes, and the ordinances delivered by the hand of Moses."

⁹ But Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations whom *ADONAI* destroyed before *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁰ *ADONAI* spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention.

Assyrians Sent to Chasten Manasseh

¹¹ Therefore, *ADONAI* brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who captured Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze shackles, and led him to Babylon.

¹² In his distress, he entreated *ADONAI* his God and greatly humbled himself before the God of his fathers. ¹³ When he prayed to Him, He was moved by his entreaty, heard his plea, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that *ADONAI*, He is God.

¹⁴ Afterward he built an outer wall to the city of David west of Gihon in the valley, as far as the entrance to the Fish Gate, and encircling the Ophel; he also raised it up much higher. He stationed military officers in all the fortified cities of Judah.

¹⁵ He also removed the foreign gods and idols from the House of *ADONAI*, as well as all the altars that he had built on the mount of the House of *ADONAI* and in Jerusalem and threw them outside the city. ¹⁶ He rebuilt the altar of *ADONAI* and sacrificed on it sacrifices of fellowship and thanksgiving, and commanded Judah to serve *ADONAI* the God of Israel. ¹⁷ Nevertheless, the people still sacrificed in the high places, but only to *ADONAI* their God.

¹⁸ Now 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 *ADONAI* the God of Israel, behold, they are written in the records of the kings of Israel. ¹⁹ His prayer also, and how God was moved by his entreaty, all his sin and his unfaithfulness, and the sites on which he built high places and erected the Asherah poles and the carved images before he humbled himself, behold, they are written in the records of Hozai. ²⁰ Manasseh slept with his fathers and they buried him in his own house. His son Amon became king in his place.

Wicked King Amon Assassinated

²¹ Amon was 22 years old when he became king and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. ²² He did what was evil in the sight of *ADONAI* just as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the carved images that Manasseh his father had made, and worshiped them. ²³ He did not humble himself before *ADONAI* as his father Manasseh had humbled himself. Instead Amon increased his guilt. ²⁴ So his servants conspired against him and assassinated him in his own house. ²⁵ Then the people of the land struck down all who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place.

Josiah Restores the Temple

34 Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned 31 years in Jerusalem. ² He did right in the eyes of *ADONAI*, and walked in the ways of his father David. He did not turn aside to the right or to the left. ³ In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek after the God of his father David. In the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, the Asherah poles, and the carved and molten images. ⁴ They tore down the altars of the Baal in his presence and chopped down the sun-images that were above them. Also the Asherah poles and the carved and molten images he smashed into pieces, ground into dust, and scattered upon the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵ Then he burned the bones of the priests on their altars—so he purged Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶ In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, with their surrounding ruins, ⁷ he broke down the altars, the Asherah poles, crushed the carved images into powder, and chopped down all the sun-images throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

⁸ Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, after purging the land and the House, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the House of *ADONAI* his God. ⁹ They came to Hilkiah the *kohen gadol* and handed over the silver money that was brought into the House of God, which the Levites, the gatekeepers, had collected from Manasseh, Ephraim, and all the remnant of Israel, as well as from all Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁰ Then they put it in the hands of the workmen who were in charge of the House of *ADONAI*. The workmen who were working in the House of *ADONAI* spent it on repairing and restoring the House. ¹¹ They in turn gave it to the carpenters and the builders to buy quarried stone as well as timber—for joining and making beams—for the buildings that the kings of Judah had let fall into ruin. ¹² The men did the work faithfully. Over them were appointed Jahath and Obadiah,

Levites from the sons of Merari, along with Zechariah and Meshullam from the sons of Kohath, to supervise, while other Levites—all skilled musicians—¹³ were over the burden-bearers and supervised all who worked from task to task. Some of the Levites were also scribes, overseers and gatekeepers.

Torah Scroll Found in the Temple

¹⁴ While they were bringing out the silver that had been brought into the House of *ADONAI*, Hilkiah the *kohen* found a *Torah* scroll of *ADONAI* given by Moses. ¹⁵ Hilkiah responded by telling Shaphan the scribe, "I have found a scroll of the *Torah* in the House of *ADONAI*." Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan.

¹⁶ Then Shaphan brought the scroll to the king and moreover returned a report to the king, saying, "Your servants are doing everything that was committed to them. ¹⁷ They have melted down the silver that was found in the House of *ADONAI* and handed it over to the overseers and into the hand of the workmen." ¹⁸ Shaphan the scribe also said to the king, "Hilkiah the *kohen* has given me a scroll." Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

¹⁹ When the king heard the words of the *Torah*, he tore his clothes. ²⁰ The king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, ²¹ "Go! Inquire of *ADONAI* for me and for the remnant in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found. For great is the wrath of *ADONAI* that will be poured out upon us—because our fathers did not observe the word of *ADONAI* to do according to all that is written in this scroll."

Huldah the Prophetess

²² So Hilkiah, and those whom the king commanded, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tokahath, son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe—now she was living in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter—and spoke to her about this.

²³ She said to them, "Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: 'Tell the man who sent you to me, ²⁴ "Thus says *ADONAI*, Behold, I am bringing disaster on this place and on its inhabitants—all the curses that are written in the book that they have read before the king of Judah. ²⁵ For they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods in order to provoke Me with all the works of their hands. Therefore, My wrath will be poured out upon this place and it will not be quenched." ²⁶ But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of *ADONAI*, thus you will say to him, "Thus says *ADONAI* the God of Israel, Regarding the words which you have heard, ²⁷ because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against the inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, tore your clothes, and wept before Me, I have heard you,' says

ADONAI. ²⁸ 'Behold, I will gather you to your fathers and you will be buried in your grave in *shalom*. Your eyes will not see all the evil that I will bring upon this place and upon the inhabitants.'''''''

So they brought her word back to the king.

²⁹ Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ³⁰ The king went up to the House of ADONAI with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the *kohanim*, the Levites, and all the people from the oldest to the youngest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that was found in the House of ADONAI.

³¹ Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before ADONAI—to follow ADONAI and to observe His *mitzvot*, His regulations, and His decrees with all his heart and with all his soul and to obey the words of the covenant written in this book. ³² Moreover, he made all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin stand with him. The inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. ³³ Josiah removed all the abominations from the whole territory of *Bnei-Yisrael* and made all who were found in Israel to worship ADONAI their God. All his days they did not turn away from following ADONAI, the God of their fathers.

Josiah Keeps Pesach

35 Josiah celebrated Passover unto ADONAI in Jerusalem. They slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month. ² He reinstated the *kohanim* to their duties and encouraged them in the service of the House of ADONAI. ³ He said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were consecrated to ADONAI, "Put the holy Ark in the House which Solomon the son of King David of Israel built. Since it is no longer a burden on your shoulders now, serve ADONAI your God and His people Israel. ⁴ Prepare yourselves by your ancestral houses in your divisions, according to the writing of King David of Israel and according to the writing of his son Solomon. ⁵ Stand in the holy place by the divisions of the ancestral houses, by sons of the people and by divisions of ancestral houses of the Levites. ⁶ Now sanctify yourselves, slaughter the Passover lamb and prepare it for your kinsmen, according to the word of ADONAI by the hand of Moses."

⁷ Josiah provided for all the people who were present, flocks of lambs and goats totaling 30,000, all for the Passover offerings, as well as 3,000 bulls—all from the king's possessions.

⁸ His officials also gave a freewill offering to the people, the *kohanim* and the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel—the administrators of the House of God—donated to the *kohanim* 2,600 Passover offerings, and 300 bulls. ⁹ Likewise, Conaniah along with Shemaiah and Nethaniel, his brothers, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, leaders of the Levites, provided 5,000 Passover lambs for the Levites and 500 bulls.

¹⁰ So the *avodah* was prepared and the *kohanim* stood at their posts with the Levites in their divisions according to the king's command. ¹¹ They slaughtered the Passover lambs and while the *kohanim* sprinkled the blood handed to them, the Levites flayed them.

¹² Then they removed the portions to be burnt to give them to the divisions of ancestral houses of the people to present to ADONAI, as it is written in the book of Moses. They did the same with the bulls. ¹³ They roasted the Passover lambs with fire according to the ordinance, then boiled the sacred parts in pots, caldrons, and pans, and brought them quickly to all the people.

¹⁴ Afterward, they made preparations for themselves and for the *kohanim*, because the *kohanim*, the sons of Aaron, were busy sacrificing the burnt offerings and the fat until nightfall. So the Levites made preparations for themselves and for the *kohanim*, the sons of Aaron.

¹⁵ The singers, the descendants of Asaph, were at their stations according to the commandment of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, the king's seer. The gatekeepers were at every gate. They did not need to depart from their posts for their fellow Levites provided for them.

¹⁶ So on that day the entire service of ADONAI was prepared to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of ADONAI according to the command of King Josiah. ¹⁷ The *Bnei-Yisrael* present celebrated the Passover at that time and observed the Feast of *Matzot* for seven days. ¹⁸ Passover had not been celebrated like that in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet, and none of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated such a Passover as Josiah did with the *kohanim*, the Levites, all Judah, and Israel who were present and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁹ This Passover was celebrated in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah.

Death of Josiah

²⁰ After all this, when Josiah had set the House in order, King Neco of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates and Josiah went out to engage him. ²¹ But Neco sent messengers to him saying, "What is there between me and you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today but against the house that wars with me and God has ordered me to hurry. Stop for your sake from meddling with God who is with me, so that He will not destroy you!"

²² Josiah, however, would not turn away from him but disguised himself in order to fight him. He did not listen to Neco's words from the mouth of God and went to fight him in the plain of Megiddo. ²³ Archers shot King Josiah and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am seriously wounded." ²⁴ So his servants carried him out of the chariot and put him in the second chariot that he had. They brought him to Jerusalem where he died and was buried in the tombs

of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned over Josiah.

²⁵ Now Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah, and to this day all the singers, male and female, commemorated Josiah in their laments. And they made them an ordinance in Israel and behold, they are written in the lamentations. ²⁶ Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his deeds of devotion as written in the *Torah* of *ADONAI*, ²⁷ and his acts, the first and the last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

Defiance Leads to Devastation

36 Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in Jerusalem in his father's place. ² Joahaz † was 23 years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. ³ The king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and imposed a fine on the land of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold. ⁴ The king of Egypt made Eliakim, his brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Joahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.

⁵ Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of *ADONAI* his God. ⁶ Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched against him and bound him with bronze chains to take him to Babylon. ⁷ Nebuchadnezzar also took some of the vessels of the House of *ADONAI* to Babylon and put them in his temple in Babylon. ⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, the detestable things he did, and all that was found against him, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

⁹ Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of *ADONAI*. ¹⁰ At the turn of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent and had him brought to Babylon along with the precious articles from the House of *ADONAI* and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

¹¹ Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king and he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. ¹² He did evil in

† Joahaz

Jehoahaz

the sight of *ADONAI* his God and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke from the mouth of *ADONAI*. ¹³ He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him take an oath by God. He also stiffened his neck and hardened his heart so as not to turn to *ADONAI*, the God of Israel. ¹⁴ Furthermore, all the leading *kohanim* and the people became very unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations. They defiled the House of *ADONAI*, which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.

¹⁵ *ADONAI*, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through His messengers again and again, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶ But they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets until the wrath of *ADONAI* rose against His people, until there was no remedy. ¹⁷ Therefore, He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the House of their Temple. He had no pity on young man or virgin, elderly or infirm—He gave them all into his hand. ¹⁸ All the vessels of the House of God, large and small, and the treasures of the House of *ADONAI*, as well as the treasures of the king and his officers were all brought to Babylon. ¹⁹ They burned the House of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all the palaces with fire and destroyed everything of value. ²⁰ He exiled to Babylon those who had escaped the sword and they became slaves to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia— ²¹ in fulfillment of the word of *ADONAI* by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had paid back her *Shabbat* rests—for as long as it lay desolate—the *Shabbat* rest was kept till 70 years were complete.

Proclamation of Cyrus of Persia

²² Now in the first year of King Cyrus of Persia—fulfilling the word of *ADONAI* by the mouth of Jeremiah—*ADONAI* stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing, saying: ²³ "Thus says King Cyrus of Persia ' *ADONAI*, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build Him a House in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever among you of all His people may go up and may *ADONAI* his God be with him.'"

Ezra

Ezra Introduction

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are combined as one book in the Hebrew canon. Ezra's name, עזרא means, "has helped." The period of time that this book covers can be determined to be approximately eighty years. The book of Ezra is divided into two main parts: chapters 1-6, the first return from exile from Babylon to Jerusalem and the beginning of Temple restoration, and chapters 7-10, the second return from exile. This book is one of the most factual books of the Bible as Ezra was a scribe, a , and presented facts, records, royal edicts and memoirs. He wrote during the rule of the Persian Empire and detailed the post-exilic return of the Jewish people to their beloved Jerusalem. He traced the monumental attempts to restore the Temple.

Ezra was greatly troubled about the emergence of religious syncretism which had permeated Israel's lifestyle. Intermarriage, pagan religious practices, and other heathen activities had held sway among Israel. Because Ezra was also a priest, his mantle required him to address the unfaithfulness of Israel contrasted with the faithfulness of God.

One of the most compelling laments can be noted in the third chapter of this book. The Jews began the task of restoring Jerusalem to her former glory. In Ezra 3:1-6, they "gathered together as one man to Jerusalem." They re-established sacrifices and participated in , the Feast of Tabernacles. Constructions began by the Jews to restore the Temple. Yet, cries of praise and cries of weeping could be heard blended together (Ezra 3:12-13). There was sorrow about what had been, yet some were celebrating with expectant hopes. Although restoration progressed, funds grew scarce and building had to cease. The Jews were able to complete the restoration in 516 BC.

Ezra returns to Jerusalem, and chapters 7-10 detail this second return. Ezra pursued God and desired to teach God's ways: "For Ezra had set his heart to seek the of , to observe and to teach its statues and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7:10). Upon learning of the vast intermarriages between the Jews and those of other lands, pagan religions, Ezra noted that "[He] tore [his] garment and [his] robe and plucked out some of the hair of [his] head and beard and sat down devastated." (Ezra 9:3) He rebuked the children of Israel for the sin of intermarriage. His deep sorrow provoked them to confess their sins. The book of Ezra concludes with this confession of the sin of intermarriage where the pagan wives were sent away. Ezra's example of obedience to God's commands provoked the children of Israel to turn from their wicked ways and seek .

Ezra Headings

- Cyrus Decrees: Rebuild the Temple
- Numbering Those Returning
- Rebuilding the Temple
- Resistance Weakens the People
- Prophets Restart the Project
- Darius Endorses Rebuilding
- Completion and Dedication of the Temple
- Ezra Returns from Babylon
- King Artaxerxes's Letter to Ezra
- A Holy People and Their Witness
- Interceding for Unfaithful Remnant
- Putting Away Pagan Wives

Cyrus Decrees: Rebuild the Temple

1 Now in the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in order to accomplish the word of *ADONAI* from the

mouth of Jeremiah, *ADONAI* stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his entire kingdom, announcing in a written edict, saying:

²“Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: *ADONAI*, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has appointed me to build a House for Him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³Whoever is among you from all His people—may his God be with him—may go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the House of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel—He is the God who is in Jerusalem. ⁴As for anyone who remains, wherever they may be living, let the people of those places supply him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the House of God in Jerusalem.”

⁵So the patriarchal leaders of Judah and Benjamin, along with the *kohanim* and the Levites—everyone whose spirit God had stirred up—arose to go up to build the House of *ADONAI* in Jerusalem. ⁶All those around them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, gold, goods, cattle, and valuable gifts, besides all that was willingly offered.

⁷Then King Cyrus brought out the vessels from the House of *ADONAI* that Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods.

⁸King Cyrus of Persia had them brought out by Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out for Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. ⁹And this was the inventory of them:

- gold basins—30
- silver basins—1,000
- silver utensils—29
- ¹⁰ gold bowls—30
- other silver bowls—410
- other vessels—1,000

¹¹In all there were 5,400 vessels of gold and silver. Sheshbazzar brought them all along when the exiles were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Numbering Those Returning

2 Now these are the people of the province who went up from the captives of the exile, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken captive to Babylon. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his town. ²They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordechai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.

The number of men of the people of Israel:

- ³ the sons of Parosh—2,172
- ⁴ the sons of Shephatiah—372
- ⁵ the sons of Arah—775
- ⁶ the sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab—2,812
- ⁷ the sons of Elam—1,254
- ⁸ the sons of Zattu—945
- ⁹ the sons of Zaccai—760
- ¹⁰ the sons of Bani—642
- ¹¹ the sons of Bebai—623
- ¹² the sons of Azgad—1,222
- ¹³ the sons of Adonikam—666
- ¹⁴ the sons of Bigvai—2,056

- ¹⁵ the sons of Adin—454
- ¹⁶ the sons of Ater, of Hezekiah—98
- ¹⁷ the sons of Bezai—323
- ¹⁸ the sons of Jorah—112
- ¹⁹ the sons of Hashum—223
- ²⁰ the sons of Gibbar—95
- ²¹ the sons of Beth-lehem—123
- ²² the men of Netophah—56
- ²³ the men of Anathoth—128
- ²⁴ the sons of Azmaveth—42
- ²⁵ the sons of Kiriath-Arim, Chephirah, and Beerot—743
- ²⁶ the sons of Ramah and Geba—621
- ²⁷ the men of Michmas—122
- ²⁸ the men of Beth-El and Ai—223
- ²⁹ the sons of Nebo—52
- ³⁰ the son of Magbish—156
- ³¹ the sons of the other Elam—1,254
- ³² the sons of Harim—320
- ³³ the sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono—725
- ³⁴ the sons of Jericho—345
- ³⁵ the sons of Senaah—3,630
- ³⁶ The *kohanim* :
the sons of Jedaiah from the house of Jeshua—973
- ³⁷ the sons of Immer—1,052
- ³⁸ the sons of Pashhur—1,247
- ³⁹ the sons of Harim—1,017
- ⁴⁰ The Levites:
the sons of Jeshua and Kadmiel (through the line of Hodaviah)—74
- ⁴¹ The singers:
the sons of Asaph—128
- ⁴² The sons of the gatekeepers:
the sons of Shallum,
the sons of Ater,
the sons of Talmon,
the sons of Akkub,
the sons of Hatita,
and the sons of Shobai—in all 139.
- ⁴³ The Temple servants:
the sons of Ziha, the sons Hasupha, the sons of Tab-baoth,
⁴⁴ the sons of Keros, the sons of Siaha, the sons of Padon,
⁴⁵ the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagabah, the sons of Akkub,
⁴⁶ the sons of Hagab, the sons of Salmal, the sons of Hanan,
⁴⁷ the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, the sons of Reaiah,
⁴⁸ the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, the sons of Gazzam,
⁴⁹ the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, the sons of Besai,
⁵⁰ the sons of Asnah, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephusim,
⁵¹ the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,

⁵² the sons of Batzluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,

⁵³ the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah,

⁵⁴ the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁵ The sons of Solomon's servants:

the sons of Sotai, the sons of Hassophereth, the sons of Peruda,

⁵⁶ the sons of Jaalah, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,

⁵⁷ the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, and the sons of Ami.

⁵⁸ All the Temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants—392.

⁵⁹ The following came up from Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsa, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, but they were not able to prove their family connection † or their ancestry †† whether they were from Israel:

⁶⁰ the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda—652.

⁶¹ Also from the sons of the *kohanim*: the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, and the sons of Barzillai. (He took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was subsequently called by their name.)

⁶² These sought their records in the genealogical lists, but did not find them. So they were disqualified from the priesthood. ⁶³ As a result, the governor said to them that they should not eat any of the most holy food until a *kohen* was ministering with the *Urim* and *Thummim*.

⁶⁴ The entire assembly totaled 42,360, ⁶⁵ not including their male and female servants, who numbered 7,337. They also had 200 male and female singers.

⁶⁶ They had 736 horses, 245 mules, ⁶⁷ 435 camels, 6,702 donkeys.

⁶⁸ When they arrived at the House of *ADONAI* in Jerusalem, some of the heads of the families gave voluntary offerings toward the rebuilding of the House of God on its foundation. ⁶⁹ According to their ability, they gave to the treasury for this work 61,000 gold drachmas, 5,000 silver minas, and 100 priestly tunics.

⁷⁰ Now the *kohanim*, the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers and the Temple servants settled in their own towns, and all the rest of Israel in their towns.

Rebuilding the Temple

3 When the seventh month arrived and the sons of Israel were settled in the towns, the people gathered together as one man in Jerusalem. ² Then Jeshua son of Jozadak, his fellow *kohanim*, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel, in order to offer burnt offerings on it as written in the *Torah* of Moses, the man of God. ³ They set up the altar on its fixed resting place despite their fear of the peoples of the lands and they

offered burnt offerings on it to *ADONAI*, both the morning and the evening sacrifices. ⁴ They also kept the Feast of *Sukkot* as it is written and offered the prescribed number of daily burnt offerings according to the requirement for each day.

⁵ After that they presented the regular burnt offerings, the new moon sacrifices, and the sacrifices for all the sacred *moadim* of *ADONAI*, as well as all the freewill offerings brought to *ADONAI*. ⁶ From the first day of the seventh month, they began to offer burnt offerings to *ADONAI*, though the foundation of the Temple of *ADONAI* had not been laid. ⁷ So they gave money to the stone-masons and carpenters, and food, beverages, and oil to the Sidonians and to the Tyrians to bring cedar trees by sea from Lebanon to Joppa, as authorized by King Cyrus of Persia.

⁸ In the second month of the second year after they had come to the House of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brothers—the *kohanim*, the Levites, and all who returned from captivity to Jerusalem—began the work. They appointed the Levites from 20 years of age and older to supervise the work on the House of *ADONAI*.

⁹ Then Jeshua, his sons and his brothers, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, stood together to supervise those working in the House of God, along with the sons of Henadad, their sons, and their brothers, the Levites.

¹⁰ When the builders had laid the foundation of the Temple of *ADONAI*, the *kohanim*, arrayed in their vestments and with clarions, and the Levites sons of Asaph with cymbals, were stationed to praise *ADONAI* as prescribed by King David of Israel. ¹¹ With praise and thanksgiving they sang to *ADONAI*,

"For He is good;

For His mercy upon Israel endures forever."

Then all the people gave a great shout of praise to *ADONAI* because the foundation of the House of *ADONAI* had been laid. ¹² But many of the *kohanim*, Levites and patriarchal leaders, older men who had seen the former House, wept loudly at the sight of the founding of this House, while many shouted for joy. ¹³ People could not distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of the people's weeping. For the people were shouting so loudly that the sound was heard far away.

Resistance Weakens the People

4 When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple for *ADONAI* the God of Israel, ² they approached Zerubbabel and the leading patriarchs and said to them, "Let us build with you, for like you we seek your God and have been sacrificing to Him since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who brought us here."

† Lit. house of their fathers †† Lit. seed

³ But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the prominent patriarchs of Israel said to them, “It is not for you and us to build a House for our God—but we alone will build it for *ADONAI* the God of Israel, just as Cyrus—king of Persia—has commanded us.”

⁴ Then the people of the land began discouraging † the people of Judah and making them afraid to build. ⁵ They bribed advisors in order to thwart their plans all the days of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

⁶ During the reign of Ahasuerus at the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. ⁷ Also during the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of his associates wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia. The letter was written in Aramaic and translated. ⁸ Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter concerning Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows:

⁹ From Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their associates—the judges and the officials, the magistrates, and governors over the Erechites, the Babylonians, the people of Susa (that is, the Elamites) ¹⁰ and the rest of the peoples whom the great and noble Ashurbanipal deported and settled in the city of Samaria and the rest of Trans-Euphrates. ††

(Now ¹¹ this is a copy of the letter they sent to him.)

“To Artaxerxes the king, from your servants, the men of Trans-Euphrates:

“Now ¹² let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up to us from you have gone to Jerusalem and are rebuilding the rebellious and wicked city. They are completing the walls and repairing the foundations.

¹³ “Furthermore, let it be known to the king, that if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, no more tribute, taxes, or duty will be paid and the royal revenue will suffer. ¹⁴ Now since we eat the salt of the palace, and it is not proper for us to see the king dishonored, we are sending this message to inform the king ¹⁵ so that a search may be made in the book of records of your fathers and you will discover in the records and know that this city is a rebellious city, harmful to kings and provinces, inciting internal revolts from ancient times. That is why this city was destroyed. ¹⁶ We are informing the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls completed, you will no longer have any possession in Trans-Euphrates.”

¹⁷ The king sent this reply:

“To Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their associates who dwell in Samaria and the others in Trans-Euphrates.

“ *Shalom!*

¹⁸ “The letter that you sent to us has been translated and read in my presence. ¹⁹ At my order a search was made and it was found that this city has from earliest times revolted against kings and that rebellion and

sedition continually occur in it. ²⁰ Mighty kings have ruled over Jerusalem governing all the Trans-Euphrates, and tribute, taxes, and duty were paid to them.

²¹ “So now, issue a decree to stop these men—this city is not to be rebuilt until I issue a decree. ²² Be careful not to be negligent in this matter. Why should damage increase to the detriment of the kings?”

²³ Then, as soon as the copy of the letter from King Artaxerxes was read in the presence of Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their associates, they hurried off to the Jews in Jerusalem and by force and power compelled them to stop. ²⁴ Thus the work on the House of God in Jerusalem ceased. It remained at a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Prophets Restart the Project

5 Now Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, the son 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 Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak arose and began to rebuild the House of God in Jerusalem. And the prophets of God were with them supporting them.

³ At that time Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and their associates came to them and asked them, “Who gave you the authority to build this House and to complete this structure?” ⁴ They also asked them, “What are the names of the men who are constructing this building?”

⁵ But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until a report could go to Darius and a written reply about it be returned.

⁶ This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and his colleagues, officials of Trans-Euphrates, sent to King Darius. ⁷ The report they sent to him was written as follows:

“To King Darius.

“All *Shalom!*

⁸ “Be it known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the House of the great God, which is being built with large stones and timber is being set in the walls. Now this work is being done diligently and is succeeding in their hands.

⁹ “Then we questioned those elders, asking them, ‘Who gave you the authority to build this House and to complete this structure?’ ¹⁰ We also asked them their names in order to inform you, so that we might write the names of the men who were in charge of them.

¹¹ “They responded to us saying,

“We are servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the House that was built many years ago. A great king of Israel built and finished it. ¹² But because our fathers angered the God of heaven, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the Chaldean. He destroyed this House and carried the people away to Babylon.

† *Lit. weakening the hands of the people* †† *passim beyond the river*

¹³ However, in the first year of Cyrus, king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this House of God. ¹⁴ Even the gold and silver utensils of the House of God that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem and had carried away to the temple in Babylon—King Cyrus took those things from the temple in Babylon and gave them to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor.

¹⁵ Then he said to him, “Take these vessels and go and deposit them in the Temple in Jerusalem and let the House of God be built in its place!” ¹⁶ So this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the House of God in Jerusalem. From that time until now it has been under construction, yet it is not yet finished.’

¹⁷ “Now, if it pleases the king, let a search be made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see if in fact King Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild this House of God in Jerusalem. Then let the king send us his decision about this matter.”

Darius Endorses Rebuilding

6 King Darius then issued an order and a search was made in the archives stored in the treasury at Babylon. ² A scroll was found in the citadel of Ecbatana in the province of Media, and this was written on it:

“Memorandum:

³ “In the first year of Cyrus the king, King Cyrus issued a decree concerning the House of God at Jerusalem.

“Let the House be rebuilt as a place where sacrifices are offered. Let its foundations be laid. Its height is to be 60 cubits and its width 60 cubits ⁴ with three layers of large stones and one layer of timber. Let the expense be paid from the king’s house. ⁵ Also let the gold and silver vessels of the House of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the Temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought to the Temple in Jerusalem; you shall deposit them in the House of God.

⁶ “Now then, Tattenai, governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and their colleagues, officials of Trans-Euphrates, all of you stay away from there.

⁷ Leave the work of this House of God alone! Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this House of God in its place.

⁸ “Moreover, I hereby issue a decree as to what you are to do for these elders of the Jews to rebuild this House of God. The complete costs are to be paid to these men from the royal treasury, from the tribute from Trans-Euphrates so that they are not hindered.

⁹ “Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, or lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven or wheat, salt, wine, and oil, as requested by the *kohanim* in Jerusalem—must be given to them daily without neglect, ¹⁰ so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

¹¹ “Furthermore, I decree that if anyone changes this edict, a beam is to be pulled out from his house, and let him be lifted up and impaled on it, and because of this, his house be made a pile of refuse. ¹² May God, who makes His name to dwell there, overthrow any king or people who lifts his hand to cause such change to destroy this House of God in Jerusalem. I Darius have issued a decree; let it be carried out with diligence.”

Completion and Dedication of the Temple

¹³ Then Tattenai the governor of Trans-Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai, and their associates diligently carried it out, just as King Darius had sent. ¹⁴ So the elders of the Jews continued building and prospering through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. They finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and according to the decrees of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia. ¹⁵ The Temple was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

¹⁶ Then the sons of Israel—the *kohanim*, the Levites, and the rest of the exiles—celebrated the dedication of the House of God with joy. ¹⁷ For the dedication of this House of God they offered 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 male lambs, and, as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁸ They appointed the *kohanim* in their divisions and the Levites in their divisions over the service of God at Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

¹⁹ The exiles celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, ²⁰ for every one of the *kohanim* and the Levites had purified themselves and all of them were ceremonially pure. They slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the exiles, and for their fellow *kohanim* and for themselves. ²¹ So those of *Bnei-Yisrael* who had returned from the exile ate it, together with all who had separated themselves from the impurity of the nations of the land to seek *ADONAI* the God of Israel. ²² They celebrated the Feast of *Matzot* with joy for seven days, because *ADONAI* had given them joy and had changed the heart of the king of Assyria toward them so as to strengthen their hands in the work on the House of God, the God of Israel.

Ezra Returns from Babylon

7 Now after these things, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, ² son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub, ³ son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth, ⁴ son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, ⁵ son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the *kohen gadol* — ⁶ this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a scribe skilled in the *Torah* of Moses that *ADONAI* the God of Israel had given. The king

granted him everything he requested, because the hand of *ADONAI* his God was upon him. ⁷ Some of *Bnei-Yisrael* and some of the *kohanim*, the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the sanctuary servants also came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.

⁸ He arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king. ⁹ He began his *aliyah* from Babylon on the first day of the first month and entered Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, because the good hand of his God was upon him. ¹⁰ For Ezra had set his heart to seek the *Torah* of *ADONAI*, to observe and to teach its statutes and ordinances in Israel.

King Artaxerxes's Letter to Ezra

¹¹ Now this is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the *kohen*, the scribe, a teacher of matters pertaining to the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* and His statutes over Israel:

¹² "Artaxerxes, king of kings,

"To Ezra the *kohen*, a scribe of the Law of the God of heaven.

¹³ "I have now issued a decree that anyone in my kingdom from the people of Israel—even the *kohanim* and Levites—who wish to go up to Jerusalem with you may go. ¹⁴ For you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to inquire about Judah and Jerusalem with regard to the Law of your God, which is in your hand, ¹⁵ and to bring the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely given to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, ¹⁶ together with all the silver and gold that you find in the whole province of Babylon, as well as the freewill offerings of the people and the *kohanim* for the House of their God in Jerusalem. ¹⁷ Furthermore, with this silver you should be sure to buy bulls, rams, and lambs, along with their grain offerings and their drink offerings and offer them on the altar of the House of your God in Jerusalem. ¹⁸ You may do whatever seems good to you and your brothers with the remaining silver and gold, according to the will of your God.

¹⁹ "The vessels that are entrusted to you for the service of the House of your God, deliver before the God of Jerusalem. ²⁰ The rest of the needs for the House of your God that you may have occasioned to supply, you may provide from the royal treasury.

²¹ "I, King Artaxerxes, hereby issue a decree to all the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates to diligently provide all that Ezra the *kohen*, scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, may ask of you— ²² up to 100 talents of silver, 100 cors of wheat, 100 baths of wine, 100 baths of oil, and salt without limit. ²³ Everything that the God of heaven has required, let it be done with diligence for the House of the God of heaven. For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? ²⁴ We also notify you that you have no authority to impose tribute, tax, or duty on any of the *kohanim*,

Levites, singers, gatekeepers, sanctuary servants, or attendants at this House of God.

²⁵ "Now you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that is in your hand, appoint judges and magistrates who may administer justice to all the people in Trans-Euphrates—all who know the laws of your God. And you are to teach those who do not know them.

²⁶ Let anyone who does not observe the Law of your God and the law of the king, be punished with due diligence, whether it is death or banishment, confiscation of goods or imprisonment."

²⁷ Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of our fathers, who has put it into the heart of the king to beautify the House of *ADONAI* in Jerusalem in this way ²⁸ and who has extended lovingkindness to me before the king and his counselors and all the king's mighty princes. I gained strength, as the hand of *ADONAI* my God was upon me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.

A Holy People and Their Witness

8 Now these are the patriarchal leaders, and the genealogical records of those who came up with me from Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes:

² from the sons of Phinehas—Gershom;

from the sons of Ithamar—Daniel;

from the sons of David—Hattush;

³ from the sons of Shecaniah, of the sons of Parosh—Zechariah and with him were 150 males enrolled by genealogy;

⁴ from the sons of Pahath-Moab—Eliehoenai the son of Zerariah and with him were 200 males enrolled by genealogy;

⁵ from the sons of Shechaniah—the son of Jahaziel and 300 males with him;

⁶ from the sons of Adin—Ebed the son of Jonathan and 50 males with him;

⁷ from the sons of Elam—Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah and 70 males with him;

⁸ from the sons of Shephatiah—Zebadiah the son of Michael and 80 males with him;

⁹ from the sons of Joab—Obadiah the son of Jehiel and 128 males with him;

¹⁰ from the sons of Shelomith—the son of Josiphiah and 160 males with him;

¹¹ from the sons of Bebai—Zechariah the son of Bebai and 28 males with him;

¹² from the sons of Azgad—Johanan the son of Hakkatan and 110 males with him;

¹³ from the sons of Adonikam (they came later, but these are their names)—Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah and 60 males with them;

¹⁴ from the sons of Bigvai—Uthai and Zaccur and 70 males with him.

¹⁵ I assembled them at the river that flows toward Ahava. We camped there for three days, and I observed the people and the *kohanim*, but I did not find any Levites there. ¹⁶ So I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shema-

iah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leaders and for Joiarib and Elnatan who were men of learning. ¹⁷ I sent them to Iddo, the leader at the place Casiphia. I put words in their mouths to speak to Iddo and his brother, who were sanctuary servants at Casiphia, in order to bring us ministers for the House of our God.

¹⁸ Now as the good hand of our God was upon us, they brought us Sherebiah, a man of insight from the sons of Mahli, son of Levi, son of Israel, along with his sons and his brothers, 18 men. ¹⁹ Also Hashabiah together with Jeshaiiah from the sons of Merari, his brothers and their sons, 20 men. ²⁰ Also from the sanctuary servants, whom David and his officials had given for the work of the Levites, 220 sanctuary servants, all of them designated by name.

²¹ Then I proclaimed a fast there at the Ahava River so that we might humble ourselves before our God and seek from Him a straight way for us, our little ones, and all of our possessions. ²² For I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and cavalry to protect us from the enemy along the way, because we had spoken to the king saying, "The gracious hand of our God is upon everyone who seeks Him, but His great anger is against everyone who forsakes Him." ²³ So we fasted and sought our God about this, and He responded to our plea.

²⁴ Then I set apart twelve of the leading *kohanim*—Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and with them ten of their brothers— ²⁵ and I weighed out for them the silver, the gold, and the utensils, the contribution to the House of our God that the king, his counselors, his officials, and all Israel who were present had offered. ²⁶ Specifically, I weighed into their hand 650 talents of silver, silver utensils worth 100 talents, 100 talents of gold, ²⁷ 20 golden bowls valued at 1000 darics, and two exquisite vessels of gleaming bronze, as precious as gold.

²⁸ Then I said to them, "You are holy to *ADONAI* and the vessels are holy. The silver and the gold are a freewill offering to *ADONAI*, the God of your fathers. ²⁹ Guard them carefully until you weigh them before the leading *kohanim* and the Levites and the leading patriarchs of Israel in Jerusalem, in the storerooms of the House of *ADONAI*." ³⁰ So the *kohanim* and the Levites received the silver, the gold, and the vessels by weight to bring them to Jerusalem to the House of our God.

³¹ Then 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 upon us and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambush along the way. ³² So we came to Jerusalem and remained there for three days. ³³ On the fourth day the silver, the gold, and the utensils were weighed out in the House of our God into the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the *kohen*. 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 Everything was accounted for by number and weight, and the total weight was recorded at that time.

³⁵ Then the exiles returning from captivity sacrificed burnt offerings to the God of Israel: 12 bulls for all Israel, 96 rams, 77 lambs and as a sin offering 12 male goats. All of this was a burnt offering to *ADONAI*.

³⁶ Then they delivered the decrees of the king to the king's Persian governors and to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, who then gave help to the people and the House of God.

Interceding for Unfaithful Remnant

9 Now when these things had been completed, the leaders approached me to say: "The people of Israel, the *kohanim*, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands who practice detestable things just like the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. ² For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons and have mingled the holy seed with the peoples of the lands. Indeed, the hand of the leaders and the officials have been at the forefront in this unfaithful act."

³ When I heard this report, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled out some of the hair from my head and from my beard. Then I sat down devastated. ⁴ Everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered themselves around me because of the unfaithful act of the exiles. Devastated, I sat there until the evening offering.

⁵ At the time of the evening offering, I rose up from my self-abasement with my garment and robe torn, then I bowed down on my knees and spread out my hands to *ADONAI* my God. ⁶ I prayed, "O my God, I am ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God! For our iniquities are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. ⁷ From the days of our fathers to this day our guilt has been great. Because of our iniquities we, our kings, and our *kohanim* have been subjected to the sword, to captivity, to plunder, and to humiliation at the hand of the kings of the lands, as it is today.

⁸ "But now for a brief moment *ADONAI* our God has shown us favor in leaving us a remnant and giving us as a peg in His holy place. Thus our God has enlightened our eyes and has given us a little relief in our bondage. ⁹ Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, reviving us in order to restore the House of our God, to raise up its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

¹⁰ "So now, our God, what should we say after this? For we have forsaken Your *mitzvot* ¹¹ that You commanded through Your servants the prophets saying, 'The land that you are entering to possess is a land de-

filed by the impurities of the peoples of the lands. Through their abominations, they have filled it from one end to the other with their uncleanness. ¹² Therefore, do not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek their *shalom* or their welfare, so that you may be strong, eat the good things of the land, and leave it as an inheritance for your children forever.'

¹³ "After everything that has happened to us because of our evil deeds and our great guilt—for You, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and given us a remnant such as this— ¹⁴ shall we once again break Your *mitzvot* and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable actions as these? Would You not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? ¹⁵ *ADONAI*, God of Israel, You are righteous, for we are left this day as a remnant. Behold, here we are before You in our guilt; because of it no one can stand before You."

Putting Away Pagan Wives

10 While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and prostrating himself before the House of God, a very large assembly of Israelites—men, women, and children—gathered around him. The people also wept very bitterly. ² Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said to Ezra, "We have been unfaithful to our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land. But in spite of this, there is still hope for Israel. ³ So now let us make a covenant with our God to send away all these women and their offspring, in accordance with the counsel of my lord and of those who fear the commands of our God. Let it be done according to the *Torah*. ⁴ Arise! For this matter concerns you. We are with you, so be strong and do it!"

⁵ So Ezra rose up and made the leading *kohanim*, the Levites, and all Israel take an oath to do according to this word; and they took the oath. ⁶ Then Ezra got up from before the House of God and went into the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. While he was there, he ate no bread and drank no water, because he continued to mourn over the unfaithfulness of the exiles.

⁷ A proclamation was then circulated throughout Judah and Jerusalem for all of the exiles to assemble in Jerusalem. ⁸ Everyone who did not come within three days, would forfeit all his property according to the counsel of the officials and the elders, and would himself be excluded from the assembly of the exiles.

⁹ So within three days all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem. On the twentieth day of the ninth month, all the people were sitting in the plaza before the House of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the rain. ¹⁰ Then Ezra the *kohen* stood up and said to them, "You have been unfaithful and taken foreign wives, increasing the guilt of Israel. ¹¹ So now, give praise to *ADONAI*, the God of

your fathers, and do His will. Separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from your foreign wives."

¹² The entire assembly answered and said with a loud voice, "Yes, we will do just as you have said. ¹³ However, there are many people here and it is the rainy season, and we are not able to stand outside. Besides, this task cannot be resolved in one or two days, for we have transgressed greatly in this matter. ¹⁴ Let our leaders stand for the whole assembly. Let everyone in our cities who has married a foreign woman come at an appointed time, and with them the elders of each city and its judges, until the burning wrath of our God is turned back from us in this matter." ¹⁵ Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah stood against this, supported by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite. ¹⁶ So the exiles did as proposed. Ezra, the *kohen*, set apart men who were patriarchal leaders of their fathers' households each designated by name. So they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to consider the matter, ¹⁷ and they were finished dealing with all the men who had married foreign women on the first day of the first month.

¹⁸ Among the sons of the *kohanim* it was found that the following had married foreign women: The sons of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. ¹⁹ They all gave their hands in pledge to put away their wives, and for their guilt, they offered a ram of the flock as a guilt offering.

²⁰ Also from the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

²¹ From the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah.

²² From the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa.

²³ From the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah—he is Kelita—Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

²⁴ From the singers: Eliashib. From the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

²⁵ Also from Israel: From the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah.

²⁶ From the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.

²⁷ From the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

²⁸ From the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.

²⁹ From the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adahiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Ramoth.

³⁰ From the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.

³¹ From the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, ³² Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.

† Luke 17:12; also the traditional prayer, *Aleinu*

³³ From the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.

³⁴ From the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, ³⁵ Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhu, ³⁶ Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, ³⁷ Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai, ³⁸ Bani, Binnui, Shimei, ³⁹ Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, ⁴⁰ Machnadebai,

Shashai, Sharai, ⁴¹ Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, ⁴² Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

⁴³ From the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

⁴⁴ All these had taken foreign women, and some of them had children by these wives.

Nehemiah

Nehemiah Introduction

Nehemiah is the model for Servant Leadership, both in the spiritual realm and for the 21st century organization. Nehemiah practiced “management by walking around.” He not only delegated work; he exemplified the ultimate servant leader. He demonstrated a life of prayer. Everything he did, all of his big decisions were highlighted by Nehemiah 1:4: “Upon hearing these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days. I prayed and fasted before the God of heaven.” Nehemiah’s name, נְהִמְיָהוּ, means “God comforts.” As noted in the introduction to the book of Ezra, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are combined as one book in the Hebrew canon. Some scholars believe that one author penned both books. The time period is similar and the events in both books appear to have occurred in succession. However, the book of Nehemiah begins with the distressed condition of Jerusalem and in particular, her walls. Nehemiah was a Jew who returned from exile and rose to a high position in the Persian Empire.

We are told that Nehemiah was a cupbearer to king Artaxerxes I. He must have shared many intimate times of fellowship with the King. Upon learning about Jerusalem’s disastrous condition, Nehemiah prayed to God, that access would be given with the King. Miraculously, permission was granted, not only for access to the King, but also for the King to give Nehemiah permission to move to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. The King even provided letters of approval, protection, and funding for the project.

Thus begins the amazing adventure of Nehemiah in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah demonstrated outstanding servant leadership as he labored intensely, traveled at night to survey the walls, and determined what would be the plan of action. He was surrounded by enemies, within his camp and outside his camp. “From that day on, half of my men were doing the work, while half of them took hold of the spears, shields, bows and breast plates, and the leaders were behind the entire house of Judah.... So each of the builders had his sword strapped to his side while they were building... (Neh. 4:10, 12) His battle cry became “Our God will fight for us” (Neh. 4:14)

Whether Nehemiah had to contend with opponents, economic hardship, traitors, conspiracy, or social injustice, Nehemiah rose to the call. He led by example and never compromised. God honored his obedience and prayers, in that the walls were restored in just fifty-two days.

The eighth chapter of Nehemiah notes the public reading of Scripture by Ezra. Ezra began to read the book of the of Moses. Several of the aides to Ezra “read from the scroll of God, distinctly explaining it and giving insight. Thus they understood what was read” (Neh. 8:8). The listeners wept as the words of the were read. Yet, Ezra exhorted them to enjoy the day, “For today is to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of is your strength” (Neh. 8:10). God’s covenant was re-established. Nehemiah 12:27–47 highlights Nehemiah’s work. With much celebration, the walls of Jerusalem were dedicated. This dedication is not the same Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah, הכּוּנָה, that is noted in the inter-testamental period or in John 10:22-23. May the final verse from the book of Nehemiah be our heart cry: “Remember me, O my God, for good!” (Neh. 13:30)

Nehemiah Headings

- Nehemiah Intercedes for Jerusalem
- Favor with the King
- Inspecting the Walls
- The Builders of the Wall
- Opposition Mocks the Rebuilding
- Working and Watching
- Considering the Poor
- Nehemiah’s Unselfishness
- Attempts to Intimidate Nehemiah
- Hanani, Hananiah, and the Returning Exiles
- Ezra Reads the

Joy
 Levites Tell Israel's Story
 Renewed Covenant
 Resettlement of the Land
 Identifying the and Levites
 Dedicating the Wall
 Please Remember This, My God

Nehemiah Intercedes for Jerusalem

1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:
 Now it happened that in the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in Shushan the capitol, ²that Hanani, one of my brothers, together with some men from Judah, arrived and I asked them about the Judeans, the remnant who had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.

³They said to me, "The remnant who have survived the captivity there in the province are in great distress and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire."

⁴Upon hearing these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days. I prayed and fasted before the God of heaven. ⁵Then I said:

"ADONAI, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps the covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His *mitzvot*, ⁶ please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant that I am praying before You today both day and night on behalf of Your servants, the *Bnei-Yisrael*. I am confessing the sins of *Bnei-Yisrael* that we have sinned against You—yes, I and my ancestral house have sinned. ⁷We have acted very corruptly against You. We have not kept the *mitzvot*, the statutes, nor the rulings that You commanded Your servant Moses.

⁸"Please recall the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you act unfaithfully, I will scatter you among the peoples, ⁹ but if you return to Me and obey My *mitzvot*, and do them, then even if your dispersed people are at the ends of the heavens, I will gather them from there, and bring them back to the place where I have chosen for My Name to dwell.'

¹⁰"They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great strength and by Your mighty hand. ¹¹ Please, my Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants who delight in revering Your Name. Give Your servant success today and grant compassion in the presence of this man."

Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Favor with the King

2 Then in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was set before

him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before. ² So the king said to me, "Why is your face so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart."

I was very frightened, ³ but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"

⁴ The king asked me, "What is your request?"

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ⁵ and I answered the king, "If it seems good to the king and if your servant has found favor in your sight, send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried that I may rebuild it."

⁶ Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you return?" Since it pleased the king to send me, I set a time for him.

⁷ I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let him give me letters for the governors of Trans-Euphrates that will enable me to pass through until I arrive in Judah, ⁸ as well as a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, so he will give me lumber to make beams for the gates of the fortress adjacent to the Temple, for the wall of the city and for the residence I will occupy."

The king granted me the requests because the good hand of my God was upon me.

⁹ Then I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and I gave them the king's letters. The king had also sent army officials and cavalry with me.

¹⁰ When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite officials heard all this, they were very displeased that a man had come to seek the welfare of *Bnei-Yisrael*.

Inspecting the Walls

¹¹ I came to Jerusalem, and after I was there for three days, ¹² I got up during the night along with a few men. But I did not tell anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no animals with me except the animal I was riding. ¹³ By night I went out by the Valley Gate toward Jackal Spring and the Dung Gate, inspecting the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴ Then I moved on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, where there was not enough room for my animal to pass with me; ¹⁵ so I went up the valley by night, examining the wall. Final-

ly, I turned back and returned to the Valley Gate. ¹⁶ The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, but as yet I had not told the Jews, the *kohanim*, the nobles, the officials, or the rest of the workers.

¹⁷ Then I said to them, "You see the bad situation we are in: Jerusalem is desolate and its gates have been burnt. Come! Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a disgrace."

¹⁸ Then I told them how the good hand of my God was on me and the words that the king had said to me. Then they replied, "Let us begin building!" So they prepared themselves for this good work.

¹⁹ But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. They said, "What is this you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"

²⁰ I responded to them saying, "The God of heaven will bring us success. We His servants will arise and build. But you have no part, right, or historical claim in Jerusalem."

The Builders of the Wall

3 Then Eliashib the *kohen gadol* and his brothers, the *kohanim*, arose and built the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set up its doors, dedicating it as far as the Tower of the Hundred and as far as the Tower of Hananel. ² The men of Jericho built next to it and Zaccur the son of Imri built next to them.

³ The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. ⁴ Next to them Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz made repairs. Adjacent to them Meshullam son of Berechiah, son of Meshezabel made repairs, and next to them Zadok son of Baana made repairs. ⁵ The men of Tekoa made repairs next to them, but their nobles would not put their shoulders to the work of their masters.

⁶ Joiada son of Paseah, and Meshullam son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate. They laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. ⁷ Adjacent to them worked Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, men from Gibeon and Mizpah who are under the jurisdiction of the governor of Trans-Euphrates. ⁸ Uzziel son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, worked adjacent to him, and Hananiah, one of the perfumers, worked next to him. They restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. ⁹ Rephaiah son of Hur, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem made repairs next to them. ¹⁰ Jedaiah son of Harumaph repaired the section adjacent to them opposite his house, and Hat-tush son of Hashabneiah worked next to them.

¹¹ Malchijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section and the Tower of the Furnaces. ¹² Shallun son of Hallohesh, the ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, and his daughters repaired the next section.

¹³ Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and set up its doors, its bolts,

and its bars. They also repaired a thousand cubits of wall up to the Dung Gate.

¹⁴ Malchijah son of Rechab, the ruler of the district of Beth-Cherem, repaired the Dung Gate. He built it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

¹⁵ Shallun son of Col-Hozeh, the ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it, covered it, and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. He also repaired the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the King's Garden, as far as the stairs going down from the City of David. ¹⁶ Beyond him Nehemiah son of Azbuk, the ruler of half the district of Beth-Zur, made repairs as far as the tombs of David and the artificial pool and the House of the Warriors.

¹⁷ After him, the Levites made repairs under Rehum son of Bani, and beside him, Hashabiah, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, made repairs for his district.

¹⁸ After him repairs were made by their brothers under Bavvai son of Henadad, the ruler of half the district of Keilah. ¹⁹ Adjacent to him Ezer son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the corner buttress. ²⁰ After him Baruch son of Zaccai zealously repaired another section from the corner buttress up to the door of the house of Eliashib, the *kohen gadol*. ²¹ After him Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib.

²² And after him the *kohanim* worked, men from the surrounding district. ²³ After them Benjamin and Hashub made repairs in front of their house. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, worked beside his house. ²⁴ Beyond him Binnui son of Henadad repaired another section from the house of Azariah up to the inner buttress and the corner. ²⁵ Palal son of Uzai made repairs opposite the inner buttress and the tower coming out from the upper palace, which is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh ²⁶ and the Temple servants living on the Ophel made repairs up to the area opposite the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower. ²⁷ After him the men of Tekoa repaired another section from opposite the great projecting tower to the wall of the Ophel.

²⁸ Above the Horse Gate the *kohanim* worked, each in front of his own house. ²⁹ After them Zadok son of Immer made repairs opposite his house and after him Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, the guard of the East Gate, made repairs. ³⁰ After him Hananiah, son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another portion. After him Meshullam son of Berechiah made repairs in front of his living quarters.

³¹ After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs up to the house of the Temple servants, and the merchants opposite the Inspection Gate and as far as the room above the corner. ³² Between the room above the corner and the Sheep Gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants worked.

Opposition Mocks the Rebuilding

³³ (4:1) Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he became very angry and was greatly enraged. He mocked the Jews ³⁴ (4:2) in the presence of his colleagues and the army of Samaria, saying:

"What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the heaps of rubble that are burnt?"

³⁵ (4:3) Then Tobiah the Ammonite, who was beside him, said: "Even if a fox climbed on what they are building, it would break down their stone wall!"

³⁶ (4:4) Hear, our God, for we are despised. Turn their insult back on their own head! Give them up as plunder in a land of captivity. ³⁷ (4:5) Do not cover their guilt or blot out their sin from before You, for they have provoked You to anger before the builders.

³⁸ (4:6) So we rebuilt the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a heart to work.

4 (7) Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the people of Ashdod heard that restoration of the walls of Jerusalem was proceeding and that the breaches had begun to be closed, they became extremely angry. ² (8) They all conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to stir up trouble against it. ³ (9) But we prayed to our God and stationed a guard against them day and night.

⁴ (10) Meanwhile the people of Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing. There is so much rubble that we are unable to rebuild the wall."

⁵ (11) Our adversaries also said, "They will not know or perceive anything, until we come among them and kill them, and put an end to the work!"

⁶ (12) So it happened that the Jews living near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us!"

Working and Watching

⁷ (13) So I stationed people in the lower places behind the wall in the exposed places. I stationed the people by families with their swords, spears, and bows. ⁸ (14) When I looked things over, I rose up and said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the great and awesome Lord, and fight on behalf of your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

⁹ (15) Now when our enemies heard that their plan was known to us, and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. ¹⁰ (16) From that day on, half of my men were doing the work, while half of them took hold of the spears, shields, bows, and breastplates, and the leaders were behind

the entire house of Judah. ¹¹ (17) Those building the wall and those bearing heavy burdens kept one hand on the work and the other holding a weapon. ¹² (18) So each of the builders had his sword strapped to his side while they were building, and the *shofar* blower was beside me.

¹³ (19) Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work is extensive and spread out, and we are widely separated from one another on the wall. ¹⁴ (20) Wherever you hear the sound of the *shofar*, join us there. Our God will fight for us!"

¹⁵ (21) So we continued the work with half the men holding spears, from dawn until the stars came out. ¹⁶ (22) Also at that time I said to the people, "Let every man and his helper lodge inside Jerusalem, so they can be guards for us by night and workers by day." ¹⁷ (23) So neither I, nor my brothers, nor my workers, nor the guards who were with me took off our clothes; each man even had his weapon at the water.

Considering the Poor

5 Then there was a great outcry from the people and their wives to their fellow Jews. ² There were those who said, "We and our sons and our daughters are numerous. We must take grain, so we may eat and live."

³ There were others who said, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards, and our houses in order to obtain grain during the famine."

⁴ Still others were saying, "We have borrowed money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards. ⁵ And now, though we share the same flesh as our brothers, and our children are just like their children, still we subject our sons and our daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved but our hands are tied since our fields and vineyards belong to others."

⁶ I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. ⁷ I pondered them in my heart and then I opposed the nobles and the officials, saying to them, "Usury! Each of you is putting his brother in debt!"

So I convened a great assembly to deal with them. ⁸ I said to them, "As much as possible, we have bought back our fellow Jews who had been sold to the nations. Now you also are selling your brothers so that they will be sold back to us?" Then they became silent and could not find anything to say.

⁹ Then I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good! Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God, in order to avoid the reproach of our Gentile enemies?"

¹⁰ Even I, my brothers, and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let this usury stop, now!

¹¹ Now, return to them this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, as well as the hundredth that you have extracted from them on the money, the grain, the new wine, and the fresh oil."

¹² Then they said, "We will restore these and require nothing from them. We will do just as you say."

Then I summoned the *kohanim* and I made them swear to do according to this promise. ¹³ Also I shook out my garment, and said, "In this way may God shake out from His house and from His property every one that does not keep this promise. In this way may he be shaken out and emptied!"

And all the assembly replied, "Amen!" and they praised *ADONAI*. So the people did according to this promise.

Nehemiah's Unselfishness

¹⁴ Moreover, from the day when I was appointed to be the governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes—twelve years—neither I, nor my relatives have eaten the bread allocated to the governor. ¹⁵ The earlier governors, those preceding me, placed heavy burdens on the people, and took bread and wine from them, in addition to 40 shekels of silver. Their attendants also lorded over the people. But I did not do so, out of fear of God. ¹⁶ Instead, I devoted myself to the work on this wall, without even buying a field. All my attendants were gathered there for the work.

¹⁷ Furthermore, 150 Judeans and officials, as well as those that came to us from the nations around us, were at my table. ¹⁸ Now, each day one ox and six choice sheep, as well as some fowl, were prepared for me, and every ten days an abundance of every kind of wine was prepared. Despite all this, I did not require the governor's food allowance, because the work was already heavy on this people.

¹⁹ Remember me for good, O my God, for all that I have done for this people.

Attempts to Intimidate Nehemiah

6 Now it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and no breach remained in it—even though at that time I had not positioned the doors in the gates. ² Sanballat and Geshem sent word to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono."

But they were scheming to do me harm.

³ So I sent messengers to them saying, "I am doing an important work, so I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"

⁴ They sent me the same message four times, and each time I returned a similar response to them. ⁵ But the fifth time Sanballat sent his young aide to me in this way, he had an open letter in his hand. ⁶ In it was written:

"It has been heard among the nations—and Geshem substantiates it—that you and the Jews are planning to revolt. That is why you are rebuilding the wall. Fur-

thermore, according to these reports, you are to become their king ⁷ and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem saying, 'There is a king in Judah.' Now, the king is going to hear about these reports. So come now! Let us confer together."

⁸ Then I sent a message to him, saying, "Nothing like what you are saying is happening; you are devising them from your own heart."

⁹ For they were all trying to intimidate us, thinking, "Their hands will become weak from the work and it will not be done."

So now, strengthen my hands!

¹⁰ Then I went to the house of Shemaiah, son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel. He was confined to his home. He said, "Let us meet in the House of God, within the Temple. Let us shut the doors of the Temple, for they are coming to kill you. Indeed, they will come to kill you at night."

¹¹ But I said, "Should a man like me flee? Who in my position could go into the Temple and live? I will not go in."

¹² I recognized that God had not really sent him, for he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ He had been hired so that I might become so frightened that I would do this and thereby sin. Then they would give me a bad name in order to discredit me.

¹⁴ Remember, my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these works of theirs, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who have been trying to intimidate me.

¹⁵ So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in just 52 days. ¹⁶ When all our enemies heard, all the surrounding nations were afraid and fell greatly in their own eyes, because they realized that this work had been accomplished by our God.

¹⁷ Also in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah and replies from Tobiah kept coming to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah were under oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah. ¹⁹ Moreover, they kept telling me about his good deeds and then reporting my words to him. Also Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

Hanani, Hananiah, and the Returning Exiles

7 After the wall had been rebuilt, the doors set up, and the gatekeepers, singers, and Levites appointed, ² I put in charge over Jerusalem, my brother Hanani along with Hananiah the commander of the fortress, for he was a man of integrity and feared God more than many. ³ I said to them, "The gates of Jerusalem must not be opened until the sun is hot. While those are still on duty, have them shut and bar the doors. Also appoint residents of Jerusalem as

guards, some at their post and some near their homes.”

⁴ Now the city was spacious and large, but there were few people within it and no houses were being built. ⁵ So my God put into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials, and the people to be registered by genealogy. I found the scroll of the genealogical record of those who formerly returned. I found the following written there:

⁶ These are the people of the province who returned from the captivity of the exile, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had taken away, and who returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, each man to his own town. ⁷ Those who came with Zerubbabel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number of the men of *Bnei-Yisrael* was:

⁸ The sons of Parosh—2,172

⁹ The sons of Shephatiah—372

¹⁰ The sons of Arah—652

¹¹ The sons of Pahath-Moab, from the sons of Jeshua and Joab—2,818

¹² The sons of Elam—1,254

¹³ The sons of Zattu—845

¹⁴ The sons of Zaccai—760

¹⁵ The sons of Binnui—648

¹⁶ The sons of Bebai—628

¹⁷ The sons of Azgad—2,328

¹⁸ The sons of Adonikam—667

¹⁹ The sons of Bigvai—2,067

²⁰ The sons of Adin—655

²¹ The sons of Ater of Hezekiah—98

²² The sons of Hashum—328

²³ The sons of Bezai—324

²⁴ The sons of Hariph—112

²⁵ The sons of Gibeon—95

²⁶ The men of Beth-Lehem and Netophah—188

²⁷ The men of Anathoth—128

²⁸ The men of Beth-Azmaveth—42

²⁹ The men of Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth—743

³⁰ The men of Ramah and Geba—621

³¹ The men of Michmas—122

³² The men of Beth-El and Ai—123

³³ The men of the other Nebo—52

³⁴ The sons of the other Elam—1,254

³⁵ The sons of Harim—320

³⁶ The sons of Jericho—345

³⁷ The sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono—721

³⁸ The sons of Senaah—3,930

³⁹ The *kohanim* :

The sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua—973

⁴⁰ The sons of Immer—1,052

⁴¹ The sons of Pashhur—1,247

⁴² The sons of Harim—1,017

⁴³ The Levites: the sons of Jeshua of Kadmiel from the sons of Hodeiah—74

⁴⁴ The singers: the sons of Asaph—148

⁴⁵ The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, and the sons of Shobai—138.

⁴⁶ The sanctuary servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁷ the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon, ⁴⁸ the sons of Lebanah, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Salmi, ⁴⁹ the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar, ⁵⁰ the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda, ⁵¹ the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah, ⁵² the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephishesim, ⁵³ the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur, ⁵⁴ the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha, ⁵⁵ the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah, ⁵⁶ the sons of Neziah, and the sons of Hatipha.

⁵⁷ The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida, ⁵⁸ the sons of Jala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel, ⁵⁹ the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-Hazzebaim, and the sons of Amon.

⁶⁰ All the Temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants—392.

⁶¹ Now the following were the ones who came up from Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer—but they were not able to identify their ancestral houses or whether their descendants were from Israel: ⁶² the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, and the sons of Nekoda—642.

⁶³ Also of the *kohanim* : the sons of Habaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai. (Their ancestor took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and subsequently was called by their name.)

⁶⁴ These sought their names in the genealogies, but were not found; so they were disqualified from the priesthood. ⁶⁵ The governor said to them that they should not eat any of the most holy things until a *kohen* arose with *Urim* and *Thummim* †.

⁶⁶ The whole congregation together was 42,360, ⁶⁷ not including their male and female servants—these were 7,337—as well as 245 male and female singers.

⁶⁸ (69) There were 435 camels and 6,720 donkeys.

⁶⁹ (70) Some from among the family leaders contributed to the work. The governor gave to the treasury: gold drachmas—1,000; bowls—50; and priestly tunics—500. ⁷⁰ (71) Those from the heads of ancestral lines gave to the treasury for the work: gold drachmas—20,000; silver minas—2,000. ⁷¹ (72) The rest of the people gave gold drachmas—20,000; silver minas—2,000; and priestly tunics—67.

⁷² (73) So the *kohanim* , the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, and the Temple servants, even all Israel, dwelt in their towns.

† Hebrew *Urim Thummim lights perfections*

Ezra Reads the Torah

Then the seventh month came and *Bnei-Yisrael* were in their towns.

8 Then all the people were brought as a single body into the plaza that was before the Water Gate. They said to Ezra the scribe, "Bring out the *Torah* scroll of Moses that *ADONAI* had commanded Israel."

² Ezra the *kohen* brought the *Torah* before the assembly, which included men and women and all who could understand what they heard. This happened on the first day of the seventh month. ³ So he read from it before the plaza in front of the Water Gate from first light until midday, in the presence of the men and women, and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the scroll of the *Torah*.

⁴ Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform constructed for this purpose. Standing near him at his right hand were Mattitiah, Shema, Anaiyah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiyah and at his left hand were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariyah, and Meshullam.

⁵ Ezra opened the scroll in the sight of all the people for he was above all the people. When he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Ezra blessed *ADONAI*, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, amen!" as they lifted up of their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped *ADONAI* with their faces to the ground.

⁷ The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbetai, Hodiah, Maaseiyah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiyah—instructed the people in the *Torah* while the people were standing in their place.

⁸ They read from the *Torah* scroll of God, distinctly explaining [†] it and giving insight. Thus they understood what was read.

⁹ Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the *kohen*-scribe, and the Levites who were teaching the people said to all the people, "Today is *kadosh* to *ADONAI* your God. Do not mourn or weep!" For all the people had been weeping when they heard the words of the *Torah*.

¹⁰ So he said to them, "Go! Eat choice food, drink sweet drinks, and send portions to those who have nothing ready. For today is *kadosh* to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of *ADONAI* is your strength."

¹¹ Then the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Hush! For today is *kadosh*. Do not grieve." ¹² So all the people departed to eat and drink, to send portions, and to celebrate with great joy, because they came to understand the words that were explained to them.

Sukkot Joy

¹³ On the second day, the heads of the families along with the *kohanim* and the Levites gathered around Ezra to ponder the words of the *Torah*. ¹⁴ They found

written in the *Torah* that *ADONAI* had commanded through Moses that *Bnei-Yisrael* should dwell in *sukkot* during the feast of the seventh month. ¹⁵ So that they should proclaim and spread this message in all their towns and in Jerusalem saying, "Go out to the hill country and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of other leafy trees to make *sukkot*, just as it is written." ¹⁶ So the people went out and brought branches, and made *sukkot* for themselves, each on their own roof, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the House of God, in the plaza before the Water Gate and in the plaza of the Ephraim Gate. ¹⁷ The entire assembly who had returned from the captivity made *sukkot* and dwelt in the *sukkot*. Since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day *Bnei-Yisrael* had not done so—and the joy was very great.

¹⁸ Day after day from the first day to the last day, he read from the scroll of the *Torah* of God. So they kept the festival for seven days, and on the eighth day, according to the regulation, there was a solemn assembly.

Levites Tell Israel's Story

9 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this same month, *Bnei-Yisrael* gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads. ² The offspring of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, standing and confessing their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. ³ They stood in their place and read in the scroll of the *Torah* of *ADONAI* their God for a quarter of the day; and for another quarter they were confessing and prostrating themselves before *ADONAI* their God.

⁴ Then the Levites —Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniyah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani—stood on the platform and cried out with a loud voice to *ADONAI* their God. ⁵ The Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiyah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniyah, and Pethahiyah—said: "Stand up! Bless *ADONAI* your God, from everlasting to everlasting! May Your glorious Name be blessed; may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. ⁶ You alone are *ADONAI*. You made the heavens, even the highest heaven with all its array, ^{††} the earth and everything on it, the seas and everything in them. You give life to them all, and the multitudes of heaven worship You.

⁷ "You are *ADONAI*, the God who chose Abram, brought him from Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham. ⁸ You found his heart faithful before You and made the covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite, Hittite, Amorite, Perizzite, Jebusite, and the Girgashite to his seed. You have fulfilled Your words, for You are righteous.

⁹ "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry by the Sea of Reeds. ¹⁰ You gave signs and wonders against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all

[†] Or translating

^{††} cf. Col. 1:16.

the people of his land, for You knew how insolently they treated them. You made a name for Yourself which remains to this day. ¹¹ You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through the midst of the sea on dry land! But their pursuers You threw into the depths like a stone into mighty waters. ¹² You led them with a pillar of cloud by day and with a pillar of fire by night to illuminate for them the way they were to go.

¹³ You descended on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven. You gave them just judgments, reliable laws, and good statutes and *mitzvot*. ¹⁴ You made known to them Your holy *Shabbat* and ordained for them *mitzvot*, statutes and *Torah* by the hand of Your servant Moses. ¹⁵ You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger, and brought them water from the rock for their thirst. You told them to go in to possess the land that You had sworn to give them. †

¹⁶ “But they, our ancestors, became arrogant. They stiffened their neck and did not obey Your *mitzvot*. ¹⁷ They refused to obey and did not remember Your wonders that You did among them. Instead, they became stiff-necked and in their rebellion, appointed a leader in order to return to their bondage. But You are a God of forgiveness, merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love. Therefore You did not abandon them, ¹⁸ even when they made a cast image of a calf for themselves and said, ‘This is your god who brought you up from Egypt!’ or when they committed great blasphemies.

¹⁹ “Yet in Your great compassion You did not abandon them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud by day did not depart from above them, guiding them in the way, nor the pillar of fire by night, illuminating the way they should go. ²⁰ You also gave Your good *Ruach* to teach them. You did not withhold Your manna from their mouth and You gave them water for their thirst. ²¹ For forty years You sustained them in the desert: they lacked nothing, their garments did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

²² “You gave them kingdoms and peoples and You allotted them their boundaries of the land. They possessed the land of Sihon king of Heshbon and the country of Og king of Bashan. ²³ You multiplied their descendants like the stars of heaven, and You brought them into the land that You told their ancestors to enter and inherit. ²⁴ So the children went in and possessed the land. You subdued before them the Canaanites who were the inhabitants of the land. You delivered them into their hands, along with their kings and the peoples of the land to deal with them as they pleased. ²⁵ They captured fortified cities and fertile land. They took possession of houses full of every good thing—hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves, and an abundance of fruit trees. They ate and were satisfied, and grew fat. They enjoyed Your great goodness.

† Lit. raised Your hand

²⁶ “Nonetheless they became contentious and rebelled against You. They cast Your *Torah* behind their back. They killed Your prophets who warned them †† to return to You; they committed appalling blasphemies. ²⁷ Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies who oppressed them. But in the time of their distress, they cried out to You and You heard from heaven. According to Your great compassion, You gave them deliverers, who rescued them out of the hand of their enemies.

²⁸ “But as soon as they were at rest, they returned to doing evil before You. Therefore You abandoned them into the hand of their enemies who ruled over them. When they repented and cried out to You, You heard from heaven, and according to Your compassion You delivered them many times.

²⁹ “You warned them in order to turn them back to Your *Torah*, but they became insolent and disobeyed Your *mitzvot*. They sinned against Your ordinances—those by which if a man does them he will live. They turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen. ³⁰ You bore with them for many years and admonished them by Your *Ruach* through the hand of Your prophets. Yet they would not listen, so You handed them over to the peoples of the lands. ³¹ Nevertheless, in Your great compassion, You did not put an end to them or abandon them, for You are a gracious and compassionate God.

³² “So now, our God—the great, mighty and awesome God, who keeps covenant and mercy—do not let all the hardship that has befallen us seem insignificant to you—our kings, our leaders, our *kohanim*, our prophets, our ancestors, and all Your people, from the time of the kings of Assyria to this day. ³³ You are righteous in all that has come upon us. For You have acted faithfully while we have done wickedly. ³⁴ Our kings, our leaders, our *kohanim*, and our ancestors have not kept Your *Torah* or paid attention to Your *mitzvot* or Your testimonies by which You have admonished them.

³⁵ “Even in their own kingdom with the abundance of Your good things that You gave them, or with the spacious and fertile land that You set before them, they did not serve You or turn back from their evil deeds.

³⁶ “But see, even today we are slaves! Slaves in the land that You gave to our ancestors to eat of its fruit and its bounty. We are slaves in it. ³⁷ Its abundant produce goes to the kings You have set over us due to our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please. We are in great distress!

Renewed Covenant

10 (9:38) “Now because of all this, we are making a binding agreement in writing, and the names of our leaders, our Levites, and our *kohanim* are affixing their seals on the document. ² (1) On the sealed document were:

†† cf. Matt. 23:30-31.

Nehemiah, the governor, son of Hachaliah, Zedekiah,³ (2) Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,⁴ (3) Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah,⁵ (4) Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,⁶ (5) Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,⁷ (6) Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,⁸ (7) Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,⁹ (8) Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah. These were the *kohanim*.

¹⁰ (9) And the Levites were:

Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui from the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel,

¹¹ (10) and their associates Shebaniah, Hodiah, Keltai, Pelaiah, Hanan,

¹² (11) Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

¹³ (12) Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

¹⁴ (13) Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.

¹⁵ (14) The leaders of the people:

Parosh, Pahat-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

¹⁶ (15) Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,

¹⁷ (16) Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,

¹⁸ (17) Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,

¹⁹ (18) Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,

²⁰ (19) Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,

²¹ (20) Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,

²² (21) Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,

²³ (22) Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,

²⁴ (23) Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,

²⁵ (24) Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,

²⁶ (25) Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

²⁷ (26) Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,

²⁸ (27) Malluch, Harim, and Baanah."

²⁹ (28) "Now the rest of the people—the *kohanim*, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Temple servants, and all who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands for the sake of the *Torah* of God, along with their wives, their sons, and their daughters who were able to understand—³⁰ (29) all join their brothers the nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in the *Torah* of God given through Moses the servant of God, and to keep and do all the *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* our Lord, along with His ordinances and His statutes.

³¹ (30) "Furthermore, we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, and we will not take their daughters for our sons. ³² (31) When the peoples of the land bring merchandise or any kind of grain on *Shabbat*, we will not buy from them on *Shabbat* or on a holy day. Also every seventh year we will forego working the land and the debt of every hand. ³³ (32) We also assume responsibility for the *mitzvot* to give a third of a shekel each year for the work of the House of our God: ¹³⁴ (33) for the rows of bread, the regular grain offering and regular burnt offering, the *Shabbatot*, the New Moons, for the *moadim*, for the holy things, for the sin offerings to atone for Israel, and for all the service of the House of our God.

³⁵ (34) "We—the *kohanim*, the Levites, and the people—have cast lots concerning the offering of wood,

to bring it into the House of our God according to our ancestral house at the appointed times year by year to burn on the altar of *ADONAI*, our God, as it is written in the *Torah*. ³⁶ (35) Also to bring the firstfruits of our land and the firstfruits of all fruit trees year by year to the House of *ADONAI*, ³⁷ (36) and the firstborn of our sons and our livestock as written in the *Torah*; the firstborn of our cattle and our sheep to the House of our God—to the *kohanim* ministering in the House of our God; ³⁸ (37) and the first of our coarse meal, along with our offerings—the fruit from every kind of tree, new wine, and oil—to the *kohanim* at the storerooms of the House of our God, as well as a tenth of the crop of our land to the Levites, for they, the Levites, receive tithes in all the towns where we labor.

³⁹ (38) "Also the *kohen*, a descendant of Aaron, will be with the Levites when the Levites receive the tithe, and the Levites will bring a tenth of the tithes up to the House of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury. ⁴⁰ (39) For *Bnei-Yisrael* and the sons of Levi will bring the grain offering, new wine, and oil to the storerooms where the utensils for the Sanctuary, and for the ministering *kohanim*, the gatekeepers, and the singers are kept.

"We will not forsake the House of our God."

Resettlement of the Land

11 So the leaders of the people dwelt in Jerusalem while the remainder of the people cast lots to bring one out of every ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while the other nine remained in the other towns. ² Then the people blessed all the men who volunteered to dwell in Jerusalem.

³ These are the leaders of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. (Some of Israel, the *kohanim*, the Levites, the Temple servants, and the children of Solomon's servants dwelt in the towns of Judah, each on his own property in their towns, ⁴ and some of the descendants of Judah and Benjamin dwelt in Jerusalem.)

From the sons of Judah: Athaiah son of Uziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, from the descendants of Perez; ⁵ also Maaseiah son of Baruch, son of Col-Hozeh, son of Hazariah, son of Adaiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah, son of the Shilonite. ⁶ In all, 468 sons of Perez dwelt in Jerusalem—valiant men.

⁷ Now these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Joed, son of Pedaiiah, son of Koliaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of Jeshaiiah. ⁸ Following him were 928 valiant men. ⁹ Joel son of Zichri was in charge over them; Judah son of Hassenuah was second over the city.

¹⁰ Of the *kohanim*: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, Jachin, ¹¹ Seraiah son of Hilkiyah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the ruler of the House of God, ¹² their relatives who performed the work of the House—822. Also Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi, son of Zechariah, son of

† cf. Matt. 17:24.

Pashhur, son of Malchijah,¹³ and his relatives, leaders of ancestral lines—242. Also Amashsai son of Azarel, son of Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer,¹⁴ and their relatives were 128 valiant warriors. Zabdiel son of Hagedolim was in charge over them.

¹⁵ From the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah of Bunni. ¹⁶ From the leaders of the Levites, Shabbethai and Jozabad had oversight over the external business of the House of God. ¹⁷ Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zabdi, son of Asaph, the director who led the thanksgiving prayer. Also Bakbukiah, second among his relatives, and then Abda son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun. ¹⁸ In all there were 284 Levites in the holy city.

¹⁹ Also there were 172 gatekeepers—Akkub, Talmon and their brothers—who kept watch at the gates.

²⁰ The rest of Israel, the *kohanim*, and the Levites, were in all the towns of Judah, each in his own inheritance.

²¹ But the Temple servants dwelt on the Ophel, with Ziha and Gishpa over the Temple servants. ²² The one in charge over the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, son of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica, from the sons of Asaph who were singers responsible for the service in the House of God. ²³ The king's command concerning them was to provide regular daily support for the singers. ²⁴ Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, from the descendants of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's agent for any matter concerning the people.

²⁵ Now as for the villages with their fields, some of the people of Judah dwelt in Kiriath-Arba and its towns, in Dibon and its towns, in Jekabzeel and its villages,²⁶ in Jeshua; in Moladah, in Beth-Pelet; ²⁷ in Hazar-Shual, in Beersheba and its towns,²⁸ in Ziklag, in Meconah and its towns,²⁹ in En-Rimmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth,³⁰ in Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, in Lachish and its fields, and in Azekah and its towns. So they settled from Beersheba to the Hinnom valley.

³¹ The descendants of Benjamin dwelt in Geba, Michmas and Aijah, Beth-El and its towns,³² Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,³³ Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,³⁴ Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,³⁵ Lod, Ono, and Ge-Harashim. ³⁶ Some of the divisions of the Levites of Judah settled with Benjamin.

Identifying the *Kohanim* and Levites

12 Now these are the *kohanim* and the Levites who returned with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,² Amariah, Mal-luch, 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 *kohanim* and their brothers in the days of Jeshua.

⁸ The Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and also Mattaniah—he and his brothers conducted the songs of praise—⁹ and Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, were opposite them in ranks.

¹⁰ Jeshua fathered Joiakim, Joiakim fathered Eliashib, Eliashib fathered Joiada,¹¹ Joiada fathered Jonathan, and Jonathan fathered Jaddua.

¹² In the days of Joiakim, the family leaders of the *kohanim* were: Meraiah for Seraiah, Hananiah for Jeremiah,¹³ Meshullam for Ezra, Jehohanan for Amariah,¹⁴ Jonathan for Melicu, Joseph for Shebaniah,¹⁵ Adna for Harim, Helkai for Meraiot,¹⁶ Zechariah for Iddo, Meshullam for Ginnethon,¹⁷ Zichri for Abijah, Piltai for Miniamin and Moadiah,¹⁸ Shammua for Bilgah, Jehonathan for Shemaiah,¹⁹ Mattenai for Joiarib, Uzzi for Jedaiah,²⁰ Kallai for Sallai, Eber for Amok,²¹ Hashabiah for Hilkiyah, and Nethanel for Jedaiah.

²² The family heads of the Levites were recorded in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, as well as for the *kohanim*, up until the reign of Darius the Persian. ²³ The family leaders among the sons of Levi were recorded in the Book of the Chronicles up to the days of Johanan son of Eliashib.

²⁴ So the leaders of the Levites were: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua son of Kadmiel, with their brothers facing them, to give praise and thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, one section responding to the other. ²⁵ Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers guarding the storehouses at the gates. ²⁶ These served in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua, son of Jozadak, in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the *kohen*-scribe.

Dedicating the Wall

²⁷ At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought out Levites from all their places to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with joy and thanksgiving, and songs with cymbals, harps, and lyres. ²⁸ The companies of singers were also assembled from the district around Jerusalem and from the Netophathite villages,²⁹ and from Beth-Gilgal, and from the fields of Geba and Azmavet, for the singers had built communities for themselves round about Jerusalem.

³⁰ After the *kohanim* and the Levites had purified themselves, they purified the people, the gates, and the wall. ³¹ Then I led the leaders of Judah up on the wall, and I appointed two great choirs to give thanks. One of the processions went to the right on the wall toward the Dung Gate,³² and going after them, Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah—³³ Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,³⁴ Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah and Jeremiah,³⁵ some of the *kohanim* with trumpets, Zechariah son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph,³⁶ and his brothers, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani—all with the musical instruments of David the man of God—and Ezra the scribe was ahead of them. ³⁷ They went over the Fountain Gate and continued up the stairs of the city of David at the ascent to the wall, and passed,

above the house of David all the way to the Water Gate toward the east.

³⁸ The second thanksgiving choir proceeded to the left. I followed them, along with half of the people on the wall above the Tower of the Furnaces as far as the Broad Wall, ³⁹ over the Ephraim Gate, the gate of the old city, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate. They stopped at the Gate of the Guard.

⁴⁰ So the two thanksgiving choirs stood in the House of God. ⁴¹ So did I along with half the officials with me, and the *kohanim*—Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micahiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah with their trumpets—⁴² and also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers sang under the direction of Jezrahiah. ⁴³ On that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced, for God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The joy in Jerusalem could be heard from far off.

⁴⁴ On that day men were appointed over the storehouses for the offerings, firstfruits, and tithes. They were to gather into them the portions from the fields of the cities required by the *Torah* for the *kohanim* and the Levites. For Judah delighted in the *kohanim* and in the Levites who were ministering. ⁴⁵ They kept the ceremonial functions of their God and the ceremony of the purification according to the command of David and of Solomon his son. ⁴⁶ For of old, in the days of David and Asaph, there were leaders of the singers who sang songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.

⁴⁷ So in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah, all Israel gave daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers. They also set apart the portion for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the portion for the sons of Aaron.

Please Remember This, My God

13 On that day, the scroll of Moses was read aloud in the hearing of the people. The command was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should enter into the assembly of God forever. ² For they did not meet *Bnei-Yisrael* with bread and water, but instead hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³ When they heard the *Torah*, they separated from Israel all of mixed ancestry.

⁴ Prior to this Eliashib the *kohen* was given authority over the storerooms in the House of our God. ⁵ He was closely associated with Tobiah and provided him with a large chamber previously used to store the offerings, frankincense, and the Temple vessels, and also the tithes of grain, wine, and oil prescribed for the Levites, singers and gatekeepers, along with the offerings for the *kohanim*.

⁶ I was not in Jerusalem during all this, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, I went to the king. After a period of time, I requested to take

leave from the king ⁷ and returned to Jerusalem. Then I discovered the evil that Eliashib had done by preparing a chamber for Tobiah in the courts of the House of God. ⁸ It greatly displeased me, so I threw all of Tobiah's household goods outside of the storeroom ⁹ and commanded the storerooms to be cleansed. Then I restored the utensils of the House of God, the offerings, and the frankincense.

¹⁰ I also learned that the portions for the Levites had not been provided, and that each of the Levites and singers who performed the work had gone back to his own field. ¹¹ So I rebuked the leaders and asked, "Why has the House of God been forsaken?" I assembled them and stationed them at their posts.

¹² Then all Judah brought the tithe of grain, new wine, and oil to the storehouses. ¹³ I put Shelemiah the *kohen*, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah from the Levites in charge over the storehouses, and made Hanan son of Zaccur son of Mattaniah their assistant, because these men were considered faithful. They were responsible for distributing to their brothers.

¹⁴ Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out my lovingkindness that I have done for the House of my God and for overseeing it.

¹⁵ In those days, I saw in Judah some people treading winepresses on the *Shabbat*, some bringing and loading heaps of grain on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and various other burdens, bringing them into Jerusalem on the *Shabbat* day. So I warned them about selling food on that day. ¹⁶ Men from Tyre who lived there were bringing fish and all kinds of merchandise and were selling it on the *Yom Shabbat* to the children of Judah, even in Jerusalem.

¹⁷ So I complained to the nobles of Judah and asked them, "What is this evil thing that you are doing? You are profaning *Yom Shabbat*!" ¹⁸ Didn't your ancestors do exactly the same causing our God to bring all this evil upon us and upon this city? So now you are bringing even more wrath upon Israel by profaning *Yom Shabbat*."

¹⁹ When evening darkness began to fall on the gates of Jerusalem before *Yom Shabbat*, I commanded the doors to be shut. I further commanded that they should not be opened till after *Yom Shabbat*. I appointed some of my attendants over the gates so that no burden could enter during *Shabbat*.

²⁰ Once or twice the traders and those selling all kinds of merchandise camped outside Jerusalem.

²¹ But I warned them and said to them, "Why are you camping next to the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you." From that time they no longer came on the *Shabbat*.

²² Then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves, and to come and guard the gates in order to sanctify *Yom Shabbat*. Remember this also on my behalf, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of your lovingkindness.

²³ In those days I also saw Jews who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. ²⁴ Half of their children spoke the dialect of Ashdod or the language of other peoples, but none of them understood the language of Judah. ²⁵ So I rebuked them. I cursed them, beat some of their men and pulled their beards. I made them swear by God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons—or for yourselves. ²⁶ Didn't Solomon king of Israel sin about these things? Yet among many nations there was never any king like him. Yes, he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, the foreign women caused even him to sin. ^{†27} Must we then hear about you doing all

this great evil, thereby being unfaithful with our God by marrying foreign women?"

²⁸ Now one of the sons of Joiada, son of Eliashib the *kohen gadol*, was son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite. So I drove him from me. ²⁹ O my God, please remember them for the defilement of the priesthood as well as the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites. ³⁰ So I purged them from everything foreign and I assigned duties for the *kohanim* and the Levites, each to his own task, ³¹ and for the wood offering at appointed times and for the firstfruits.

Remember me, O my God, for good.

† cf. Matt. 6:29.

Esther

Esther Introduction

The name “*ester*” is apparently derived from the Persian word for star, . Esther’s Hebrew name was Hadassah, meaning “myrtle.”

The Babylonian Talmud attributes the writing of Esther to the men of the Great Synagogue. Josephus affirmed that Mordecai wrote the book of Esther; others affirmed that Mordecai wrote the book of Esther, sometime between 460 and 350 BCE.

Esther was written for the Jewish people, especially to display the providence of God in regard to Israel. Esther records the institution of the Feast of Purim and keeps the memory of God’s salvation alive for future generations. Purim is the plural word for “,” the “lots,” that were used to determine the fate of the Jewish people at the hands of the evil Haman. The Book of Esther is read at the Feast of Purim to commemorate the great deliverance of the Jewish nation brought about by God through Esther. In the Jewish world, “”—plays based on the reading of the “whole” (scroll), are often acted out by young and old alike, drawing the children into recounting the loving care of God for His people—often uncared about.

Commentators throughout the ages have drawn poignant parallels between the characters in the book of Esther and the divine drama that unfolded in their lives. In His sovereignty, God knew that the descendants of the Amalek and Agag would persecute and trouble the Jewish people. Just as Moses and Saul had dealt with these, so it was Mordecai’s turn in his day with their descendant Haman. God is the hero of Esther, although He is never mentioned by name. In fact His divine oversight has been a source of comfort to the Jewish people throughout time. This short tale provides ample evidence of His sovereignty and His commitment to His purposes. When all seems to be lost, God wins the day and preserves His people.

Esther is a brilliant type of the Bride of the Messiah. Mordecai coaxes and challenges her (Esther 4:13) as her natural uncle (Esther 2:7), much as the Holy Spirit prompts individuals to action. With Haman as (“the adversary,” Esther 3:6) in play, the horrible drama is set. God then invites Esther to participate in His response. Today, as yesterday, God is offering another woman (the believing community) an opportunity to participate in His plan for Israel and the Jewish people (Romans 11:18). His New Covenant bride, must recognize her Jewish roots and proclaim her kinship through credible witness, intercession and participate in rescue when appropriate. Thankfully, more believers are coming to understand these issues as the era of Messiah draws near.

Esther Headings

- Persian King’s Banquet
- Vashti Refuses to Appear
- Esther Wins Favor
- Mordecai Foils a Plot
- Haman Hates the Jews
- If I Perish!
- Esther’s Request of the King
- Gallows for Mordecai
- The King Honors Mordecai
- Esther Intercedes for Her People
- A Decree to Protect the Jews
- Jews Defend Themselves
- Purim Festival

Persian King's Banquet

1 This is what happened in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia. **2** At that time King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in the castle in Shushan. **3** In the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his princes and his servants. The military leaders of Persia and Media plus the nobles and officials of the provinces were present.

4 He displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty for many days, 180 days. **5** When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting seven days, in the garden court of the king's palace for all the people who were present in the palace at Shushan, for both the greatest to the least. **6** There were white and blue linen curtains hung by cords of fine linen and purple on silver rings and marble columns, gold and silver couches on a mosaic pavement of alabaster, marble, mother-of-pearl and minerals. **7** Wine was served in golden goblets, each of which was different from the other, and the royal wine was abundant according to the king's wealth. **8** In keeping with the law, there were no restrictions on drinking for the king had instructed the supervisors of his household to comply with each person's desire. **9** In addition Queen Vashti held a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Ahasuerus.

Vashti Refuses to Appear

10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry from the wine, he commanded Mehuman, Bizzetha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas—the seven eunuchs who attended Ahasuerus the king— **11** to bring Queen Vashti before the king wearing the royal crown. He wanted to show the peoples and the officials her beauty, for she was very attractive. **12** But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. Then the king became furious, and burned with anger.

13 So the king consulted the wise men who discerned the times, for it was the king's practice to consult experts in matters of law and justice. **14** Those closest to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media who had access to the king's presence and were the highest in the kingdom.

15 "By law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, for failing to obey the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed by the eunuchs?"

16 Then Memucan answered in the presence of the king and the princes, "Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king, but also all the princes and peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. **17** For the queen's conduct will go out to all the women making their husbands contemptible in their eyes, by saying, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be

brought in before him, but she would not come!'

18 This very day the noblewomen of Persia and Media who have heard of the matter concerning the queen will respond similarly to all the king's princes and there will be no end to the contempt and anger. **19** If it pleases the king, let a royal commandment go forth from him, and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti may not come into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal status to another who is more worthy than she. **20** Then the king's edict, which he will enact, will be proclaimed throughout all his vast kingdom, and all the wives will give their husbands honor from the greatest to the smallest."

21 The matter pleased the king and the princes. So the king did according to the word of Memucan. **22** He sent letters throughout all the royal provinces, to each province in its own script, and to each people in its own language, that every man should be in charge of his own household, and speak the language of his own people.

Esther Wins Favor

2 After these things when King Ahasuerus' anger subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. **2** Then the king's servants who attended him said, "Let a search be made on the king's behalf for beautiful young virgins. **3** Let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather together all the beautiful young virgins to the palace at Shushan in the house of women under the supervision of Hegai the king's eunuch, who oversees the women. Let them be given beauty treatments. **4** Then let the young woman who pleases the king become queen instead of Vashti."

This advice pleased the king and he acted accordingly.

5 There was a Jewish man in the Shushan palace whose name was Mordecai, son of Jair son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjamite, **6** who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the captives that had been carried away with King Jeconiah of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had taken away. **7** He had raised Hadassah—that is Esther—his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The girl was attractive and had a beautiful figure. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her to him as his own daughter.

8 After the king's order and decree became known, many young women were assembled in the palace of Shushan under the supervision of Hegai. Esther also was taken into the king's household under the supervision of Hegai, guardian of the women. **9** This young woman pleased him and found favor with him. He quickly arranged her beauty treatments and provided her special food. He also provided her with seven specially chosen young women from the king's house-

hold. Then he moved her and her maids to the best place in the women's house.

¹⁰ Esther had not disclosed her people or her lineage, because Mordecai had commanded her not to make them known. ¹¹ Every day Mordecai walked in front of the women's courtyard to find out how Esther was, and what might happen to her.

¹² When each young woman's turn came to go to King Ahasuerus at the end of 12 months as prescribed for the women—for in this way they fulfilled their beautification: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and women's cosmetics—¹³ the young woman would go to the king in this way: whatever she asked for was given to her to take with her from the women's house to the king's palace. ¹⁴ In the evening she would go, and in the morning she would return to the second women's home under the supervision of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, guardian of the concubines. She would not go back to the king unless the king was pleased with her, and summoned her by name.

¹⁵ When the turn came for Esther, the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai who had taken her as his daughter, to go to the king, she did not ask for anything except what Hegai the king's eunuch, the guardian of the women, advised. And Esther won favor in the eyes of all who saw her. ¹⁶ Then Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus at his royal house in the tenth month, which is the month Tevet, in the seventh year of his reign. ¹⁷ Now the king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she won his grace and favor more than all the other virgins. So he placed the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

¹⁸ Then the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his princes and servants. He proclaimed a holiday for the provinces and distributed gifts in keeping with the king's wealth.

¹⁹ When the virgins were assembled a second time, Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate. ²⁰ Esther had not yet made known her lineage or her people, just as Mordecai had told her. Esther continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up.

Mordecai Foils a Plot

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 conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus. ²² But Mordecai found out about the plot and told it to Queen Esther. Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. ²³ When the matter was investigated and found to be so, they were both hanged on a gallows. It was then written in the book of the chronicles in the king's presence.

Haman Hates the Jews

³ Some time later King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite, elevating him and setting his chair above all the officials who were with him. ² All the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded it. But Mordecai would not bow down or pay him honor.

³ Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why are you disobeying the king's command?" ⁴ Day after day, they spoke to him but he would not listen to them. Therefore they told Haman in order to see whether Mordecai's resolve would prevail, for he had told them that he was a Jew.

⁵ When Haman saw that Mordecai was not bowing down or paying him honor, Haman was filled with rage. ⁶ But it was repugnant in his eyes to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him the identity of Mordecai's people. So Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

⁷ In the first month (that is the month of Nisan), in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast the pur (that is, 'the lot') in the presence of Haman from day to day and month to month, up to the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

⁸ Haman then said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose laws differ from those of every other people and who do not obey the king's laws. It is not in the king's interest to tolerate them. ⁹ If it pleases the king, let an edict be written to destroy them. I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who carry out this business, to put it into the king's treasuries."

¹⁰ The king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman—son of Hammedatha the Agagite—enemy of the Jews. ¹¹ The king said to Haman, "The silver and the people are yours—do with them as you please."

¹² The king's scribes were summoned in the first month, on the thirteenth day, and an edict was written as Haman had commanded. Everything Haman commanded was written to the king's provincial governors, and to the officials who were in every province, and to the officials of every people, province by province, according to its script and people by people according to its language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's ring. ¹³ Dispatches were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, stating to destroy, slay, and annihilate all the Jews—from the youth to the elderly, both little children and women—on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their possessions. ¹⁴ A copy of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to all people, so that they would be ready for that day. ¹⁵ The

couriers went out hurriedly with the king's command and the edict was issued in the palace in Shushan. The king and Haman then sat down to drink. But the city of Shushan was dumbfounded.

If I Perish!

4 When Mordecai learned all that was done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the middle of the city crying out in a loud and bitter voice. ² He went only as far as the king's gate, because no one could enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. ³ In each and every province where the king's edict and law came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many put on sackcloth and ashes.

⁴ When Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, the queen was greatly distressed. She sent clothes for Mordecai to put on so he would remove his sackcloth, but he refused. ⁵ So Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to find the cause and reason for this.

⁶ So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square in front of the king's gate. ⁷ Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, even the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸ He also gave him a written copy of the decree, which had been distributed in Shushan, for their annihilation, to show to Esther and to explain it to her. He instructed her to go in to the king, to beg his favor and plead before him on behalf of her people. ⁹ Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said.

¹⁰ Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him instructions for Mordecai: ¹¹ "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces fully understand that for anyone, man or woman, who approaches the king in the inner courtyard without being summoned, he has one law—that he be put to death, unless the king extends his golden scepter permitting him to live. But I have not been summoned to come to the king for 30 days." ¹² So they conveyed Esther's words to Mordecai.

¹³ Mordecai told them to reply to Esther with this answer, "Do not think in your soul that you will escape in the king's household more than all the Jews. ¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place—but you and your father's house will perish. Who knows whether you have attained royal status for such a time as this?"

¹⁵ Esther sent this to reply to Mordecai, ¹⁶ "Go! Gather together all the Jews who are in Shushan and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast in the same way. Afterwards, I will go in to the king, even though it is not according to the law. So if I perish, I perish!"

¹⁷ So Mordecai left and did all that Esther commanded him.

Esther's Request of the King

5 On the third day, Esther put on her royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. ² When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard, she found favor in his eyes, so the king held out to Esther the golden scepter in his hand and Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter.

³ Then said the king to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? Whatever you request, even as much as half of the kingdom, it will be given to you."

⁴ So Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

⁵ The king replied, "Bring Haman quickly so we may do what Esther said." Then the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther prepared. ⁶ As they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your request? It will be granted to you. Whatever you request, even as much as half the kingdom, it will be fulfilled."

⁷ Esther answered and said, "My petition and my request is this: ⁸ If I have found favor in the king's eyes and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and my request, then let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet that I will prepare for them—and then I will do as the king requests."

Gallows for Mordecai

⁹ Haman went out that day happy and in good spirits. However, when Haman saw Mordecai at the king's gate, and he did not rise or tremble before him, Haman was filled with rage against Mordecai. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home.

He sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh. ¹¹ Haman boasted to them about his vast wealth, his many sons, and how the king had promoted him and exalted him above the other officials and servants of the king. ¹² Haman added, "And that's not all! Queen Esther invited only me to accompany the king to a banquet that she prepared. And she has also invited me along with the king tomorrow. ¹³ Yet all this does not satisfy me, as long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

¹⁴ Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, "Let them set up a gallows 50 cubits high, and in the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it. Then go happily with the king to the banquet." This idea delighted Haman and he ordered the gallows to be built.

The King Honors Mordecai

6 That night sleep deserted the king, so he ordered the book of the chronicles, the record of his reign,

be brought in and read before the king. ²It was found recorded there that Mordecai had revealed that Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who guarded the door, had conspired to kill King Ahasuerus.

³The king asked, "What honor or recognition has been shown to Mordecai for this?"

The king's servants that attended him replied, "Nothing has been done for him."

⁴The king said, "Who is in the courtyard?" Now Haman had just come into 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.

⁵The king's servants answered, "Haman is standing in the courtyard."

The king said, "Let him come in."

⁶When Haman entered, the king asked him, "What should be done for a man whom the king desires to honor?"

Now Haman thought to himself, "Whom would the king desire to honor rather than me?" ⁷So Haman replied, "For the man whom the king desires to honor, ⁸let them bring a royal robe that the king has worn, and a horse on which the king has ridden, one with a royal crest placed on his head. ⁹Then let the robe and the horse be placed into the hand of one of the king's most noble princes. Let them clothe the man whom the king desires to honor and parade him on horseback through the city streets, proclaiming, 'This is what is done for a man the king desires to honor!'"

¹⁰The king said to Haman, "Go quickly! Take the robe and the horse, just as you suggested, for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate! Do not neglect anything that you recommended."

¹¹So Haman took the robe and the horse, robed Mordecai, and paraded him through the city streets, proclaiming: "This is what is done for the man whom the king desires to honor." ¹²Afterwards, Mordecai then returned to the king's gate, but Haman rushed to his home, grief-stricken and with his head covered.

¹³Haman recounted to his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "Since Mordecai, before whom you have begun your downfall, is of Jewish descent, you won't be able to stand against him. In fact, you will certainly fall before him!" ¹⁴While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs came and hurried Haman along to the banquet Esther had prepared.

Esther Intercedes for Her People

7 So the king and Haman came to dine with Queen Esther, ²and as they were drinking wine on the second day, the king asked Esther again, "Whatever you request, even as much as half of the kingdom, it will be given to you."

³So Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor in the eyes of the king, and if it pleases the king, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare the life of

my people—this is my request! ⁴For we have been sold, I and my people, for destruction, slaughter and annihilation. If we had simply been sold as male and female slaves, I would have remained silent, for such distress would not be worth disturbing the king."

⁵King Ahasuerus responded to Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is the man that presumed to do this?"

⁶Esther replied, "The man—the adversary and foe—is this wicked Haman!"

Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen. ⁷Enraged, the king got up from the banquet of wine and withdrew to the palace garden. But Haman stayed behind to plead with Queen Esther for his life, for he realized that the king had determined a catastrophic end for him.

⁸When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the same couch where Esther was. The king exclaimed, "Will he also assault the queen while she is with me in the palace?"

As soon as these words came out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. ⁹Harbonah, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "Look, a gallows fifty cubits high is standing next to Haman's house. Haman himself made it for Mordecai, who spoke good on behalf of the king!" [†]

The king said, "Hang him on it!" ¹⁰So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's rage subsided.

A Decree to Protect the Jews

8 That same day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. Then Mordecai came into the presence of the king, for Esther had revealed how he was related to her. ²The king took off his signet ring, which he had taken back from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. Esther then appointed Mordecai over Haman's estate.

³Esther again pleaded with the king, falling at his feet and weeping. She pleaded with him to stop the evil of Haman the Agagite and his plan that he had devised against the Jews. ⁴Then the king extended the golden scepter to Esther, and she arose and stood before the king.

⁵She said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor before him and it seems right to the king, and if I am pleasing in his eyes, let an edict be written rescinding the dispatches devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are throughout the king's provinces.

⁶For how can I endure seeing the disaster that will fall on my people? How can I bear to see the destruction of my relatives?"

⁷King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "I have decided to give Haman's estate to Esther and had him hanged on the gallows, because he stretched out his hand against the Jews. ⁸Now write in

[†] cf. Matt. 7:2.

the king's name on behalf of the Jews what seems good to you and seal it with the king's signet ring. For a decree that is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, cannot be revoked."

⁹ So the king's scribes were called at that time—on the twenty-third day of the third month, the month of Sivan. It was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to all the Jews, as well as to the officials, governors and advisors of all the 127 provinces that stretch from India to Ethiopia. To each province it was written in its own script and in its own language, and also to the Jews in their own writing and language.

¹⁰ This decree was written in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed with the king's ring, and sent on horseback by couriers who rode on the king's horses specially bred for their speed.

¹¹ The king granted the right for Jews in every city to assemble themselves and to protect themselves—to destroy, kill and annihilate any army of any people or province that might attack them and their women and children, and to plunder their possessions. ¹² The day appointed for this in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month Adar. ¹³ A copy of the written edict was distributed to every province and made known to the peoples of every nationality so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

¹⁴ The couriers that rode royal horses raced out, pressed on by the king's command. The decree was also given out at the palace at Shushan.

¹⁵ Then Mordecai went out from the king's presence in blue and white royal robes, with a large gold crown, and also a purple robe of fine linen. The city of Shushan shouted and rejoiced. ¹⁶ For the Jews there was light and gladness, joy and honor. ¹⁷ Throughout every province and throughout every city, wherever the king's edict and his law went, the Jews had gladness and joy, banquets and holidays. Many peoples of the land became Jews, because the fear of the Jews had overcome them.

Jews Defend Themselves

9 Consequently, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (that is the month Adar), the king's edict and his law drew near to be carried out. On that day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but contrary to expectations the Jews gained the upper hand over those that hated them. ² Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus in order to lay hands on those seeking their harm. No one was able to stand against them, for fear of them had fallen on all the peoples. ³ Even all the administrators of the provinces, the officers and governors, and those doing business for the king, helped the Jews, for the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them. ⁴ Mordecai was prominent at the palace, and

his fame spread throughout all the provinces. The man Mordecai was growing ever more powerful.

⁵ The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying, and they did whatever they wished to those who hated them. ⁶ In the citadel at Shushan the Jews killed and destroyed 500 people, ⁷ including Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸ Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹ Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha, ¹⁰ the 10 sons of Haman, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. They slew them but did not lay their hands on the plunder.

¹¹ On that day the number of those that were killed in the citadel at Shushan was brought to the king's attention. ¹² Then the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed 500 men in the citadel of Shushan, including Haman's ten sons. What have they done, in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your request? It shall be granted to you. What other petition do you have? It shall be done."

¹³ "If it please the king," Esther said, "let the Jews in Shushan be allowed to carry out today's edict tomorrow also, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows."

¹⁴ The king commanded that this be done. A decree was issued in Shushan and they hanged Haman's 10 sons. ¹⁵ The Jews in Shushan gathered together on the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and they killed 300 men in Shushan, but they did not put their hands on the plunder.

¹⁶ Meanwhile the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces gathered together to protect themselves and to get relief from their enemies. They killed 75,000 of their enemies, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder. ¹⁷ This happened on the thirteenth day of Adar and on the fourteenth day they rested, making it a day of feasting and gladness.

¹⁸ But the Jews that were in Shushan had assembled on the thirteenth and on the fourteenth and on the fifteenth they rested, making it a day of feasting and gladness. ¹⁹ That is why the rural Jews—those living in unwallled villages—make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, a day of sending presents of food to one another.

Purim Festival

²⁰ Mordecai recorded these events and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, ²¹ urging them to celebrate the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar every year ²² as the days when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into celebration. These were to be days of feasting, celebration and sending presents of food to one another and giving gifts to the poor.

²³ So the Jews agreed to continue the commemoration they had begun, and do what Mordecai had written to them. ²⁴ For Haman, son of Hammedatha the

Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to destroy them and had cast the pur—that is, the lot—to ruin and destroy them.²⁵ But when it came to the king's attention, he issued a written edict that the wicked scheme Haman † had devised against the Jews should come back on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. (²⁶ For this reason, these days were called Purim, from the word pur.) Therefore because of everything in this letter and because of what they had seen and what had happened to them,²⁷ the Jews established and took upon themselves, upon their descendants, and upon all who joined with them, that they would commemorate these two days in the way prescribed and at the appointed time every year.²⁸ These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family and in every province and every city. These days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor their remembrance perish from their descendants.

²⁹ Then Queen Esther the daughter of Abihail, and also Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to con-

firm this second letter of Purim.³⁰ He sent letters to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with words of *shalom* and truth,³¹ to establish these days of Purim at their designated times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had decreed for them and just as they had established for themselves and their descendants, matters regarding their times of fasting and lamentations.³² Esther's command confirmed these regulations about Purim and it was written into the records.

10 Now King Ahasuerus imposed a tribute upon the entire land, even to the coastlands of the sea.² All the acts of his power and might, along with the full account of the greatness of Mordecai and the story of how the king promoted him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?³ For Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by the multitude of his people. He sought their good and spoke for the welfare of his descendants.

† The text has a pronoun; Haman is added for clarity.

Job

Job Introduction

Many scholars believe that the book of Job is the oldest book of the Bible. There is no mention of the Torah or the land of Israel. We are unsure where the land of Uz (Job 1:1) was, so much of the initiatory content is speculation. In the opening verses, we see the stage set for what follows. We are introduced to Job (יֹבִיָּא) who is described as a man who is blameless and upright (יָשָׁר). The content of this book contains speeches from Job, his advisers and God.

The most important subject that the book of Job deals with is the problem of theodicy. Theodicy attempts to justify suffering in light of God's perfect will for man. If God is perfect, why did He allow Job to suffer so severely? Why do good people suffer? Why should one do right if one must suffer as Job did? Why did not God intervene? As Rabbi Harold Kushner addressed in his book, , man does not always have the answers to such perplexing questions.

If God is omniscient and all-powerful, then the presence of evil evokes a philosophical challenge. If evil appears to have the upper hand, then God seems to not be all-powerful or all-loving. Job attempts to reconcile his suffering in light of his own finite knowledge.

In Job 1:6, we see a dialogue between God and . Another perplexing philosophical challenge is: why did God even address to inquire, "Have you noticed my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth – a blameless and upright man, who fears God and spurns evil."(Job 1:8) Satan challenges Job's integrity and God allows him to afflict and torment Job: physically through painful boils, with loss of wealth, and with loss of his children. If that was not bad enough, his wife exhorted him to "curse God and die" (Job 2:9). We are introduced to Job's three friends: Eliphaz, Zophar and Bildad. These fellows try to console him and offer advice about . Each friend has his own view about God and retribution. They were eager to give Job advice thinking that his suffering was because of his sin. Rather than judgment and condemnation, Job needed comfort and compassion. Another friend, Elihu, joins the fray.

Finally, God answers. He initially rebukes Job, then questions him. Were you there at creation? Were you there in the design of the stars in their orbit? Job remained silent. Do you have an arm like God's? (Job 38 - 40). Job came to realize that God was sovereign, divine, infinite and all-knowing. The book of Job has a happy ending in that restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends (Job 42:10).

If there is one lesson that we learn from this book, it is that "Many are the distresses of the righteous, but delivers him out of them all." (Ps. 34:20).

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Job and His Children

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. Now that man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. ² He had seven sons and three daughters ³ and his possessions were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and a very large household. That man was the greatest of all the people of the East.

⁴ Now it was customary for his sons to hold a banquet, each on his own day in his own house. They would send to invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ When the round of banquet days was completed, Job would send for them and consecrate them. He would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings, according to the number of them all. For Job said, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did everyday.

The Adversary Tests Job

⁶ One day the sons of God came to present themselves before *ADONAI*, and the *satan* [†] also came with them. ⁷ *ADONAI* said to the *satan*, "Where have you come from?"

The *satan* responded to *ADONAI* and said, "From roaming the earth and from walking on it." ^{††}

[†] *Lit. the adversary* ^{††} *cf. 1 Pet. 5:8.*

⁸ *ADONAI* said to the *satan*, "Did you notice my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth—a blameless and upright man, who fears God and spurns evil."

⁹ Then the *satan* responded to *ADONAI*, saying, "Does Job fear God for nothing? ¹⁰ Have you not made a hedge around him, his household, and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹ But now, stretch out Your hand and strike everything he has, and he will certainly curse You to Your face!"

¹² Then *ADONAI* said to the *satan*, "Everything he has is in your hand. Only do not extend your hand against him!" So the *satan* departed from the presence of *ADONAI*.

¹³ One day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ a messenger came to Job, saying, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing near them, ¹⁵ when the Sabeans attacked and carried them off. They also killed the servants with the edge of the sword—I alone escaped to tell you!"

¹⁶ While this one was still speaking another came in and said, "The fire of God has fallen from heaven and has burned up the sheep and servants—it has consumed them, and I—I alone—escaped to tell you!"

¹⁷ While this one was still speaking another came in and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and

raided the camels and took them all away. They also killed the servants with the edge of the sword, and I—only I alone—escaped to tell you!”

¹⁸ While this one was still speaking another came in and said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine at their oldest brother’s house ¹⁹ when suddenly a mighty wind came from beyond the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it collapsed on the young people and they died. And I—only I alone—escaped to tell you!”

²⁰ Then Job got up, tore his robe, shaved his head, fell to the ground, and worshiped. ²¹ Then he said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will return there.

ADONAI gave and *ADONAI* has taken away; blessed be the Name of *ADONAI*.” ²² Through all this, Job did not sin nor did he cast reproach on God.

Affliction of the Body

2 Again the day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before *ADONAI*, and the *satan* also arrived among them to present himself before *ADONAI*. ² *ADONAI* said to him, “Where are you coming from?”

The *satan* answered *ADONAI*, “From roaming the earth and from walking on it.”

³ Then *ADONAI* said to the *satan*, “Have you noticed My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and spurns evil. And he still holds firmly to his integrity, though you incited Me against him to ruin him without any reason.”

⁴ The *satan* replied to *ADONAI* saying, “Skin for skin! A man will give up all he has for his own life. ⁵ But now, stretch out Your hand and strike his bone and his flesh, and he will certainly curse You to Your face!”

⁶ *ADONAI* said to the *satan*, “Very well, he is in your hand—only spare his life!”

⁷ So the *satan* departed from the presence of *ADONAI*, and afflicted Job with painful boils, from the sole of his foot to the top of his head. ⁸ He took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Are you still holding firmly to your integrity? Curse God and die!”

¹⁰ He said to her, “You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Should we accept the good from God and not accept the bad?”

Through all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Three Friends Sit *Shiva*

¹¹ When Job’s three friends heard about all this calamity that had come upon him, each of them came from his own place—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to come and mourn with him and to comfort him.

¹² But when they saw him from a distance they did not

recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept. Each one tore his robe and threw dust into the air on to their heads. ¹³ Then they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights. No one spoke a word to him because they saw that his pain was very great.

Job Curses His Own Birth

3 After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed his day. ² Then Job answered and said:

³ “May the day I was born perish, and the night that said, ‘A man is conceived!’

⁴ That day—may it be darkness; may God above not regard it; may no light shine on it.

⁵ May darkness and deep gloom reclaim it; may a cloud settle over it; may whatever blackens the day terrify it.

⁶ That night—may thick darkness seize it; may it not be included among the days of the year, nor be entered among the number of months.

⁷ Indeed, may that night be barren; may no joyful shout enter it.

⁸ May those who curse, curse the day—those ready to awaken Leviathan.

⁹ May its morning stars be darkened; may it hope for light but have none—may it never see the eyelids of dawn.

¹⁰ For it did not shut the doors of the womb on me, nor did it hide trouble from my eyes.

¹¹ Why did I not die at birth and expire as I exited the womb?

¹² Why did the knees welcome me, and breasts that I might nurse?

¹³ For now I would be lying down and quiet; I would be asleep and at rest

¹⁴ with kings and counselors of the earth, who built for themselves places now desolate, ¹⁵ with princes who had gold, who filled their houses with silver.

¹⁶ Or why was I not hidden like a stillborn, like infants who never saw light?

¹⁷ There the wicked cease from turmoil, and there the weary are at rest.

¹⁸ Prisoners are at ease together; they do not hear the voice of the taskmaster.

¹⁹ Small and great are there; and slave is free from his master.

²⁰ “Why is light given to one who suffers and life to the bitter of soul,

²¹ to those who long for death, but it does not come, who dig for it more than for hidden treasures,

²² who are filled with gladness and rejoice when finding the grave?

²³ Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in?

²⁴ For my sighing comes instead of my bread, and my groans pour out like water.

²⁵ For the thing I dreaded has come upon me,
and what I feared has happened to me.

²⁶ I have no ease, no quietness;
I have no rest, but turmoil came."

Eliphaz: God Is Righteous

4 Then Eliphaz the Temanite responded and said:
² "If one attempts a word with you, will you become impatient?

But who can keep from speaking?

³ Behold, you have instructed many;
you have strengthened weak hands.

⁴ Your words have supported those who stumbled,
and strengthened buckling knees.

⁵ Yet now it has come to you,
and you are discouraged;
it strikes you,

and you are dismayed.

⁶ "Is not your piety your confidence,
the integrity of your ways your hope?

⁷ Reflect now:

Who, being innocent, ever perished?
And where were the upright destroyed?

⁸ As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow harm, reap them. †

⁹ By the breath †† of God they perish;
by the blast of His anger they vanish. ‡

¹⁰ The lion may roar and the cub growl,
but the teeth of young lions are broken.

¹¹ The mighty lion perishes for lack of prey
and the lioness' cubs are scattered.

Testimony of an Accusing Spirit

¹² "Now a word was secretly brought to me,
and my ear caught a whisper of it.

¹³ Amid unsettling visions in the night,
when a deep sleep falls on men,

¹⁴ dread and trembling seized me,
and made my bones shake.

¹⁵ Then a spirit brushed over my face,
and the hair of my flesh stood on end.

¹⁶ It stood still,
but I could not recognize its appearance,
A form was before my eyes

and I heard a murmur, a voice:

¹⁷ "Can a mortal be righteous before God;
or a man pure before his Creator?

¹⁸ If He puts no trust in His servants
and accuses His angels of error,

¹⁹ how much more those
who dwell in houses of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed before the moth?

²⁰ From morning until evening they are beaten into
pieces—
unnoticed, they perish forever.

²¹ Is not their tent cord pulled out,
so that they die without wisdom.

Eliphaz: God Is Correcting You

5 "Cry out now! Will anyone answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?

² For resentment kills a fool,
and envy slays the simple.

³ I myself have seen a fool taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his dwelling.

⁴ His sons are far from safety,
and crushed at the gate without a deliverer!

⁵ The hungry consumes his harvest,
taking it even from among thorns,
and the thirsty pants after their wealth.

⁶ For evil does not come from the dust,
nor does trouble sprout from the ground.

⁷ Yet man is born for trouble,
as surely as sparks fly upward.

⁸ But as for me, I would seek God;
I would lay my cause before God.

⁹ Who does great things beyond comprehension,
wonders without number.

¹⁰ Who gives rain to the earth
and sends water over the plains.

¹¹ Who places the lowly on high
and lifts mourners to salvation.

¹² Who frustrates the plans of the crafty,
so that their hands attain no success.

¹³ Who catches the clever in their craftiness,
and thwarts the plan of the cunning.

¹⁴ By day they encounter darkness
and grope at noon as if it were night.

¹⁵ But He saves the needy from the sword of their
mouth,

and from the clutches of the mighty.

¹⁶ So the helpless have hope
and injustice shuts its mouth.

¹⁷ "Behold, happy is the one whom God corrects,
so do not despise the discipline of *Shaddai*.

¹⁸ For He inflicts pain, but He also binds up;
He injures, yet His hands also heal.

¹⁹ From six calamities He will deliver you,
even 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 hidden from the lash of the tongue,
and not fear when violence comes.

²² You will laugh at violence and famine,
and will not fear the beasts of the earth.

²³ For you will have a covenant with the stones of the
field,

and the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.

²⁴ You will know *shalom* in your tent,
and you will take stock of your home
and find nothing missing.

²⁵ "You will know that
your descendants will be numerous,

† cf. Gal. 6:7. †† Hebrew *ruach* wind ‡ cf. 2 Thes. 2:8.

your offspring like the grass of the earth.
²⁶You will come to the grave in vigor,
 like sheaves of grain in its season.
²⁷Behold, we have investigated this—it is true.
 Hear it, and apply it to yourself!"

Job Cries for Justice

6 Job responded and said:
²"If only my grief could be weighed
 and my calamity placed on the scales.
³For it outweighs the sands of the sea;
 that is why my words have been rash.
⁴For the arrows of *Shaddai* are in me,
 my spirit drinks in their poison;
 God's terrors line up against me.
⁵Does a wild donkey bray over fresh grass
 or an ox bellow over his fodder?
⁶Is something bland eaten without salt,
 is there taste in the white of an egg?
⁷My soul refuses to touch them;
 they are like sickening food to me.
⁸"Oh that my request would be realized,
 that God would grant my hope;
⁹that God would be willing to crush me,
 to release His hand, and cut me off!
¹⁰Then I would still be comforted,
 even rejoice in spite of unrelenting pain,
 for I have not denied the words of the Holy One.
¹¹"What is my strength,
 that I should hope?
 What is my end,
 that I should endure?
¹²Is my strength the strength of rock?
 Is my flesh bronze?
¹³Is there no help within me;
 has not success been banished from me?
¹⁴"A despairing person should have the kindness of
 his friend,
 even if he forsakes the fear of *Shaddai*.
¹⁵My brothers have acted deceptively,
 as a seasonal stream,
 as a torrential stream that overflows
¹⁶when darkened by thawing ice,
 and obscured by snow,
¹⁷but when they are scorched, they dry up,
 and in the heat, they vanish from their place.
¹⁸Caravans turn aside from their course;
 they go up into the wasteland and perish.
¹⁹The caravans of Tema looked intently,
 the travelers of Sheba hoped for them.
²⁰They were distressed because they had been confi-
 dent;
 they came so far and were disappointed.
²¹"Indeed, now you have become nothing;
 you see a terror and are afraid.
²²Have I ever said, 'Give to me'
 or 'Pay a bribe for me from your wealth'
²³or 'Save me from the enemy's hand'

or 'Redeem me from a ruthless hand'?
²⁴"Teach me, and I will be silent;
 explain to me how I have been wrong.
²⁵Honest words are painful,
 but what does your arguing prove?
²⁶Do you intend to correct my words,
 and treat the words of
 a despairing man as wind?
²⁷Would you cast lots for an orphan,
 and barter over your friend?
²⁸"Now be so kind as to look at me;
 I will not lie to your face.
²⁹Relent, do not be unjust;
 reconsider, for my righteousness is in it.
³⁰Is injustice on my tongue?
 Can my palate not discern evil?

Futility of Days

7 "Does not man have hard labor on earth?
 Are not his days like those of a hired laborer?
²Like a slave longing for the shadow,
 or a hired man waiting for his pay,
³so I have inherited months of futility,
 and nights of distress have been appointed to me.
⁴When I lay down I say, 'When will I rise?'
 The night drags on, and I toss until the day dawns.
⁵My flesh is clothed with maggots and clods of dirt;
 My skin is broken and festering.
⁶My days fly faster than a weaver's shuttle
 and come to an end without hope.
⁷Remember, my life is but a breath;
 my eyes will not see goodness again!
⁸The eye that sees me now will see me no more;
 your eyes will be on me, but I will be no more.
⁹As a cloud vanishes and is gone,
 so one descending into *Sheol* does not come up;
¹⁰he will never return to his house,
 his place does not know him.
¹¹"So I will not keep silent;
 I will speak in the distress of my spirit,
 I will complain in bitterness of soul.
¹²Am I a sea, or a monster of the deep
 that You have set a watch over me?
¹³When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
 my couch will ease my complaint,'
¹⁴then You frighten me with dreams,
 and terrify me with visions,
¹⁵so that my soul prefers strangulation,
 and my bones death.
¹⁶I despise it; I would not live forever.
 Leave me alone, for my days are a vapor.
¹⁷"What is mankind,
 that You magnify him,
 that You set Your heart on him,
¹⁸that You visit him every morning,
 and test him in every moment?
¹⁹Will You never look away from me,
 or let me alone until I swallow my spittle?

20 Have I sinned—
 what have I done to You,
 O watcher of men?
 Why have You set me as Your target?
 Have I become a burden to You?
 21 Why do You not pardon my transgression,
 and take away my iniquity?
 For now I will lie down in the dust,
 and You will search for me,
 but I will be gone.”

Bildad: God Restores the Righteous

8 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:
 2 “How long will you say these things?
 The words of your mouth are like a mighty wind.
 3 Does God pervert justice?
 Does *Shaddai* pervert justice?
 4 If your children sinned against Him,
 He handed them over to their rebellion.
 5 If you would seek God
 and plead with *Shaddai* ,
 6 if you are pure and upright,
 even now He will awaken for you
 and restore your righteous abode.
 7 And though your beginning was small,
 your future would flourish.
 8 “Now ask the previous generation;
 consider the findings of their fathers;
 9 for we were born yesterday
 and know nothing,
 and our days on earth are but a shadow.
 10 Will they not teach you and tell you?
 Will they not bring forth words from their hearts?
 11 “Can papyrus grow tall without a marsh?
 Can reeds flourish without water?
 12 When still in bloom and uncut,
 it withers more quickly than other grass.
 13 Such are the ways of all who forget God;
 the hope of the godless perishes—
 14 whose confidence is snapped off,
 his trust is a spider’s web.
 15 He leans against his house but it does not stand,
 He holds fast to it, but it does not hold up.
 16 He is a well-watered plant in the sun,
 spreading his shoots over his garden;
 17 he entwines his roots around a heap of stones,
 and looks for a place between the rocks.
 18 If he is uprooted from his place,
 it denies him saying, ‘I never saw you.’
 19 Such is his joyous course,
 and from the earth others spring up.
 20 Surely God does not spurn the blameless
 or strengthen the hand of evildoers.
 21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter
 and your lips with shouts of joy.
 22 Those who hate you will be clothed with shame.
 The tent of the wicked will be no more!”

Job: Who is Righteous before God?

9 Job responded and said:
 2 “Truly I know it is so,
 but how can one be righteous before God? †
 3 If anyone wished to contend with Him,
 he could not answer Him once in a thousand.
 4 He is wise in heart and mighty in strength.
 Who has resisted Him and come out whole?
 5 “He who moves mountains,
 yet they do not know it,
 who overthrows them in His anger;
 6 who shakes the earth from its place
 until its pillars tremble;
 7 who speaks to the sun so it does not rise,
 and seals up the stars;
 8 He alone spreads out the heavens,
 and treads on the waves of the sea;
 9 He makes the Bear, Orion, and Pleiades,
 and the constellations of the south;
 10 He does great and unfathomable things,
 wonders beyond number.
 11 If He were to pass by me,
 I would not see Him!
 Were He to move past me,
 I would not perceive Him.
 12 If He were to snatch away,
 who could restrain Him?
 Who could say to Him,
 ‘What are You doing?’
 13 “God does not restrain His anger;
 under Him the helpers of Rahab cower.
 14 How then can I answer Him
 or choose my words with Him?
 15 Even if I were right, I would not answer;
 I would implore the mercy of my Judge.
 16 Even if I called and He answered me,
 I would not believe that He would listen to my voice.
 17 He who crushes me with a storm
 and multiplies my wounds for no reason.
 18 He does not allow me to catch my breath,
 but fills me with bitterness.
 19 If it is a question of strength—
 certainly, He is the mighty One!
 If it is a matter of justice—
 who will summon me?
 20 Even if I were innocent,
 my mouth would condemn me.
 If I were guiltless,
 it will declare me perverse.
 21 “I am guiltless.
 I have no concern for myself.
 I despise my life.
 22 It is all the same, therefore I say,
 ‘He destroys both the blameless and the wicked.’
 23 If a scourge smites suddenly,
 He mocks the despair of the innocent.”

† cf. Rom. 3:20.

24 If the land falls into the hand of the wicked,
 He blindfolds the faces of its judges.
 If it is not He, then who is it?
 25 "My days are swifter than a runner;
 they flee away without seeing goodness.
 26 They slip by like reed boats,
 like an eagle swooping down on its prey.
 27 If I say, 'I will forget my complaint,
 I will put off my sad face and be cheerful,'
 28 I still dread all my pains,
 for I know You will not find me innocent.
 29 If I am condemned—
 why should I struggle in vain?
 30 If I wash myself with melted snow
 and cleanse my hands with lye,
 31 then You would plunge me into a pit
 and my own clothes would detest me.
 32 For He is not a human being, like I am,
 that I could answer Him,
 that we could go to court together.
 33 There is no arbitrator between us,
 who could lay his hand on us both;
 34 who could remove His rod from me,
 so that His terror would not frighten me.
 35 Then I would speak and not fear Him
 —except it is not so with me."

Do Not Condemn Me!

10 "I loathe my own life;
 I will give full vent to my complaint;
 I will speak out of the bitterness of my soul.
 2 I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me;
 tell me why You contend with me.'
 3 Is it good for You to oppress,
 to despise the work of Your hands,
 while You smile on the plans of the wicked?
 4 Do You have eyes of flesh?
 Do You see as a human being sees?
 5 Are Your days like those of a mortal,
 or Your years like those of a strong man,
 6 that You should seek out my iniquity
 and search out my sin,
 7 though You know that I am not guilty,
 yet there is no one to deliver from Your hand?
 8 "Your hands molded and fashioned me,
 will You now destroy me completely?
 9 Remember You fashioned me like clay;
 will You return me to dust?
 10 Did You not pour me out like milk
 and curdle me like cheese,
 11 clothe me with skin and flesh
 and knit me together with bones and sinews?
 12 You gave me life and steadfast love,
 and Your care has preserved my spirit.
 13 "Yet these things You have hid in Your heart,
 for I know that this is with You.
 14 If I sinned, You would watch me,
 and not acquit me of my iniquity.

15 If I am guilty, woe to me!
 Even if I am innocent,
 I cannot lift my head.
 I am full of shame
 and conscious of my affliction.
 16 If my head is held high,
 You hunt me like a lion,
 and again work wonders against me.
 17 You renew Your witnesses against me,
 and increase Your anger toward me,
 change and warfare are with me.
 18 "Why then did You bring me out from the womb?
 I should have died so no eye would have seen me.
 19 If only I had never come into being,
 or been carried from womb to grave.
 20 Are not my days few?
 Then stop, leave me alone
 so I might have a little joy,
 21 before I depart, and never return,
 to the land of darkness
 and the shadow of death,
 22 the land of utter darkness,
 like the deepest darkness and disorder,
 where even the light is like darkness."

Zophar: God Sees Iniquity

11 Then, Zophar the Naamathite answered and
 said:
 2 "Should so many words go unanswered?
 Is a man justified by his lips?
 3 Will your idle talk silence men
 and will no one rebuke you when you mock?
 4 For you have said,
 'My teaching is flawless'
 and 'I am pure in Your eyes!'
 5 But if only God would speak
 and open His lips against you,
 6 and show you the secrets of wisdom—
 for sound wisdom has two sides.
 Know that God has forgotten some of your iniquity.
 7 "Can you discover the mysteries of God?
 Can you find the limits of *Shaddai*?
 8 They are higher than the heavens
 —what can you do?
 They are deeper than *Sheol*
 —what can you know?
 9 Its measure is longer than the earth
 and wider than the sea.
 10 "If He comes by and imprisons, or convenes a
 court,
 who can prevent Him?
 11 For He knows deceitful men;
 when He sees wickedness, does he not consider it?
 12 But a witless man will gain understanding
 when a wild donkey's colt is born a human being?
 13 "If you devote your heart to Him
 and spread out your hands to Him,
 14 if you put away the wickedness that is in your hand,

and allow no iniquity to abide in your tent,
 15 then you will lift up your face without reproach;
 you will stand firm and without fear.
 16 You will forget your trouble;
 you will remember it like water that has flowed
 away.
 17 Life will be brighter than noonday;
 darkness like the morning.
 18 You will be confident, because there is hope;
 you will look about you and lie down in safety.
 19 You will lie down with no one to make you afraid,
 many will seek your favor.
 20 But the eyes of the wicked will fail,
 and escape will elude them;
 their only hope is their dying breath.” †

Job: Everything Is in His Hand

12 Job responded and said:
 2 “Without a doubt you are the people
 and wisdom will die with you!
 3 But I have a mind as well as you;
 I am not inferior to you.
 Who does not know these things?
 4 “I have become a laughingstock to my friend,
 though I called on God and He answered—
 a righteous and blameless man is a laughingstock!
 5 Contempt for calamity is the thought of one at ease,
 prepared for those whose foot slips.
 6 The tents of marauders prosper,
 and there is security for those who provoke God—
 for those whom God brings in His hand.
 7 But now ask the animals and they will teach you,
 or the birds of the sky and they will tell you,
 8 or speak to the earth and it will teach you,
 or the fish of the sea and they will inform you.
 9 Which of these does not know
 that the hand of *ADONAI* has done this?
 10 In His hand is the life of every creature,
 and the breath of all the human race.
 11 Does not the ear test words
 as the palate tastes food?
 12 Is not wisdom with the aged
 and understanding bring long life?
 13 “With Him are wisdom and power;
 counsel and understanding are His.
 14 If He tears down, it cannot be rebuilt;
 one He imprisons cannot be released.
 15 If He holds back the waters, they dry up;
 if He releases them, they destroy the earth.
 16 With Him are power and sound wisdom;
 both deceived and deceiver are His.
 17 He leads counselors away stripped
 and makes judges into fools.
 18 He loosens the bonds of the kings,
 and binds a loincloth around their waists.
 19 He leads priests away stripped
 and overthrows the rulers.

† *Lit. to breath out their soul*

20 He silences the lips of trusted advisors
 and removes the discernment of elders.
 21 He pours contempt on nobles
 and loosens the belts of the mighty.
 22 He reveals the deep things of darkness ††
 and brings utter darkness into light.
 23 He makes nations great
 and destroys them.
 He enlarges the nations
 and leads them away.
 24 He deprives the heads of the people of earth of un-
 derstanding,
 and causes them to wander in a pathless wasteland.
 25 They grope in darkness with no light;
 He makes them stagger like a drunkard.

Job Challenges God

13 “Indeed, my eye has seen it all,
 my ears have heard and understood it.
 2 What you know, I also know;
 I am not inferior to you.
 3 Still, I desire to speak to *Shaddai*
 and to argue my case with God.
 4 You, however, smear me with lies;
 you are worthless doctors—all of you!
 5 If only you would keep completely silent!
 For you, that would be wisdom.
 6 Hear now my argument;
 listen to the contentions of my lips.
 7 Will you speak unjustly on God’s behalf?
 Will you speak deceitfully for Him?
 8 Will you show Him partiality?
 Will you argue the case for God?
 9 Would it turn out well if He examined you?
 Could you deceive Him as you deceive a man?
 10 He would surely rebuke you
 if you secretly showed favoritism.
 11 Would not His majesty terrify you
 and the dread of Him fall on you?
 12 Your maxims are proverbs of ashes;
 your defenses are defenses of clay.
 13 “Be silent and let me speak;
 then let come to me what may.
 14 Why should I take my flesh in my teeth
 and take my life in my hands?
 15 Even if He slays me, I will wait for Him;
 I will surely defend my ways before Him.
 16 This, too, will be my salvation
 for no godless can come before Him.
 17 “Listen carefully to my words,
 and let my declaration be in your ears.
 18 See now, I have prepared my case;
 I know that I will be vindicated.
 19 Who will contend with me?
 If so, I will be silent and die.
 20 “Only two things do not do to me;
 then I will not hide from Your face:

†† *cf. 1 Cor. 4:5.*

21 withdraw Your hand far from me,
 and do not assail me with Your terror.
 22 Then call, and I will answer,
 or I will speak, and You respond to me.
 23 How many are my iniquities and sins?
 Show me my transgressions and sin.
 24 Why do You hide Your face
 and consider me Your enemy?
 25 Will You frighten a windblown leaf
 and chase after dry chaff?
 26 For You write bitter things against me
 and make me inherit the iniquities of my youth.
 27 You put my feet in shackles and watch all my paths;
 You put marks on the soles of my feet.
 28 "So he wastes away
 like something rotten,
 like a moth-eaten garment.

Death and Resurrection

14 "A mortal born of woman,
 is of few days and full of turmoil.
 2 Like a flower he comes up and withers;
 like a shadow he flees and does not stay.
 3 Do You fix Your eyes on such a one,
 and bring me for judgment with You?
 4 Who can make something pure out of the impure?
 No one!
 5 Since his days are determined,
 the number of his months is with You,
 You have set his limits,
 which he cannot exceed.
 6 Look away from him and let him alone,
 until he fulfills his time like a hired laborer.
 7 "At least there is hope for a tree—
 if it is cut down it will sprout again,
 and its shoots will not cease.
 8 Though its roots grow old in the earth
 and its stump dies in the dry ground,
 9 at the scent of water it will bud
 and sprout sprigs like a new plant.
 10 But man dies and is powerless.
 Man expires—and where is he?
 11 As water evaporates from the sea
 and a river drains away and dries up,
 12 so a person lies down and does not rise;
 until the heavens are no more,
 people will not awake,
 or be roused from their sleep.
 13 "Oh that You would hide me in *Sheol*,
 and conceal me until Your wrath has passed!
 Oh that You would set a time for me
 and then remember me!
 14 If a man dies, will he live again?
 All the days of my hard labor
 I will wait until my relief comes.
 15 You will call and I—I will answer You;
 You will long for the work of Your hands.
 16 For then You will number my steps;

You will not keep track of my sin;
 17 my transgression will be sealed in a bundle
 and cover over my iniquity.
 18 "Yet as a mountain falls away and crumbles
 and a rock is moved from its place,
 19 as water wears away stones
 and torrents wash away the soil,
 so You destroy a person's hope.
 20 You overpower him—once for all, and he perishes;
 You change his appearance and send him away.
 21 If his sons achieve honor,
 he does not know it;
 if they are brought low,
 he does not perceive it.
 22 He only feels pain for his own flesh,
 and mourns for his own soul."

Eliphaz Rebukes Job

15 Then Eliphaz the Temanite responded and said:
 2 "Does a wise man answer with empty knowl-
 edge,
 or fill his belly with the east wind?
 3 Does he argue with useless talk
 and words that have no value in them?
 4 You even do away with reverence
 and hinder devotion before God.
 5 For your iniquity prompts your mouth
 and you choose the tongue of the crafty.
 6 Your own mouth condemns you—not I;
 your own lips testify against you.
 7 "Are you the first man to be born?
 Were you brought forth before the hills?
 8 Do you listen in on God's counsel?
 Do you limit wisdom to yourself?
 9 What do you know that we do not know?
 What do you understand that we do not understand?
 10 Both gray-haired and aged are with us,
 men even older than your father.
 11 Are the comforts of God too small for you,
 or a gentle word toward you?
 12 Why has your heart carried you away
 and why do your eyes flash,
 13 so that you turn your spirit against God
 and bring such words out of your mouth?
 14 "What is man, that he could be pure,
 or one born of woman, that he could be righteous?
 15 If He puts no trust in His holy ones,
 if even the heavens are not pure in His eyes,
 16 how much less man, who is vile and corrupt,
 who drinks evil like water!
 17 "I will tell you; listen to me,
 and what I have seen I will declare,
 18 what wise men have declared
 and did not hide from their ancestors,
 19 to whom alone the land was given,
 when no foreigner passed among them:
 20 All his days the wicked suffers torment,

and numbered are the years stored up for the tyrant.

²¹ Terrifying sounds are in his ears;
in a time of peace, marauders attack him.
²² He does not expect to escape from darkness;
he is destined for the sword.
²³ He wanders about for bread—'Where is it?'
He knows that the day of darkness is at hand.
²⁴ Distress and anguish terrify him;
they overpower him like a king poised to attack,
²⁵ for he raises his hand against God
and flaunts himself against *Shaddai*,
²⁶ defiantly rushing at Him
with a thick, strong shield.
²⁷ Because He covered his face with his fat
and made his hips bulge with blubber,
²⁸ he lived in ruined cities,
in houses which no one inhabits,
which are ready to crumble into heaps.
²⁹ He will not become rich, and his wealth will not endure,
nor will his possessions spread over the land.
³⁰ He will not escape from the darkness;
a flame will wither his shoots,
and he will depart by the breath of His mouth.
³¹ "Let him not trust in emptiness, deceiving himself;
for emptiness will be his reward.
³² Before his day it will be paid in full
and his branch will not be green.
³³ He will shake off his unripe grapes like a vine,
and cast off his blossoms like an olive tree.
³⁴ For the company of the godless is barren,
and fire consumes the tents of bribery.
³⁵ They conceive mischief and bring forth evil
and their belly prepares deception."

Job Reproves His Friends

16 Job answered, saying:
² "I have heard many things like these;
you are miserable comforters, all of you!
³ Is there no end to your futile words?
What compels you to answer?
⁴ I too could speak like you,
if you were in my place;
I could compose words against you
and shake my head at you.
⁵ But I would strengthen you with my mouth
and comfort from my lips would bring you relief.
⁶ "Yet, if I speak, my pain is not relieved,
and if I refrain, does it not go away from me?
⁷ Surely now He has exhausted me;
You have devastated my entire household.
⁸ You have seized me—
it has become a witness;
my leanness rises against me
and testifies to my face.
⁹ His anger has torn and tormented me;
He gnashes at me with his teeth;

my enemy looks at me with daggers in his eyes.

¹⁰ People open their mouths against me;
they strike my cheek in contempt;
they unite together against me.
¹¹ God has handed me over to the ungodly,
and tossed me into the hands of the wicked.
¹² I was at ease, but He shattered me;
He grabbed me by the neck and crushed me.
He has made me His target;
¹³ His archers surround me.
Without mercy He pierces my kidneys
and spills my gall on the ground.
¹⁴ He breaks through against me, breach after breach.
He runs after me like a warrior.
¹⁵ "I have sewn sackcloth over my skin
and sunk my horn in the dust;
¹⁶ my face is red from weeping,
and on my eyelids are deep darkness;
¹⁷ yet no violence is in my hands
and my prayer is pure.
¹⁸ "Earth, do not cover my blood,
and let my cry find no resting place!
¹⁹ Even now my witness is in heaven, †
my advocate is on high.
²⁰ My intercessor is my friend;
as my eyes pour out tears to God;
²¹ he contends with God on behalf of man
as one pleads for a friend.
²² "For the number of years will come to pass,
and then I will go the way of no return.

Hope in *Sheol*?

17 "My spirit is broken, my days have cut short,
the graveyard awaits me.
² Surely mockers are with me,
my eyes must gaze on their hostility.
³ "Make then a pledge for me with You.
Who else would strike hands with me?
⁴ Because You have closed their heart to understanding,
therefore You will not exalt them.
⁵ If anyone denounces his friends for profit
the eyes of his children will fail.
⁶ He has made me a byword to people,
I am the one in whose face people spit.
⁷ My eyes have grown dim with grief
and all my limbs are like a shadow.
⁸ The upright are appalled at this;
the innocent are stirred up against the ungodly.
⁹ But the righteous one holds to his way,
and the one with clean hands grows stronger.
¹⁰ "But turn, all of you, come now!
I will not find a wise man among you.
¹¹ My days have passed, my plans are torn apart.
Yet the desires of my heart
¹² turn night into day;

† cf. Rom. 1:9.

in the face of darkness light is near.
¹³ If I hope for *Sheol* as my home,
 if I make my bed in darkness,
¹⁴ if I say to the pit, 'You are my father,'
 and to the worm, 'My mother,' or 'My sister,'
¹⁵ where then is my hope?
 And my hope, who sees it?
¹⁶ Will it go down to the gates of *Sheol*?
 Will we descend together into the dust?"

Bildad Rebukes Job

18 Then, Bildad the Shuhite replied, saying:
² "How long until you end these words?
 Consider, and then we will talk.
³ Why are we regarded as beasts,
 and stupid in your eyes?
⁴ You, who tear yourself to pieces in anger,
 will the earth be abandoned for your sake?
 Or must a rock be moved from its place?
⁵ Indeed, the light of the wicked is snuffed out;
 the flame of his fire does not shine.
⁶ The light in his tent grows dark;
 the lamp above him goes out.
⁷ His vigorous stride is shortened,
 and his own scheme throws him down.
⁸ For he is cast into a net by his feet;
 he wanders into its mesh.
⁹ A trap seizes him by the heel;
 a snare holds him fast.
¹⁰ A rope is hidden for him on the ground,
 and a trap for him lies on the path.
¹¹ On every side terrors frighten him
 and harass his every step.
¹² Calamity is hungry for him;
 disaster is ready for his fall.
¹³ It eats away pieces of his skin;
 death's firstborn devours his limbs.
¹⁴ He is torn from the security of his tent,
 and marched off to the king of terrors.
¹⁵ Nothing of his dwells in his tent;
 brimstone is scattered over his dwelling.
¹⁶ Below his roots dry up,
 and above his branches wither.
¹⁷ His memory perishes from the earth
 and he has no name in the land.
¹⁸ He is driven from light into darkness
 and is banished from the world.
¹⁹ He has no offspring or descendant among his people,
 no survivor where he once dwelt.
²⁰ People of the west are appalled at his fate;
 people of the east are seized with horror.
²¹ Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked;
 such is the place of one who does not know God."

Job: Have Pity on Me

19 Job responded, saying:

² "How long will you torment my soul
 and crush me with words?
³ Ten times now you have reproached me;
 you attack me shamelessly.
⁴ But even if it is true that I have erred,
 my error remains with me.
⁵ If indeed you would exalt yourselves above me
 and prove my humiliation against me,
⁶ then know that God has wronged me
 and encircled me with His net.
⁷ "Though I cry out, 'Violence!' I get no response.
 I cry for help, but there is no justice.
⁸ He has blocked my way so I cannot pass,
 and has shrouded my path in darkness.
⁹ He has stripped me of my honor,
 and removed the crown from my head.
¹⁰ He tears me down on every side until I am gone;
 He uproots my hope like a tree.
¹¹ His anger burns against me,
 and He considers me among His enemies.
¹² His troops advance together;
 they build a siege ramp against me
 and encamp around my tent.
¹³ "He removed my brothers far from me;
 my acquaintances are only strangers to me.
¹⁴ My relatives have gone away and my close friends
 have forgotten me.
¹⁵ My houseguests and my maidservants consider me
 a stranger.
 I have become a foreigner in their eyes.
¹⁶ I call my servant but he does not reply
 though I beg him with my own mouth.
¹⁷ My breath is repulsive to my wife;
 I am loathsome to my children.
¹⁸ Even young children despise me;
 when I stand, they speak against me. †
¹⁹ All my close friends despise me;
 those I love have turned against me.
²⁰ My bones cling to my skin and my flesh;
 I have escaped only by the skin of my teeth.
²¹ "Have pity on me my friends, have pity,
 for the hand of God has struck me.
²² Why do you pursue me—like God?
 Are you not satisfied with my flesh?
²³ Oh that my words were written,
 that they were recorded in a scroll
²⁴ that with an iron pen and lead,
 they were engraved in stone forever!

My Redeemer Lives!

²⁵ "Yet I know that my Redeemer lives,
 and in the end, He will stand on earth.
²⁶ Even after my skin has been destroyed,
 yet in my flesh I will see God; ††
²⁷ I myself will see Him with my own eyes,
 I and not a stranger.
 My heart ‡ grows weak within me.

† cf. John 13:18. †† cf. Matt. 5:8; 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 John 3:2.

²⁸ "If you say, 'How we will pursue him,
since the root of the matter is found in him';
²⁹ then you should fear the sword for yourselves;
for wrath brings the punishments of the sword—
so that you may know judgment!"

Zophar: Death and Hell for the Wicked

20 Then Zophar the Naamathite responded and said:
² "In truth, my troubled thoughts urge me to answer
because of my feelings within me.
³ I hear a rebuke that dishonors me
and my understanding inspires me to reply.
⁴ Do you not know that it has been from old,
since mankind was put on earth,
⁵ that the triumph of the wicked is short
and the joy of the godless is but for a moment?
⁶ Though his pride reaches to the heavens,
and his head touches the clouds,
⁷ he perishes forever like his own dung.
Those who have seen him will say,
'Where is he?'
⁸ Like a dream, he flies away
and they cannot find him;
like a vision of the night,
he is chased away.
⁹ The eye that saw him will not see him again;
his place will look on him no more.
¹⁰ His children must recompense the poor;
his own hands must give back his wealth.
¹¹ His bones were full of his youthful vigor
but it will lie down with him in the dust.
¹² Though evil is sweet in his mouth,
though he hides it under his tongue,
¹³ though he cannot bear to let it go
and holds it in his mouth,
¹⁴ his food turns sour in his stomach;
it becomes the venom of serpents within him.
¹⁵ He swallows riches and vomits them up;
God empties it out of his stomach.
¹⁶ He sucks the poison of serpents;
fangs of a viper kill him.
¹⁷ He will not look at streams,
rivers flowing with honey and butter.
¹⁸ He gives back what he toiled for without swallow-
ing it;
he will not enjoy the riches of his trade.
¹⁹ For he has oppressed and abandoned the poor.
He has seized a house he did not build.
²⁰ For he knows no satisfaction from his greed,
he cannot save himself by his desires.
²¹ Nothing remains for him to devour;
therefore his prosperity will not last.
²² In the fullness of his plenty, he will be distressed;
the full force of misery will come upon him.
²³ While he is filling his belly,
He will send the anger of His wrath against him,

and rain it down on him, on his flesh.
²⁴ Though he flees from an iron weapon,
a bronze bow pierces him through.
²⁵ He pulls and it comes out of his back,
the gleaming point out of his liver.
Terrors come upon him!
²⁶ Total darkness waits for his treasures;
A fire not fanned will devour him;
it will consume what is left in his tent.
²⁷ The heavens will expose his iniquity;
the earth will rise up against him.
²⁸ A flood will carry off his house,
rushing waters on the day of His wrath.
²⁹ Such is the wicked man's lot from God,
the heritage appointed to him by God."

Job's Dialogue on the Wicked

21 Then Job replied:
² "Listen carefully to my words;
let this be your consolation.
³ Bear with me as I speak,
and after I have spoken, mock on.
⁴ As for me, is my complaint against man?
If so, why should I not be impatient?
⁵ Look at me and be appalled;
put your hand over your mouth.
⁶ When I think of it, I am terrified
and my flesh shudders.
⁷ Why do the wicked go on living,
growing old and increasing in power?
⁸ Their children are established in their presence,
their offspring before their eyes.
⁹ Their homes have peace and are free from fear;
no rod of God is on them.
¹⁰ His bull breeds without fail;
his cow calves and does not miscarry.
¹¹ They send out their little ones like a flock
and their children dance.
¹² They sing to the tambourine and harp
and rejoice at the sound of the flute.
¹³ They spend their days in prosperity,
and in a moment go down to *Sheol*.
¹⁴ Yet they say to God, 'Leave us alone!
We have no desire to know Your ways.
¹⁵ Who is *Shaddai* that we should serve Him?
What would we gain if we pray to Him?'
¹⁶ Look, their prosperity is not in their own hands;
the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
¹⁷ "How often is the lamp of the wicked snuffed out
or calamity fallen on them?
How often does He allot pain in His anger?
¹⁸ How often are they like straw before the wind;
like chaff swept away by a storm?
¹⁹ You say, 'God stores up the punishment for his chil-
dren.'
Let Him repay the wicked so he may know it!
²⁰ Let his own eyes see his ruin;
let him drink the wrath of *Shaddai* .

‡ Lit. kidneys

²¹ For what does he care for his family that he leaves behind,
 when the number of his months has come to an end?
²² "Can anyone teach God knowledge,
 since He judges even the highest.
²³ One dies in his full strength, †
 completely secure and at ease.
²⁴ His pails are full of milk;
 His bones are moist with marrow.
²⁵ Yet another dies in bitterness of soul,
 never having tasted goodness.
²⁶ Together they lie in the dust
 and worms cover over them.
²⁷ "Behold, I know your thoughts,
 the schemes by which you wrong me.
²⁸ For you ask, 'Where is the nobleman's house
 and the tent where the wicked lived?'
²⁹ Have you not asked travelers?
 Do you not recognize their accounts
³⁰ that the wicked are spared for the day of calamity,
 that they are brought to the day of wrath?
³¹ Who declares his conduct to his face?
 Who repays him for what he has done?
³² He is brought to the grave,
 and watch is kept over his tomb.
³³ The soil in the valley is sweet to him;
 everyone follows after him,
 and countless are those before him.
³⁴ "So how will your futility comfort me,
 for your answers remain nothing but falsehood?"

Eliphaz Keeps Pointing at Sin

22 Then Eliphaz the Temanite responded saying:
² "Can a man be useful to God?
 Can even a wise man benefit Him?
³ What pleasure is it to *Shaddai* if you are righteous?
 Or what gain if your ways are blameless?
⁴ Is it because of your reverence that He corrects you
 and He brings judgment against you?
⁵ Is not your wickedness great,
 and is there no end to your iniquity?
⁶ For you took pledges from your brothers for no reason;
 you stripped the naked of their clothing.
⁷ You gave the weary no water to drink
 and from the hungry you withhold bread,
⁸ Though you were a mighty man, owning land—
 an honored man living on it.
⁹ You sent widows away empty-handed
 and crushed the arms of orphans.
¹⁰ "That is why snares surround you,
 and why sudden fear terrifies you,
¹¹ or why it is so dark that you cannot see,
 and why a flood of water covers you.
¹² "Is not God in the heights of heaven?
 And see the lofty stars how high they are?
¹³ Yet you say, 'What does God know?'

† Lit. in the bone of his perfection

Does He judge through such thick darkness?
¹⁴ Thick clouds veil Him so He does not see,
 as He walks in the vault of heaven.'
¹⁵ Will you keep to the old way
 that wicked men have trod?
¹⁶ They were snatched away before their time,
 their foundations washed away by a river.
¹⁷ They said to God, 'Leave us alone!
 What can *Shaddai* do to us?'
¹⁸ Yet He filled their houses with good things—
 but the counsel of the wicked is far from me!
¹⁹ The righteous see and rejoice;
 the innocent mock them, saying,
²⁰ 'Surely our foes are cut off,
 and fire consumes their abundance.'
²¹ "Reconcile now with Him and have *shalom* —
 in this way prosperity will come to you.
²² Accept instruction from His mouth
 and store up His words in your heart.
²³ If you return to *Shaddai*, you will be restored;
 if you remove iniquity far from your tent
²⁴ and throw your gold in the dust,
 and the gold of Ophir to the rocks in the wadis,
²⁵ then *Shaddai* will be your gold
 and your precious silver.
²⁶ Surely then *Shaddai* will be your delight
 and you will lift up your face to God.
²⁷ You will pray to Him and He will hear you,
 and you will fulfill your vows.
²⁸ What you decide will be done,
 and light will shine on your ways.
²⁹ When people are brought low, and you say, 'Lift
 them up!'
 then He will save the downcast.
³⁰ He will deliver even one who is not innocent,
 who will be delivered by the cleanness of your hands."

Job's Argument with God

23 Then Job answered:
² "Even today my complaint is rebellious;
 His hand is heavy despite my groaning.
³ If only I knew where to find Him;
 if only I could go to His dwelling.
⁴ I would lay out my case before Him
 and fill my mouth with arguments.
⁵ I would know with what words He would answer
 me,
 and understand what He would say to me.
⁶ Would He oppose me with great power?
 No, He would only pay attention to me.
⁷ There the upright can reason with Him,
 and there I would forever be delivered from my Judge.
⁸ But, if I go to the east, He is not there;
 if I go to the west,
 I do not find Him.
⁹ When He is in the north, I cannot perceive Him;

When He turns south, I do not see Him.
¹⁰ Yet He knows the way that I take;
 if He tested me, I would come out as gold.
¹¹ My foot has held closely to His steps;
 I have kept to His way and have not strayed.
¹² I have not departed from the commands of His lips.
 I have treasured the words of His mouth more than
 my daily bread.
¹³ He is unchangeable, and who can change Him?
 Whatever His soul desires, He does.
¹⁴ For He fulfills the decree against me,
 and many such things are with Him.
¹⁵ That is why I am terrified at His presence;
 when I consider this, I fear Him.
¹⁶ God has made my heart faint;
Shaddai has terrified me.
¹⁷ Yet I am not silenced because of the darkness,
 nor by the thick darkness that covers my face.”

Futility of Injustice

24 “Why are times not stored up by *Shaddai*?
 And why do those who know Him not see His
 days?
² Some remove the boundary stones;
 they steal flocks and pasture them.
³ They drive away the orphan’s donkey
 and take the widow’s ox as a pledge.
⁴ They turn the needy off the path;
 they force the poor of the land into hiding.
⁵ Behold, like wild donkeys in the desert, they go
 about their work,
 foraging prey in the desert as food for their children.
⁶ They reap their fodder in the field
 and glean in the vineyard of the wicked.
⁷ Without clothing they spend the night naked,
 without covering against the cold.
⁸ They are drenched by mountain rains,
 and hug the rock for lack of shelter.
⁹ The orphan is snatched from the breast;
 the infant of the poor is taken as a pledge.
¹⁰ They wander about naked, without clothing
 and go hungry while they carry sheaves.
¹¹ They press oil between the terraces;
 they tread winepresses, but are thirsty.
¹² From the city men groan,
 and the souls of the wounded cry out;
 yet God charges no one with folly.
¹³ These are those who rebel against the light,
 who do not recognize its ways or stay in its paths.
¹⁴ The murderer rises with the light, kills the poor and
 needy,
 and in the night becomes a thief.
¹⁵ The eye of the adulterer waits for twilight,
 thinking, ‘No eye will see me,’ and he disguises his
 face.
¹⁶ When it is dark, they break into houses,
 but by day, they shut themselves in;
 they do not know the light.

¹⁷ For to all of them, morning is as thick darkness;
 they are familiar with the terrors of thick darkness.
¹⁸ “He is foam on the surface of water;
 their portion of the land is cursed;
 no one turns toward their vineyards.
¹⁹ As heat and drought snatch away the melted snow,
 so *Sheol*, takes away those who have sinned.
²⁰ The womb forgets him,
 the worm feasts on him,
 no longer will he be remembered.
 But like a tree, wickedness is broken.
²¹ He feeds on the barren and childless woman,
 and shows no kindness to the widow.
²² But He drags off the mighty by His power;
 He raises up, yet no one has assurance of life.
²³ He allows him to rest in a sense of security,
 but His eyes are on their ways.
²⁴ They are exalted for a little while
 and then they are gone;
 they are brought low
 and gathered up like all others,
 they are like heads of grain—they wither.
²⁵ Now if it is not so, who can prove me a liar,
 and reduce my speech to nothing?”

Bildad: Justified with God?

25 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:
² “Dominion and awe are with Him;
 He establishes *shalom* in His heights.
³ Can His armies be counted?
 On whom does His light not rise?
⁴ How then can a man be righteous with God?
 How can one born of a woman be pure?
⁵ If even the moon is not bright
 and the stars are not pure in His eyes,
⁶ how much less man who is but a maggot—
 a son of man who is a worm!”

Job: God Is Awesome

26 Then Job responded and said:
² “How you have helped the powerless!
 How you have saved the arm without strength!
³ How you have counseled the one without wisdom
 and revealed your abundant insights!
⁴ To whom have you uttered words?
 Whose spirit has come from your mouth?
⁵ “The dead tremble—those beneath the water
 and all that live in them.
⁶ is naked before Him;
 has no covering. †
⁷ He stretches out the north over the void;
 He suspends the earth over nothing.
⁸ He wraps up the waters in His clouds,
 yet the clouds do not burst under them.
⁹ He covers the face of the full moon,
 spreading His clouds over it.

† cf. Heb. 4:13; Rev. 9:11.

¹⁰ He marks out the horizon on the face of the waters,
 for a boundary between light and dark.
¹¹ The pillars of heaven tremble,
 astounded at His rebuke!
¹² By His power He churns up the sea;
 by His understanding He smashed Rahab.
¹³ By His *Ruach* the heavens are clear;
 His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.
¹⁴ Indeed, these are but glimpses of His ways; how
 faint the whisper, we hear of Him!
 Who then can understand the thunder of His might?"

What Hope Has the Godless?

²⁷ And Job took up his discourse again, saying:
² "As God lives, who has deprived me of justice,
Shaddai who has made my soul bitter,
³ as long as my breath is still in me,
 the *Ruach* of God in my nostrils,
⁴ my lips will speak no injustice,
 nor will my tongue mutter deceit.
⁵ Far be it from me to say that you are just;
 until I die, I will not set aside my integrity!
⁶ I will maintain my righteousness, and not let it go;
 my conscience will not reproach me for any of my
 days.
⁷ "May my enemy be like the wicked,
 my enemy like the unrighteous.
⁸ For what hope has the godless,
 when he is cut off,
 when God takes his soul? †
⁹ Will God hear his cry
 when trouble comes upon him?
¹⁰ Will he delight in *Shaddai*?
 Will he call upon God at all times?
¹¹ I will teach you about the hand of God;
 I will not conceal the ways of *Shaddai*.
¹² Look, you have all seen this yourselves.
 Why then this meaningless talk?
¹³ "This is the portion of a wicked man with God,
 the inheritance that ruthless men receive from *Shad-*
dai.
¹⁴ If his children increase—
 it is for the sword.
 His offspring will never
 have enough to eat.
¹⁵ Those who survive him will be buried by the
 plague,
 and their widows will not weep.
¹⁶ Though he piles up silver like dust,
 and clothing like heaps of mortar,
¹⁷ what he lays up, the righteous will wear,
 and the upright will divide the silver.
¹⁸ The house he built is like a moth's cocoon,
 like a hut made for a watchman.
¹⁹ "He lies down wealthy,
 but will gather no more.
 When he opens his eyes,

all is gone!
²⁰ Terrors overtake him like a flood;
 a storm sweeps him away at night.
²¹ The east wind picks him up and he is gone;
 it sweeps him out of his place.
²² It hurls itself at him without pity
 as he flees headlong from its hand.
²³ It claps its hands at him in derision,
 and hisses him out of his place."

Where Can Wisdom Be Found?

²⁸ "Surely there is a mine for silver,
 and a place where gold is refined.
² Iron is taken from the earth,
 and copper is smelted from ore.
³ Man puts an end to darkness;
 he searches to the farthest reaches
 for ore in gloom and blackest darkness.
⁴ He cuts open a shaft far from dwellings,
 in places forgotten by feet.
 Far from other people,
 they dangle back and forth.
⁵ The earth, from which food comes,
 is transformed as by fire;
⁶ a place whose rocks are sapphires,
 its dust contains gold.
⁷ No bird of prey knows the path;
 no falcon's eye has seen it.
⁸ Proud beasts have not set foot on it,
 and no lion has passed there.
⁹ Man sets his hand against the flinty rock
 and overturns mountains by the roots.
¹⁰ He carves out tunnels through the rocks;
 his eye sees every precious thing.
¹¹ He dams up streams from flowing.
 And brings hidden things to light.
¹² "But where can wisdom be found?
 Where is the place of understanding?
¹³ No mortal comprehends its worth;
 it cannot be found in the land of the living.
¹⁴ The deep says, 'It is not in me'—
 The sea says, 'It's not with me.'
¹⁵ Pure gold cannot be given for it,
 nor can its price be weighed in silver.
¹⁶ It cannot be weighed in gold from Ophir,
 in precious onyx, or sapphire.
¹⁷ Neither gold or crystal can compare with it,
 nor vessels of fine gold exchanged for it.
¹⁸ No mention will be made of coral or jasper;
 the price of wisdom is more than pearls.
¹⁹ The topaz of Ethiopia cannot compare to it;
 nor can it be valued in pure gold.
²⁰ Where then does wisdom come from?
 Where is the place of understanding?
²¹ It has been hidden from the eyes of all living
 things,
 concealed from the birds of the sky.
²² Abaddon and Death say,

† cf. Acts 23:1; Rom. 2:15.

'With our ears we have heard a rumor of it.'
²³ "God understands its way
 and He knows its place.
²⁴ He looks to the ends of the earth,
 and sees everything under the heavens.
²⁵ When He made the force of the wind,
 and measured out the waters,
²⁶ when He set a limit for the rain
 and a path for the thunderstorm,
²⁷ then He looked at it and assessed it,
 established it and examined it.
²⁸ And He said to mankind,
 'The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom,
 and to turn away from evil is understanding.'"

Job Remembers Better Days

29 Again Job took up his discourse saying:
² "O that I could be as in the months gone by,
 as in the days when God watched over me,
³ when His lamp shone above my head,
 when by His light I walked through darkness;
⁴ as I was in the days of my prime,
 when God's intimate friendship was upon my tent,
⁵ when *Shaddai* was still with me,
 and my children surrounded me;
⁶ when my steps were bathed with butter,
 and the rock poured out for me streams of oil.
⁷ When I went out to the city gate,
 and secured my seat in the public square,
⁸ young men would see me and hide,
 old men would rise and stand;
⁹ princes refrained from talking
 and put their hand over their mouths;
¹⁰ the voice of the nobles was hushed
 and their tongue stuck to their palate.
¹¹ "When the ear heard,
 it called me blessed,
 and when the eye saw me,
 it commended me;
¹² for I saved the poor who cried for help,
 and the orphan who had no one to help him;
¹³ the blessing of the dying man came on me,
 and I made the widow's heart sing for joy.
¹⁴ I put on righteousness as my clothing;
 justice was as my robe and turban.
¹⁵ I was eyes for the blind
 and feet for the lame;
¹⁶ I was a father to the needy,
 and I investigated the case of one I did not know.
¹⁷ I broke the jaws of the unjust,
 and snatched the prey out of his teeth.
¹⁸ "Then I thought, 'I will die in my nest,
 and multiply my days like the sand.
¹⁹ My roots reach the water,
 and dew lies on my branches all night.
²⁰ My glory is fresh within me,
 and my bow is renewed in my hand.'
²¹ "People listened to me and waited,

and kept silent for my advice.
²² After I had spoken, they spoke no more;
 my words fell on them drop by drop.
²³ They waited for me as for the rain,
 and opened their mouths as for spring rain.
²⁴ When I joked with them, they hardly believed it;
 they did not cause the light of my face to fall.
²⁵ I chose their way and sat as their chief;
 I lived as a king among the troops;
 I was like one who comforts mourners.

Cry of Great Agony

30 "But now they mock me—those younger than
 me,
 whose fathers I would have disdained to put with my
 sheep dogs.
² Moreover, what use was the strength of their hands
 to me,
 since their vigor has gone from them.
³ Haggard from want and hunger,
 they gnaw the parched land,
 in former time desolate and waste.
⁴ In the brush they pluck salt herbs,
 and their food was from the root of the broom tree.
⁵ They were banished from society,
 shouted at as if they were thieves,
⁶ so they were forced to dwell in wadis,
 in holes of the earth and among the rocks.
⁷ They brayed among the bushes
 and huddled under the nettles.
⁸ A senseless and nameless brood,
 they were cast out from the land.
⁹ "So now I have become their taunt song;
 I have become a byword to them.
¹⁰ They despise me;
 they keep their distance from me;
 they do not hesitate to spit in my face.
¹¹ Because He has loosened my cord and afflicted me,
 they have cast off restraint in my presence.
¹² On my right the rabble rise up;
 they entangle my feet
 and build up their destructive paths against me.
¹³ They break up my path;
 they succeed in destroying me without anyone help-
 ing them.
¹⁴ As through a wide breach they come;
 amid the ruins they come rolling in.
¹⁵ Terrors are turned on me;
 they chase away my honor like the wind,
 and like a cloud my deliverance vanishes.
¹⁶ "And now my soul is poured out within me;
 days of suffering have taken hold of me.
¹⁷ Night pierces my bones within me;
 my gnawing pains never rest.
¹⁸ By great power He seizes my garment;
 He binds me like the collar of my tunic.
¹⁹ He has cast me into the mud,
 and I have become like dust and ashes.

20 "I cry out to You, but You do not answer me;
I stand up, but You only look at me.
21 You have turned on me cruelly;
You attack me with the might of Your hand.
22 You lift me up on the wind
and make me ride on it;
You toss me about in the storm.
23 For I know that You will bring me to death,
to the house appointed for all the living.
24 Yet does not one in a heap of ruins stretch out his
hand,
and in his distress cry for help?
25 Have I not wept for the unfortunate?
Was not my soul grieved for the poor?
26 Yet, when I hoped for good, evil came;
when I waited for light, then darkness came.
27 "My heart † seethes and never stops;
days of suffering confront me.
28 I walk about blackened, but not by the sun;
I stand in the assembly and cry for help.
29 I have become a brother to jackals,
and a companion to ostriches.
30 My skin has turned black on me;
my bones burn with heat.
31 My harp is for mourning
and my flute for the sound of weeping.

Job Asks for Judgment

31 "I made a covenant with my eyes
not to pay attention to a virgin.
2 For what is one's lot from God above,
one's heritage from *Shaddai* on high?
3 Is it not calamity for the unjust,
and disaster for workers of iniquity?
4 Does He not see my ways
and count all my steps?
5 "If I have walked in falsehood
or my foot has hurried to deceit,
6 then let Him weigh me with honest scales,
then God will know my integrity.
7 If my step has strayed from the way,
if my heart has walked after my eyes,
or if any defilement has stuck to my hands,
8 then let me sow and another eat,
and let my crops be uprooted.
9 If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
or I have lurked at my neighbor's door,
10 then let my wife grind for another
and let others sleep with her.
11 For that would be a shameful act,
an iniquity to be judged.
12 For it is a fire that devours to destruction,
and uproots all my harvest.
13 "If I have denied justice to my male or female ser-
vant
when they disputed with me,
14 then what could I do when God rises up;

when He visits, how will I answer Him?
15 Did not He who made me in the womb, make him?
Did not the same one form us in the womb?
16 "If I withheld the desires of the poor
or let the eyes of the widow to fail,
17 if I ate my morsel of bread myself,
without letting an orphan eat of it
18 (but from my youth I reared him as a father,
and from my mother's womb I guided her),
19 if I have seen anyone perishing for lack of clothing
or the needy without a covering,
20 if his heart did not bless me
as he warmed himself with the fleece of my sheep,
21 if I have raised my hand against the orphan,
when I saw my support in the gate,
22 then let my shoulder blade fall from my shoulder,
and let my arm be broken off at the joint.
23 For calamity from God was a terror to me,
and because of His majesty, I could do nothing.
24 "If I have put my confidence in gold
or said to fine gold, 'You are my security,'
25 if I rejoiced because of my great wealth
or because of the abundance my hand acquired,
26 if I looked at the sun when it shines
or the moon moving in splendor,
27 so that my heart was secretly enticed,
and my hand threw a kiss from my mouth,
28 then this also would be iniquity to be judged,
for I would have denied God above.
29 "If I rejoiced at my enemy's misfortune
or gloated because calamity found him—
30 I have not allowed my mouth to sin,
by asking for his life with a curse—
31 if anyone in my household has ever said,
'Who has not been filled with his meat?'
32 —but no stranger had to spend the night outside
for my door was open to the traveler—
33 if I have I covered my transgressions like Adam,
by hiding my guilt in my bosom
34 because I feared a great multitude,
and the contempt of clans terrified me,
so that I kept silent
and would not go outside.
35 O, that I had someone to hear me!
Look, here is my signature,
let *Shaddai* answer me,
let the accuser write the indictment!
36 Surely I would carry it on my shoulder;
I would bind it on me as a crown.
37 I would give Him an account of my steps;
like a prince I would approach Him.
38 "If my land cries out against me,
and its furrows weep together,
39 if I have eaten its fruits without money,
or caused the death of its owners,
40 then let briars come up instead of wheat,
and stinkweed instead of barley."
The words of Job are ended.

† Lit. loins

Young Elihu Speaks

32 So these three men stopped answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. ² Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite of the clan of Ram became very angry. He was angry with Job for justifying himself rather than God. ³ He was also angry with his three friends because they had not found an answer, and yet had condemned Job. ⁴ Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were older. ⁵ When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, his anger was aroused.

⁶ Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite responded and said:

“I am young in days and you are old;
that is why I was timid
and dared not to tell what I know.

⁷ I thought, ‘Let days speak,
and many years teach wisdom.’ †

⁸ But there is a spirit in people,
the breath of *Shaddai* that gives them understand-
ing.

⁹ It is not only the aged who are wise
or old men who understand justice.

¹⁰ “Therefore I say, ‘Listen to me!
I, even I, will explain what I know.’

¹¹ Look, I waited for your words,
I listened to your reasoning;
while you were searching for words

¹² I gave you my full attention.
But behold, no one proved Job wrong;
none among you, answered his statements.

¹³ Lest you should say, ‘We have found wisdom;
let God refute him, not man!’

¹⁴ Job has not directed his words to me
and I will not respond to him with your arguments.

¹⁵ “They are dismayed and no longer reply;
words have failed them.

¹⁶ Must I wait, since they no longer speak,
since they stand there with no reply?

¹⁷ I too will answer my part;
I too will declare what I know.

¹⁸ For I am full of words,
and the spirit within me compels me;
¹⁹ inside I am like wine that has no opening,
like new wineskins ready to burst.

²⁰ I must speak that I may find relief;
I will open my lips that I may answer.

²¹ I will show partiality to no one,
nor will I flatter anyone;

²² for I do not know how to flatter
else my Maker would quickly carry me away!

33 “But now, Job, listen to my words
and give ear to everything I say.

² See now, I open my mouth;
my tongue in my mouth speaks.

³ My words are from my upright heart;

my lips speak sincerely what they know.

⁴ “The *Ruach* of God has made me;
the breath of *Shaddai* gives me life.

⁵ Answer me, if you can;
array yourselves before me;
take your stand!

⁶ Look, I am the same as you before God;
I too am formed from clay.

⁷ See, no fear of me should terrify you,
nor should my pressure be heavy on you.

⁸ “Indeed, you have said in my hearing,
—I heard the sound of the words:

⁹ ‘I am pure, without transgression;
I am innocent, without iniquity.’

¹⁰ Yet, He has found fault with me;
He considers me His enemy.

¹¹ He puts my feet in the shackles;
He watches closely all my paths.’

¹² “But in this, you are not right—
I answer you, for God is greater than a mortal.

¹³ Why do you contend against Him
that He does not answer all His words.

¹⁴ Indeed, God speaks once, even twice,
yet no one perceives it.

¹⁵ “In a dream, in a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls on men, as they slumber in
bed,

¹⁶ Then He opens the ears of men
and seals their instruction,

¹⁷ in order to turn a man from his conduct
and to cover a person’s pride.

¹⁸ He spares his soul from the Pit
and his life from perishing by the sword.

¹⁹ Or a person is chastened with pain on his bed,
with continual strife in his bones,

²⁰ so that his life loathes bread,
and his soul, desirable food.

²¹ His flesh wastes away from sight,
and his bones, once unseen, now stick out.

²² His soul draws near to the Pit
and his life to the messengers of death.

²³ “If there is an angel beside him, a messenger, one
out of a thousand,

to declare to a man his uprightness,

²⁴ then He is gracious to him, and says
‘Deliver him from going down to the Pit—

I have found a ransom’;
²⁵ let his flesh be restored like a child’s;

let him return to the days of his youth.’

²⁶ He entreats God and is accepted by Him;
he sees His face with a shout of joy;
He restores to the man his righteousness.

²⁷ He sings to others, saying,
‘I have sinned and perverted what is right,
but I did not get what I deserved.’

²⁸ He redeemed my soul from going down to the Pit,
and my life sees the light.’

²⁹ “Indeed, God does all these things,

† cf. Luke 2:47.

twice, even three times with a man,
³⁰ to bring his soul back from the Pit,
 that he may be illuminated with the light of life.
³¹ Pay attention, Job, listen to me;
 Be silent, and I will speak.
³² If you have anything to say, answer me.
 Speak, for I want to justify you.
³³ If not, then listen to me.
 Be silent, and I will teach you wisdom."

Testing Job's Claims

34 Then Elihu answered:
² "Hear my words, you wise men;
 give ear to me, you men of learning.
³ For the ear tests words
 as the mouth tastes food.
⁴ Let us choose for ourselves what is right;
 Let us learn together what is good.
⁵ "For Job says, 'I am righteous,
 but God has deprived me of justice.
⁶ Concerning my right, should I lie?
 My wound is incurable, although I am without trans-
 gression.'
⁷ What man is like Job,
 who drinks mockery like water,
⁸ who keeps company with evildoers,
 and walks with wicked men?
⁹ For he says, 'It does not profit a man
 when he makes his delight with God.'
¹⁰ "Therefore, listen to me, you men of understand-
 ing:
 Wickedness is far from God, injustice from *Shaddai* .
¹¹ For He repays a person for what he has done,
 and brings on the person what he deserves.
¹² "Truly God does not act wickedly,
 and *Shaddai* does not pervert justice.
¹³ Who appointed Him over the earth?
 Who put Him over the whole world?
¹⁴ "If He were to set His heart on it,
 and gather to Himself His *Ruach* and breath,
¹⁵ all flesh would perish together
 and mankind would return to dust. †
¹⁶ "Now if you have understanding, hear this;
 give ear to the sound of my words.
¹⁷ Can someone who hates justice govern?
 Will you condemn the mighty, righteous One?
¹⁸ Who says to a king, 'Worthless man'
 and to nobles, 'Wicked men!'
¹⁹ Who shows no partiality before princes,
 and does not favor the rich over the poor,
 for they are all the work of His hands.
²⁰ They die in a moment, at midnight,
 people are shaken and they pass away.
 The mighty are removed without a hand.
²¹ "For His eyes are on the ways of man;
 He sees all his steps.
²² There is no gloom and no deep darkness,

† cf. Acts 17:25, 28.

where evildoers can hide themselves.
²³ For He does not consider a man further
 that he should go before God in judgment.
²⁴ He shatters the mighty without inquiry,
 and sets others in their place.
²⁵ Thus He recognizes their deeds,
 He overturns them in the night and they are
 crushed.
²⁶ He strikes them for their wickedness
 in a place where people can see,
²⁷ because they turned from following Him,
 and have not understood any of His ways.
²⁸ They caused the cry of the poor to come before
 Him,
 so that He hears the cry of the afflicted.
²⁹ "But if He is quiet, who can condemn Him?
 If He hides His face, who can see Him?
 Yet He is over a nation and an individual alike,
³⁰ so that godless men should not rule,
 nor lay snares for people.
³¹ "Suppose someone says to God, 'I have born chas-
 tisement,
 but I will not act wickedly any more.
³² Teach me what I cannot see.
 If I have done evil, I will not do it again.'
³³ Should He requite it on your terms,
 because you reject it?
 But you must choose and not I;
 now declare what you know.
³⁴ "Men of understanding declare,
 wise men who hear me say to me,
³⁵ 'Job speaks without knowledge,
 and his words lack understanding.'
³⁶ Oh, that Job might be tested to the end,
 for answering like wicked men.
³⁷ For he adds rebellion to his sin;
 in our midst he claps his hands
 and multiplies his words against God."
35 Then Elihu answered, saying:
² "Do you think this is just?
 Do you say,
 'My righteousness is greater than God's?'
³ For you ask, 'What will it profit you?'
 and 'What do I gain by not sinning?'
⁴ I will answer you,
 and your friends with you.
⁵ Look up at the heavens and see;
 consider the clouds so high above you.
⁶ If you sin, how does it affect Him?
 If your transgressions are many, what do you do to
 Him?
⁷ If you are righteous, what do you give Him,
 or what does He receive from your hand? ††
⁸ Your wickedness is for a man like yourself,
 and your righteousness for a son of man.
⁹ "Because of a multitude of oppressions, they cry
 out;

†† cf. Rom. 11:35.

they cry for help because of the power of the mighty.
¹⁰ But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker,
 who gives songs in the night,
¹¹ who teaches us more than the animals of the earth,
 who makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?'
¹² There they cry out, but He does not answer,
 because of the pride of the wicked.
¹³ Indeed God does not hear an empty cry;
Shaddai pays no attention to it.
¹⁴ How much less when you say that you do not per-
 ceive Him,
 that the case is before Him and you must wait for
 Him.
¹⁵ And further, that His anger does not punish
 and that He does not know transgression?
¹⁶ So Job opens his mouth with nonsense,
 without knowledge he multiplies words."

Elihu Magnifies the Almighty

36 Then Elihu said further:
² "Be patient with me a bit longer and I will
 show you
 that there is more to say on God's behalf.
³ I get my knowledge from afar;
 I ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
⁴ For truly, my words are not false;
 One who is perfect in knowledge is with you.
⁵ "Indeed, God is mighty, but despises none,
 He is mighty in strength of understanding.
⁶ He does not keep the wicked alive,
 but gives justice to the afflicted.
⁷ He does not take His eyes from the righteous,
 but enthrones them with kings and exalts them for-
 ever.
⁸ But if they are bound in chains,
 and held captive by cords of affliction,
⁹ then He declares to them their deed
 that they have transgressed arrogantly.
¹⁰ And He opens their ear to instruction,
 and commands that they turn from evil.
¹¹ If they obey and serve, they will end their days in
 prosperity,
 and their years in happiness.
¹² But if they do not listen, they will perish by the
 sword,
 and die without knowledge.
¹³ "The godless in heart harbor anger,
 they do not cry for help even when He binds them.
¹⁴ Their souls die in youth,
 their life ends among cult prostitutes.
¹⁵ He delivers the afflicted by his affliction
 and opens their ear in oppression.
¹⁶ "And indeed, He will draw you from the mouth of
 distress,
 to a spacious place without constraint, and the com-
 fort of a table full of rich food.
¹⁷ But you are full of judgment on the wicked,
 judgment and justice take hold of you!

¹⁸ Beware lest wrath entice you with riches;
 or a large bribe turn you aside.
¹⁹ Will your wealth sustain you to keep you from dis-
 tress,
 or even all your mighty efforts?
²⁰ Do not long for the night,
 when people vanish from their places.
²¹ Be careful, do not turn to iniquity;
 for you have chosen this rather than affliction.
²² "Indeed, God is exalted in His power.
 Who is a teacher like Him?
²³ Who has prescribed His way for Him?
 Or said 'You have done wrong?'
²⁴ Remember to magnify His work,
 of which people have sung.
²⁵ All mankind has seen it;
 people gaze on it from afar.
²⁶ Behold, God is exalted—beyond our knowledge!
 The number of His years is unsearchable.
²⁷ For He draws up the drops of water;
 they distill rain into its mist,
²⁸ which the clouds pour down
 and shower mankind abundantly.
²⁹ Indeed, who can understand the spreading of the
 clouds,
 and the thunder from His pavilion?
³⁰ "See how He scatters His lightning about Him,
 covering the depths of the sea.
³¹ For by these, He judges peoples
 and supplies food in abundance.
³² He covers His hands with lightning
 and commands it to strike its target.
³³ His thunder declares His presence,
 the cattle also, about what is coming.
37 "At this my heart trembles
 and leaps from its place.
² Listen carefully to the roar of His voice,
 the rumbling that comes from His mouth.
³ Under the whole heaven He lets it loose,
 and His light to the ends of the earth.
⁴ After that a voice roars;
 He thunders with His majestic voice.
 He does not hold them back when His voice is heard.
⁵ God thunders wondrously with His voice;
 He does great things beyond our comprehension.
⁶ "For to the snow He says, 'Fall to the earth,'
 and to the torrential rain—'be a mighty downpour of
 rain.'
⁷ He seals the hand of every man,
 so that all men will know His work.
⁸ The animals go into their lairs;
 they remain in their dens.
⁹ Out of its chamber comes the storm,
 and icy cold from the driving wind.
¹⁰ From the breath of God frost is made,
 and the watery expanse freezes.
¹¹ He loads the cloud with moisture;
 He scatters His cloud of lightning.

12 It swirls around by His guidance,
 to do whatever He commands
 on the face of the inhabited world.
 13 Whether it is a rod of punishment
 for His land or for lovingkindness,
 He causes it to happen.
 14 "Listen to this, Job:
 stand and consider God's wonders.
 15 Do you know how God orders them,
 and makes the lightning flash in His cloud?
 16 Do you know the balancing of clouds,
 the wonders of Him who has perfect knowledge?
 17 "You, whose clothes are hot,
 when the earth is still, because of the south wind,
 18 can you, with Him, stretch out the skies,
 strong as a mirror of molten metal?
 19 Teach us what to say to Him;
 we cannot prepare a case because of the darkness.
 20 Should He be informed that I want to speak?
 If a man speaks, would he be swallowed up?
 21 But now, they do not see the light,
 bright as it is in the skies,
 until the wind has passed
 and cleared the clouds away.
 22 Out of the north He comes in golden splendor;
 around God is awesome majesty.
 23 *Shaddai*, we cannot find Him!
 He is great in power and justice,
 and abundant righteousness He does not oppress.
 24 Therefore people fear Him;
 He does not regard all the wise of heart."

Word out of the Whirlwind

38 Then *ADONAI* answered Job out of the whirlwind.
 He said:
 2 "Who is this, who darkens counsel
 with words without knowledge?
 3 Now gird up your loins like a man;
 I will question you,
 and you will inform Me!
 4 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of
 earth?
 Tell Me, if you have understanding.
 5 Who set its dimensions—if you know—
 or who stretched a line over it?
 6 On what were its foundations set,
 or who laid its cornerstone—
 7 when the morning stars sang together,
 and all the sons of God shouted for joy?
 8 "And who shut up the sea behind doors
 when it burst forth from the womb,
 9 when I made a cloud its garment
 and thick darkness its swaddling cloth,
 10 when I prescribed my boundary for it,
 and set bars and gates,
 11 when I said, 'This far you may come, but no further;
 here your majestic waves will stop.'

12 "Have you ever in your life commanded the morn-
 ing,
 or caused dawn to know its place;
 13 that it would take hold of the corners of the earth
 and shake the wicked out of it?
 14 It changes shape like clay under a seal—
 they stand out like those of a garment.
 15 And from the wicked their light is withheld,
 and the upraised arm is broken.
 16 "Have you gone to the springs of the sea,
 or walked in the recesses of the deep?
 17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you?
 Have you seen the gates of the deepest darkness?
 18 Have you comprehended the expanses of the
 earth?
 If you know it all, declare it!
 19 In what direction does light dwell,
 and darkness, where is its place—
 20 that you can take it to its borders,
 and discern the paths to its home?
 21 Surely you know, for you were born then;
 and the number of your days is great!
 22 "Have you entered the storehouses of snow
 or seen the storehouses of hail,
 23 which I reserved for a time of distress,
 for a day of battle and war?
 24 In what direction is light distributed,
 or the east wind scattered over the earth?
 25 Who cuts a channel for the flood,
 and a path for the thunderstorm,
 26 to cause it to rain on an uninhabited land,
 a desert with no one in it,
 27 to satisfy a devastated and desolate land,
 and cause it to sprout grass?
 28 Does the rain have a father,
 or who has birthed the drops of dew?
 29 From whose womb comes the ice?
 Who gives birth to the frost of heaven,
 30 when the waters hide like stone,
 and the surface of the deep is frozen?
 31 "Can you bind the chains of Pleiades
 or loosen the belt of Orion?
 32 Do you bring out the constellations in their season
 or guide the Bear with her cubs?
 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?
 Can you set up dominion over the earth?
 34 "Can you raise your voice to the clouds
 and cover yourself with an abundance of water?
 35 Can you send out lightning bolts, so they go?
 Will they say to you, 'Here we are?'
 36 Who put wisdom in the secret place
 or gave understanding to the mind?
 37 Who can count the clouds by wisdom,
 or tip over the water jars of heaven,
 38 when dust hardens into a mass
 and clods of earth stick together?
 39 "Do you hunt prey for the lioness
 or satisfy the hunger of young lions,

⁴⁰ when they crouch in their dens
 or lie in wait in the thicket?
⁴¹ Who arranges provision for the raven,
 when its young cry out to God,
 and wander about for lack of food?
39 "Do you know when the mountain goats give
 birth?
 Do you observe the calving doe?
² Do you count the months they fulfill
 and do you know the time when they give birth,
³ when they kneel, bring forth their young,
 and their labor pains end?
⁴ Their young thrive and grow strong in the open
 field;
 They leave and never return to them.
⁵ "Who sent the wild donkey free?
 Who released the bonds of the wild ass,
⁶ to whom I gave the Arabah as its home,
 the salt land as its dwelling place?
⁷ It scorns the commotion in the town;
 it does not hear the taskmaster's shouts.
⁸ It explores the mountains as its pasture
 and searches after every green thing.
⁹ "Is the wild ox willing to serve you?
 Will it spend the night at your manger?
¹⁰ Will you bind a wild ox to a furrow with his rope?
 Will it plow valleys behind you?
¹¹ Will you rely on it for its great strength?
 Will you leave your labor to it?
¹² Can you trust it to bring in your seed
 and gather it to your threshing floor?
¹³ "The wings of the ostrich flap joyously,
 but are they the pinions and plumage of a stork?
¹⁴ For she leaves her eggs on the ground
 and lets them warm in the soil,
¹⁵ and forgets that a foot may crush them,
 that a wild beast may trample them.
¹⁶ She treats her young ones harshly, as if they were
 not hers;
 She is not concerned that her labor was in vain,
¹⁷ for God did not endow her with wisdom
 or give her a share of understanding.
¹⁸ When she lifts herself to flee
 she laughs at the horse and its rider.
¹⁹ "Do you give the horse its strength?
 Do you clothe his neck with a mane?
²⁰ Do you cause him to leap like locust?
 His majestic snorting is terrifying!
²¹ He paws in the valley
 and exalting in his strength he charges into the fray.
²² He laughs at fear and is not dismayed;
 he does not recoil from the sword.
²³ On him the quiver rattles;
 the spear and javelin flash.
²⁴ With quaking and excitement, he swallows up the
 ground.
 He cannot stand still when the *shofar* sounds.
²⁵ At the blast of the *shofar*, he says, 'Aha!'

From a distance he smells battle,
 the shout of the captains and the battle cry.
²⁶ "Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars,
 spreading its wings toward the south?
²⁷ Is it by your command that an eagle soars
 and builds its nest high?
²⁸ It dwells on a cliff
 and spends the night there, on a rocky crag and
 stronghold.
²⁹ From there it searches for food;
 its eyes detect it from afar.
³⁰ Its young ones suck up blood,
 and where the slain are, there it is."

Insignificant before God

40 Then *ADONAI* answered Job, saying:
² "Will the one who contends with *Shaddai* cor-
 rect him?
 Let him who accuses God answer!"
³ Then Job answered *ADONAI*. He said:
⁴ "Indeed, I am unworthy—what can I reply to You?
 I put my hand over my mouth.
⁵ I spoke once, but I have no answer—
 twice, but I will say no more."
⁶ Then *ADONAI* answered Job from the whirlwind:
⁷ "Brace yourself like a man;
 I will question you,
 and you will inform Me!
⁸ "Would you really annul My judgment?
 Would you condemn Me to justify yourself?
⁹ Do you have an arm like God's
 and can you thunder with a voice like His?
¹⁰ Then adorn yourself in majesty and dignity;
 clothe yourself in splendor and honor.
¹¹ Scatter the fury of your anger.
 Look at every proud person and bring him low;
¹² look at everyone who is proud and humble him;
 tread down the wicked where they stand.
¹³ Hide them together in the dust,
 bind their faces in the hidden place.
¹⁴ Then I—even I will acknowledge to you,
 that your own right hand can save you!

Behemoth and Leviathan

¹⁵ "Look now at Behemoth, which I made along with
 you.
 He eats grass like an ox.
¹⁶ Now look at his strength in his loins,
 and his power in the muscles of his belly.
¹⁷ He stiffens his tail like a cedar;
 the sinews of his thighs are knit together.
¹⁸ His bones are tubes of bronze;
 His limbs like rods of iron.
¹⁹ He is first among the ways of God,
 Let his Maker draw near with His sword!
²⁰ For the mountains bring him food,
 and all the wild animals play there.

21 Under the lotus plants he lies down,
in the secrecy of the reeds and marsh.
22 The lotuses conceal him in their shade;
the willows of the brook surround him.
23 If the river rages, he is not alarmed.
He is secure, even though the Jordan surges against
his mouth.
24 Can anyone capture it by its eyes,
or pierce his nose with hooks?
25 (41:1) "Can you pull in Leviathan with a hook,
or tie down his tongue with a cord?
26 (41:2) Can you put a reed rope in his nose
or pierce his jaw with a hook?
27 (41:3) Will he make many supplications to you,
or speak softly to you?
28 (41:4) Will he make a covenant with you,
so you can take him as a slave forever?
29 (41:5) Can you play with him like a bird,
or put him on a leash for your girls?
30 (41:6) Will traders barter for him?
Will they divide him among the merchants?
31 (41:7) Can you fill his hide with harpoons
or his head with fishing spears?
32 (41:8) If you lay your hands on him—
you will remember the battle and never do it again!
41 (9) "See, his hope is wrong,
he is laid low, even the sight of him.
2 (10) Is he not fierce when he is roused?
Who then is able to stand before Me?
3 (11) Who has confronted Me that I should repay? †
Everything under heaven belongs to Me.
4 (12) "I will not keep silent about his limbs,
or his might or the grace of his arrangement.
5 (13) Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who can penetrate his double armor?
6 (14) Who can open the doors of his face,
ringed with fearsome teeth?
7 (15) His rows of shields are his pride,
shut up closely as with tight seal;
8 (16) each so close to the next,
that no air can pass between.
9 (17) They are joined one to another;
they clasp each other and cannot be separated.
10 (18) "He sneezes out flashes of light;
his eyes are like the eyelids of dawn.
11 (19) Out of his mouth go flames,
sparks of fire shoot out.
12 (20) Smoke pours from his nostrils,
as a boiling pot over burning reeds.
13 (21) His breath sets coals ablaze
and flames dart from his mouth.
14 (22) "Strength resides in his neck;
dismay runs before him.
15 (23) The folds of his flesh are tightly joined;
they are firm on him, immovable.
16 (24) His heart is hard as rock,
hard as a lower millstone.

† cf. Rom. 11:35.

17 (25) "When he rises up, the mighty are afraid;
at his crashing they retreat.
18 (26) A sword that reaches him has no effect—
nor with a spear, dart, or javelin.
19 (27) He regards iron as straw,
bronze as rotten wood.
20 (28) Arrows do not make him flee;
sling stones become like chaff to him.
21 (29) A club is regarded as stubble;
he laughs at the rattling of a lance.
22 (30) "His undersides are jagged potsherds,
leaving a trail like a threshing sledge in mud.
23 (31) He makes the deep boil like a cauldron
and stirs up the sea like a pot of ointment.
24 (32) He leaves a shining wake behind him;
one would think the deep had white hair.
25 (33) Nothing on dry land is his equal—
a creature without fear.
26 (34) He sees every haughty thing;
he is king over all who are proud."

Job Retracts

42 Job answered *ADONAI* and said:
2 "I know You can do all things;
no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.
3 You ask, 'Who is this,
who darkens counsel without knowledge?'
Surely I spoke without understanding,
things too wonderful for me which I did not know.
4 You said, 'Hear now, and I will speak;
I will question you,
and you will inform Me.'
5 I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear;
but now my eye has seen You.
6 Therefore I despise myself,
and repent on dust and ashes."

Job Restored

7 After *ADONAI* had spoken these words to Job, *ADONAI* said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My anger is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken about Me what is right, like My servant Job has. 8 So now, take for yourselves seven young bulls and seven rams and go to My servant Job and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, for I will accept Job's prayer †† and not deal with you according to your folly because you have not spoken correctly about Me, like My servant Job."

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what *ADONAI* told them; and *ADONAI* accepted Job's prayer.

10 So *ADONAI* restored what Job had lost, after he prayed for his friends, and *ADONAI* doubled everything that Job had before. 11 Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and everyone who had known him before, came

†† Lit. lift up his face

to him and ate bread with him in his house. They consoled him and comforted him for all the calamity that *ADONAI* had brought upon him. Each of them gave him a piece of money and a gold ring.

¹² So *ADONAI* blessed Job's latter days more than at his beginning. He had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. ¹³ He also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴ He called

the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-Happuch.

¹⁵ Nowhere in the land were there found women as beautiful as the daughters of Job. Their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers.

¹⁶ After this, Job lived 140 years; he saw his children and their children for four generations. ¹⁷ And so Job died, old and full of days.

Psalms

Psalms Introduction

The book of Psalms is one of the most loved books of the Bible. Although the word “psalms” comes from the Greek word “,” the Hebrew word, , , better describes the content of the book as “praises.” Within the 150 Psalms or songs in this book, one will encounter reflections of life’s varied experiences. Many of the songs of the church were written by composers who used the actual words of the psalms in their worship expression. We are not sure as to the date of the writings of Psalms. However, the length of time covered by this noble book of the Bible encompasses approximately one thousand years. Scholars determine that the writing style, imagery, and parallelism all contribute to this sentiment. The book of Psalms is actually divided into five smaller books. Book 1 includes Psalms 1-41; book 2 includes Psalms 42-72; book 3 includes Psalms 73-89; book 4 includes Psalms 90-106, and book 5 includes Psalms 107–150. The final five chapters of Psalms are rightly called the “Great Hallel,” as each psalm begins and ends with the exclamation of Halleluyah! Praise !

It is said that , King David, wrote most of Psalms. Seventy-three psalms begin with the statement “a Psalm of David.” His writing encompassed lament, penitence and sorrow, praises, imprecatory reflection, and Messianic referrals. As David was a harp player, he was effective in introducing the use of various musical instruments into corporate worship. Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved psalms used in the synagogue and churches today in the 21st century. Psalm 51 denotes David’s repentance after his sin with Bathsheba.

In addition, it is believed that Asaph and the sons of Korah also contributed to the writing of Psalms. Psalm 90 notes that the author is Moses. Solomon was a prolific contributor to the Bible; Psalm 72 and Psalm 127 are credited to his authorship. Approximately fifty psalms indicate no authorship, allowing the reader to only assume and accept the mystery of the source. The longest chapter of the Bible is found in the book of Psalms, Psalm 119. This psalm is unique as each main stanza begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

The book of Psalms involves almost every aspect of life. Central to this book is the worship of God. Although the genres are different, the unifying element is the adoration and love for God. Psalms 113-Psalms 118 are known as the “Hallel” psalms. These Hallel psalms are recited by Jewish people on Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot. This compilation is also part of the , הרשע הנמש , the “Eighteen Benedictions.”

One of the beautiful aspects of the book of Psalms is that almost half of all of the Old Testament () references in the New Testament are sourced from the book of Psalms. All through the book, the reader is presented with a picture of God. The adds His inspiration to the word, to enliven the reader to the true worship of the one True God.

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Forgiveness and Full Redemption
Be Still My Soul
Promise of
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His Endures Forever!
 By the Rivers of Babylon
 Your Right Hand Delivers Me
 How Precious Your Thoughts!
 Protection from the Wicked
 Evening Petition for Protection
 A Refuge from Trouble
 Hide Not Your Face from Me
 Rescue from Battle
 Glory of the Kingdom
 Justice of the Kingdom
 He Builds up Jerusalem
 Praise Him, All Creation!
 Praise with Singing and Dancing
 Praise with and Cymbals

Torah Is a Tree of Wisdom

1 Happy is the one who has not walked in the advice of the wicked,
 nor stood in the way of sinners,
 nor sat in the seat of scoffers.
² But his delight is in the *Torah* of *ADONAI*,
 and on His *Torah* he meditates day and night.
³ He will be like a planted tree over streams of water,
 producing its fruit during its season.
 Its leaf never droops—
 but in all he does, he succeeds.
⁴ The wicked are not so.
 For they are like chaff that the wind blows away.
⁵ Therefore, the wicked will not stand during the judgment,
 nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
⁶ For *ADONAI* knows the way of the righteous,
 but the way of the wicked leads to ruin.

Coronation of Messianic King

2 Why are the nations in an uproar,
 and the peoples mutter vanity?
² The kings of earth set themselves up †
 and rulers conspire together ††
 against *ADONAI*
 and against His Anointed One: ‡
³ “Let’s rip their chains apart,
 and throw their ropes off us!”
⁴ He who sits in heaven laughs!
ADONAI mocks them.
⁵ So He will speak to them in His anger,
 and terrify them in His fury:
⁶ “I have set up My king
 upon Zion, My holy mountain.”
⁷ I will declare the decree of *ADONAI*.
 He said to me: “You are My Son—

today I have become Your Father. ††

⁸ Ask Me,

and I will give the nations as Your inheritance,
 and the far reaches of the earth as Your possession.

⁹ You shall break the nations with an iron scepter. ††

You shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s jar.” †††

¹⁰ So now, O kings, be wise,
 take warning, O judges of the earth!

¹¹ Serve *ADONAI* with fear,
 and rejoice with trembling.

¹² Kiss the Son, lest He become angry,
 and you perish along your way—
 since His wrath may flare up suddenly.

Happy is everyone taking refuge in Him!

Magen David

3 (0) A Psalm of David, when he fled from his son
 Absalom.

² (1) *ADONAI*, how many are my foes!
 Many are rising up against me!

³ (2) Many are saying to my soul:
 “There is no deliverance for him in God.”

Selah

⁴ (3) But You, *ADONAI*, are a shield around me,
 my glory and the lifter of my head.

⁵ (4) I cry out to *ADONAI* with my voice,
 and He answers me from His holy mountain.

Selah

⁶ (5) I lie down and sleep.

I awake—for *ADONAI* sustains me.

⁷ (6) I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people all
 around

who have taken their stand against me.

⁸ (7) Arise, *ADONAI*! Deliver me, my God!
 For You strike all my enemies on the cheek.

You shatter the teeth of the wicked.

⁹ (8) Deliverance belongs to *ADONAI*. †††

Let Your blessing be on Your people.

† *Hebraically, usurping power* †† *cf. Mark 3:6. ‡ Hebrew*
Mashiach Messiah

†† *cf. Matt. 3:17. ††† cf. Rev. 12:5; 19:15. †††† cf. Rev. 2:27.*
 †††† *cf. Rev. 7:10.*

Selah

Prayer for Sleep in *Shalom*

4 (0) For the music director, on stringed instruments, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) Answer me when I call,
 God of my righteousness!
 You set me free when I am in distress.
 Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.
 3 (2) O sons of men, how long will you turn my glory into my shame?
 How long will you love worthlessness and pursue falsehood? *Selah*
 4 (3) But know that *ADONAI* has set apart the godly for His own.
ADONAI will hear when I call to Him.
 5 (4) Tremble, but do not sin! †
 Search your heart while on your bed, and be silent.
Selah
 6 (5) Offer righteous sacrifices
 and put your trust in *ADONAI*.
 7 (6) Many are asking, "Who will show us some good?"
 May the light of Your face shine upon us, *ADONAI*!
 8 (7) You have put joy in my heart—
 more joy than when their grain and new wine overflow.
 9 (8) I will lie down and sleep in *shalom*.
 For You alone, *ADONAI*, make me live securely.

Morning Prayer for Justice

5 (0) For the music director, on the wind instruments, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) Hear my words, *ADONAI*,
 consider my groaning.
 3 (2) Listen to the sound of my cry for help,
 my King and my God, for I pray to You.
 4 (3) *ADONAI*, in the morning You hear my voice.
 In the morning I order my prayer before You and watch expectantly.
 5 (4) For You are not a God who rejoices in evil.
 No wickedness dwells with You.
 6 (5) Braggarts will not stand before Your eyes.
 You hate all wrongdoers.
 7 (6) You destroy those who speak falsehood.
 A person of bloodshed and deceit *ADONAI* detests.
 8 (7) But because of Your great lovingkindness, I will enter Your House.
 I will bow toward Your holy Temple, in awe of You.
 9 (8) Lead me, *ADONAI*, in Your righteousness, because of my enemies.
 Make Your path straight before me.
 10 (9) For nothing upright is in their mouth.
 Inside them is a ruin—their throat an open grave.
 They flatter with their tongue. ††
 11 (10) Declare them guilty, O God!

† cf. Eph. 4:26. †† cf. Rom. 3:13.

Let them fall by their own schemes.
 Banish them because of their many transgressions—
 for they have rebelled against You.
 12 (11) But let all who take refuge in You rejoice!
 Let them always shout for joy!
 You will shelter them and they exult—those who love
 Your Name.
 13 (12) For You bless the righteous, *ADONAI*.
 You surround him with favor as a shield.

Prayer for Mercy

6 (0) For the music director, on the eight string lyre, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) *ADONAI*, do not rebuke me in Your anger!
 Do not discipline me in Your wrath.
 3 (2) Be gracious to me, *ADONAI*, for I am weak.
 Heal me, *ADONAI*—for my bones are shuddering with fear,
 4 (3) as is my soul—
 and You, *ADONAI*—how long?
 5 (4) Turn toward me, *ADONAI*, deliver my soul!
 Save me—because of Your mercy.
 6 (5) For there is no memory of You in death,
 in *Sheol* who will praise You?
 7 (6) I am worn out with my groaning.
 Every night I make my bed swim,
 drenching my pillow with my tears.
 8 (7) My eyes are weakened with grief—
 they age because of my enemies.
 9 (8) Away from me, all you evildoers!
 For *ADONAI* heard the sound of my weeping.
 10 (9) *ADONAI* has heard my cry for mercy.
ADONAI accepts my prayer:
 11 (10) "May all my enemies be ashamed, and stricken
 with terror.
 May they turn back in sudden disgrace."

ADONAI Magen

7 (0) A passionate song of David, which he sang to *ADONAI* concerning Cush, a Benjamite.
 2 (1) *ADONAI* my God, in You I have taken refuge.
 Save me from each of my persecutors, and deliver me.
 3 (2) Otherwise, he will rip me apart like a lion,
 with no one to rescue me.
 4 (3) *ADONAI* my God, if I have done this—
 if there is guilt on my hands,
 5 (4) if I have paid back evil to anyone at peace with me,
 or unjustly attacked my adversary,
 6 (5) then let the enemy chase me,
 overtake me, and trample me into the ground,
 leaving my honor in the dirt! *Selah*
 7 (6) Arise, *ADONAI*, in Your anger,
 arise against the fury of my enemies!
 Awake for me!
 You decreed justice.

8 (7) Let an assembly of peoples gather around You and return on high, above them.
 9 (8) *ADONAI* judges the peoples.
 Vindicate me, *ADONAI*,
 according to my righteousness and integrity in me.
 10 (9) Please, end the evil of the wicked and sustain the righteous.
 A just God examines hearts and minds.
 11 (10) My shield is God—
 Savior of the upright in heart.
 12 (11) God is a righteous judge,
 a God who is indignant every day.
 13 (12) If He does not relent,
 He will sharpen His sword.
 He has bent His bow and made it ready.
 14 (13) He prepares His own deadly weapons.
 He makes His fiery arrows.
 15 (14) Look! The one pregnant with trouble conceives mischief and brings forth deceit. †
 16 (15) He digs a pit, scrapes it out,
 and then falls into the hole he has made.
 17 (16) His mischief will turn on his own head.
 His violence will boomerang on his crown.
 18 (17) I will praise *ADONAI* for His justice.
 I sing praise to the Name of *ADONAI Elyon*!

Humanity Is God's Splendor

8 (0) For the music director, upon the Gittite lyre: a psalm of David.
 2 (1) *ADONAI* our Lord,
 how excellent is Your Name over all the earth!
 You set Your splendor above the heavens.
 3 (2) Out of the mouths of babies and toddlers
 You established power, ††
 because of Your enemies,
 to silence the foe and the avenger.
 4 (3) When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
 the moon and the stars, which You established—
 5 (4) what is man, that You are mindful of him?
 And the son of man, that You care for him? ‡
 6 (5) Yet You made him a little lower than the angels,
 and crowned him with glory and majesty!
 7 (6) You gave him dominion over the works of Your hands.
 You put all things under their feet: ††
 8 (7) all sheep and oxen,
 and also beasts of the field,
 9 (8) birds in the air, and fish in the ocean—
 all passing through the paths of the seas.
 10 (9) *ADONAI* our Lord, how excellent is Your Name over all the earth!

Our Righteous Judge

9 (0) For the music director, to the tune of "The Death of the Son," a psalm of David.
 2 (1) I will praise *ADONAI* with my whole heart.
 I will tell about all Your wonders.
 3 (2) I will be glad and rejoice in You.
 I will sing praise to Your Name, *Elyon*!
 4 (3) When my enemies turn back,
 they stumble and perish before You.
 5 (4) For You upheld my right and my cause.
 You sat upon the throne, judging righteously.
 6 (5) You rebuked the nations,
 You destroyed the wicked—
 blotting out their name forever and ever.
 7 (6) The enemy is finished, in ruins forever.
 You overturned their cities—
 even the memory of them has perished.
 8 (7) But *ADONAI* reigns forever.
 He established His throne for judgment.
 9 (8) He judges the world in righteousness
 and governs the peoples justly.
 10 (9) *ADONAI* is a stronghold for the oppressed,
 a high tower in times of trouble.
 11 (10) Those who know Your Name trust You—
 for You, *ADONAI*, never have forsaken those who seek You.
 12 (11) Sing praises to *ADONAI*, who dwells in Zion.
 Declare His deeds among the peoples.
 13 (12) He who avenges blood remembers.
 He will not forget the cry of the afflicted.
 14 (13) Be compassionate to me, *ADONAI*.
 See my affliction from those hating me.
 Lift me up from the gates of death.
 15 (14) Then I will tell all your praises
 in the gates of the daughter of Zion,
 rejoicing in Your salvation.
 16 (15) The nations sank into the pit they made.
 The net they hid caught their own foot.
 17 (16) *ADONAI* is known for executing judgment.
 The wicked one is trapped in the work of his own hands.
Selah
 18 (17) The wicked will turn to *Sheol*,
 as will all the nations that forget God.
 19 (18) For the needy will not forever be forgotten,
 nor the hope of the poor perish forever.
 20 (19) Arise, *ADONAI*, do not let man triumph.
 Let the nations be judged before You.
 21 (20) Strike them with terror, *ADONAI*.
 Let the nations know they are only human. *Selah*

Freedom from Terror

10 Why, *ADONAI*, are You standing far off?
 Why hide Yourself in times of trouble?
 2 In pride the wicked hotly hunt the poor.
 Let them be caught in the plots they have planned.

† cf. Jacob 1:15. †† cf. Matt. 21:16. ‡ cf. Heb. 2:6. †† cf. 1 Cor. 15:27; Heb. 2:8.

³ For the wicked one boasts about his soul's desire.
The greedy one curses, reviling *ADONAI*.
⁴ The wicked one, with his nose in the air, never seeks Him.
All his thoughts are: "There is no God."
⁵ His ways are secure at all times.
He haughtily disregards Your judgments.
He snorts at all his adversaries.
⁶ He says in his heart: "I'll never be shaken!
From generation to generation nothing bad will happen."
⁷ His mouth is full of cursing, lies, and oppression.
On his tongue are trouble and iniquity. †
⁸ He lies in ambush near villages.
In hidden places he slays the innocent.
His eyes watch in secret for the helpless.
⁹ He lurks in a hiding place like a lion in a thicket.
He lies in wait to catch the helpless.
He catches the unfortunate one, dragging him away in his net.
¹⁰ The victim is crushed, brought down,
and falls into his mighty claws.
¹¹ He says in his heart: "God has forgotten.
He hides His face—He will never see it."
¹² Arise, *ADONAI*! O God, lift up Your hand.
Do not forget the afflicted.
¹³ Why does the wicked one revile God?
He says in his heart:
"You will never require anything."
¹⁴ You saw—for You see trouble and grief,
to take it in Your hand.
The victim puts his trust in You—
You are the helper of the orphan.
¹⁵ Break the arm of the wicked, evil one!
Call him to account for his wickedness—
until no more is found.
¹⁶ *ADONAI* is King forever and ever!
Nations will be wiped off His land.
¹⁷ You hear, *ADONAI*, the desire of the meek.
You encourage them and incline Your ear.
¹⁸ You vindicate the orphan and oppressed,
so that man, who is earthly, may terrify no more.

Judgment from Heaven

11 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
(1) In *ADONAI* I have taken shelter.
How can you say to my soul:
"Fly like a bird to your mountain?"
² For look, the wicked bend the bow.
They fix their arrow on the bowstring
so they can shoot from the shadows
at those who are upright in heart.
³ If our foundations are destroyed,
what should the righteous do?"
⁴ *ADONAI* is in His holy Temple.
ADONAI's throne is in heaven. ††
His eyes are watching.

His eyelids observe the children of men.
⁵ *ADONAI* examines the righteous.
But the wicked and one loving violence His soul hates.
⁶ On the wicked He will rain down fire, brimstone,
and scorching wind as the portion of their cup!
⁷ For *ADONAI* is righteous—He loves justice.
The upright will see His face.

Silence the Flattering Lips

12 (0) For the music director, on the eight string lyre, a psalm of David.
² (1) Help, *ADONAI*! For no one godly exists.
For the faithful have vanished from the children of men.
³ (2) Everyone tells a lie to his neighbor,
talking with flattering lips and a divided heart.
⁴ (3) May *ADONAI* cut off all flattering lips—
a tongue bragging big things.
⁵ (4) They say: "With our tongue we'll prevail.
We own our lips—who can master us?"
⁶ (5) "Because of the oppression of the poor,
because of the groaning of the needy,
now will I arise," says *ADONAI*.
"I will put him in the safe place—he pants for it."
⁷ (6) The words of *ADONAI* are pure words—
like silver refined in an earthly crucible,
purified seven times.
⁸ (7) You will keep us safe, *ADONAI*.
You will protect us from this generation forever.
⁹ (8) The wicked strut all around,
while vileness is exalted by mankind.

Trust in His *Chesed*

13 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
² (1) How long, *ADONAI*? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?
³ (2) How long must I have cares in my soul
and daily sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?
⁴ (3) Look at me and answer, *ADONAI* my God.
Light up my eyes, or I will sleep in death.
⁵ (4) Or else my enemy will say: "I have overcome him!"
and my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.
⁶ (5) But I trust in Your lovingkindness,
my heart rejoices in Your salvation.
(6) I will sing to *ADONAI*,
because He has been good to me.

There Is No God?

14 (0) For the music director, of David.
(1) The fool said in his heart:
"There is no God."
They are corrupt; their deeds are vile;
there is no one who does good. ‡

† cf. Job 20:12; Rom. 3:14. †† cf. Matt. 5:34; Acts 7:49; Rev. 4:2.

² *ADONAI* looked down from heaven on the children of men,
to see if there are any who understand,
who seek after God.
³ They all turned aside, became corrupt.
There is no one who does good
—not even one.
⁴ “Will evildoers never understand—
those who consume My people as they eat bread—
and never call on *ADONAI* ?”
⁵ There they are, in great dread.
For God is with the righteous generation.
⁶ You would frustrate the plan of the lowly.
Surely *ADONAI* is his refuge!
⁷ O may He give Israel’s salvation out of Zion!
When *ADONAI* restores His captive people,
Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad!

Walking with Integrity

15 (0) A psalm of David.
(1) *ADONAI*, who may dwell in Your tent?
Who may live on Your holy mountain?
² The one who walks with integrity,
who does what is right,
and speaks truth in his heart,
³ who does not slander with his tongue,
does not wrong his neighbor,
and does not disgrace his friend,
⁴ who despises a vile person in his eyes,
but honors those who fear *ADONAI* ,
who keeps his oath even when it hurts,
and does not change,
⁵ who lends his money without usury,
and takes no bribe against the innocent.
One who does these things will never be shaken.

The Path of Eternal Life

16 (0) A Michtam of David.
(1) Keep me safe, O God, for in You I have
found shelter.
² I said to *ADONAI* : “You are my Lord—
I have no good apart from You.”
³ As for the *kedoshim* who are in the land,
they are noble—in them is all my delight.
⁴ As for those who run after another god,
may their sorrows multiply.
I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood,
nor lift up their names with my lips.
⁵ *ADONAI* is my portion and my cup.
You cast my lot.
⁶ My boundary lines fall in pleasant places
—surely my heritage is beautiful.
⁷ I will bless *ADONAI* , who counsels me.
Even at night my heart instructs me.
⁸ I have set *ADONAI* always before me.
Since He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

‡ cf. Rom. 3:10-12.

⁹ So my heart is glad and my soul rejoices.
My body also rests secure.
¹⁰ For You will not abandon my soul to *Sheol*
nor let Your faithful one see the Pit. †
¹¹ You make known to me the path of life.
Abundance of joys are in Your presence,
eternal pleasures at Your right hand. ††

A Plea for Vindication

17 (0) A prayer of David.
(1) Hear, *ADONAI* , a just plea, listen to my cry!
Give ear to my prayer—from lips with no deceit.
² From Your presence comes my vindication.
Your eyes see what is right.
³ You have examined my heart.
You searched me at night.
Though You test me, You find nothing.
I resolved that my mouth will not sin.
⁴ As for the deeds of mankind—
by the word of Your lips
I have kept out of the ways of the violent.
⁵ My steps have kept on Your paths.
My feet have not slipped.
⁶ I called upon You, O God,
for You will answer me.
Incline Your ear to me,
hear my speech.
⁷ Be wonderful with Your lovingkindness,
O Savior of those taking refuge at Your right hand
from those rising up against them.
⁸ Protect me like the pupil of the eye.
Hide me in the shadow of Your wings,
⁹ from the wicked who attack me—
my enemies, who surround me.
¹⁰ Their callous hearts they shut tight.
With their mouths they speak proudly.
¹¹ Our steps are now surrounded.
They set their eyes to throw us down to the ground,
¹² like a lion eager to tear to pieces,
like a young lion crouching in cover.
¹³ Arise, *ADONAI* ! Confront him!
Make him bow down!
Deliver my soul from the wicked with Your sword,
¹⁴ from men, with Your hand, *ADONAI* ,
from men of the world whose portion is in this life.
You fill their belly with Your treasure
—with plenty of children—
and leave their surplus to their babes.
¹⁵ I in righteousness will behold Your face!
When I awake,
I will be satisfied with Your likeness.

ADONAI Lives! Blessed Be My Rock

18 (0) For the music director: a psalm of David the
servant of *ADONAI* . He chanted the words of this

† cf. Acts. 13:35. †† cf. Acts 2:25-28.

song to *ADONAI* on the day *ADONAI* delivered him from
 the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.
 2 (0) He said, (1) I love You, *ADONAI* my strength!
 3 (2) *ADONAI* is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer.
 My God is my rock, in Him I take refuge,
 my shield, my horn of salvation, my stronghold.
 4 (3) I called upon *ADONAI*, worthy of praise,
 and I was rescued from my enemies.
 5 (4) Cords of death entangled me.
 Torrents of Belial overwhelmed me.
 6 (5) Cords of *Sheol* coiled around me.
 Snares of death came before me.
 7 (6) In my distress I called on *ADONAI*,
 and cried to my God for help.
 From His Temple He heard my voice,
 my cry before Him came into His ears.
 8 (7) Then the earth rocked and quaked.
 The foundations of mountains trembled.
 They reeled because He was angry.
 9 (8) Smoke rose from His nostrils
 and consuming fire from His mouth.
 Coals blazed from Him.
 10 (9) He parted the heavens and came down,
 with thick darkness under His feet.
 11 (10) He rode upon a *cheruv* and flew.
 He soared on the wings of the wind.
 12 (11) He made darkness His cover,
 His *sukkah* all around Him—
 dark waters, thick clouds.
 13 (12) Out of the brilliance before Him
 passed His thick clouds, hail and fiery coals.
 14 (13) *ADONAI* also thundered in the heavens,
 and *Elyon* gave forth His voice, hail and fiery coals.
 15 (14) He shot His arrows and scattered them,
 hurled lightning bolts and routed them.
 16 (15) Then ravines of water appeared.
 The foundations of earth were exposed,
 at Your rebuke, *ADONAI*,
 at a blast of breath from Your nostrils.
 17 (16) He reached down from on high
 and took hold of me.
 He drew me out of mighty waters.
 18 (17) He saved me from my powerful enemy,
 from those who hated me—
 for they were much stronger than me.
 19 (18) They came against me in my day of calamity,
 but *ADONAI* was my support.
 20 (19) He brought me out to a wide-open place.
 He rescued me since He delighted in me.
 21 (20) *ADONAI* rewarded me for my righteousness.
 For the cleanness of my hands He repaid me.
 22 (21) For I kept the ways of *ADONAI*,
 and did not turn wickedly from my God.
 23 (22) For all His judgments are before me.
 I do not put His rulings away from me.
 24 (23) I also had integrity with Him,
 and kept myself from my sin.
 25 (24) So *ADONAI* rewarded me for my righteousness,

for the cleanness of my hands in His eyes.
 26 (25) With the loyal You deal loyally.
 With the blameless You are blameless.
 27 (26) With the pure You are pure,
 and with the crooked You are shrewd.
 28 (27) For You save lowly people,
 but haughty eyes You humble.
 29 (28) For You light up my lamp.
ADONAI my God shines in my darkness.
 30 (29) For with You I rush on a troop,
 with my God I scale a wall.
 31 (30) As for God, His way is perfect.
 The word of *ADONAI* is pure.
 He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.
 32 (31) For who is God, except *ADONAI*?
 And who is a Rock, except our God?
 33 (32) God girds me with strength
 and makes my way straight.
 34 (33) He makes my feet like those of deer
 and makes me stand on my heights.
 35 (34) He trains my hands for battle,
 so my arms can bend a bronze bow.
 36 (35) You gave me the shield of Your salvation.
 Your right hand upholds me,
 Your gentleness makes me great.
 37 (36) You broaden my steps beneath me,
 so my ankles have not slipped.
 38 (37) I pursue my enemies and overtake them,
 and will not return till they are wiped out.
 39 (38) I will crush them till they cannot rise,
 till they fall beneath my feet.
 40 (39) For You girded me with strength for battle.
 You made those who rose up against me bow down
 before me.
 41 (40) You also made my enemies turn their backs to
 me.
 I cut off those who hate me.
 42 (41) They cry out, but there is none to save
 —even to *ADONAI*, but He did not answer them.
 43 (42) Then I beat them as fine as dust before the
 wind.
 I pour them out like mud in the streets.
 44 (43) You free me from strifes of the people.
 You set me as head of the nations—
 people I did not know are serving me.
 45 (44) As soon as they hear, they obey me.
 Children of foreigners cringe before me.
 46 (45) Children of foreigners lose heart
 and come trembling from their hideouts.
 47 (46) *ADONAI* lives! And blessed be my Rock!
 Exalted be God my salvation!
 48 (47) God—He gives me vengeance
 and subdues peoples under me.
 49 (48) He delivers me from my enemies.
 Indeed You lift me up above those who rise up
 against me.
 You deliver me from the violent man.
 50 (49) Therefore, I praise You among the nations,

ADONAI, and sing praises to Your Name. †
 51 (50) Great victories He gives to His king.
 He shows loyal love to His anointed—
 to David and his seed, forever.

Glory from Heaven and Torah

19 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) The heavens declare the glory of God,
 and the sky shows His handiwork.
 3 (2) Day to day they speak,
 night to night they reveal knowledge.
 4 (3) There is no speech, no words,
 where their voice goes unheard.
 5 (4) Their voice has gone out to all the earth
 and their words to the end of the world. ††
 In the heavens He pitched a tent for the sun.
 6 (5) It is like a bridegroom coming out of his bridal
 chamber.
 It is like a strong man rejoicing to run his course.
 7 (6) It rises at one end of the heavens
 and makes its circuit to the other end.
 Nothing is hidden from its heat.
 8 (7) The *Torah* of *ADONAI* is perfect,
 restoring the soul.
 The testimony of *ADONAI* is trustworthy,
 making the simple wise.
 9 (8) The precepts of *ADONAI* are right,
 giving joy to the heart.
 The *mitzvot* of *ADONAI* are pure,
 giving light to the eyes.
 10 (9) The fear of *ADONAI* is clean,
 enduring forever.
 The judgments of *ADONAI* are true
 and altogether righteous.
 11 (10) They are more desirable than gold,
 yes, more than much pure gold!
 They are sweeter than honey
 and drippings of the honeycomb.
 12 (11) Moreover, by them Your servant is warned.
 In keeping them there is great reward.
 13 (12) Who can discern his errors?
 Cleanse me of hidden faults.
 14 (13) Also keep Your servant from willful sins.
 May they not have dominion over me.
 Then I will be blameless,
 free from great transgression.
 15 (14) May the words of my mouth
 and the meditation of my heart
 be acceptable before You,
ADONAI, my Rock and my Redeemer.

ADONAI -Nissi

20 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) May *ADONAI* answer you in the day of trou-
 ble!

May the Name of the God of Jacob set you up secure-
 ly on high.

3 (2) May He send you help from the Sanctuary
 and support you from Zion.
 4 (3) May He remember all your meal offerings
 and accept the fat of your burnt offering. *Selah*
 5 (4) May He grant you your heart's desire
 and fulfill all your plans.
 6 (5) We will shout for joy in your victory
 and lift up our banners in the Name of our God!
 May *ADONAI* fulfill all your petitions.
 7 (6) Now I know that *ADONAI* saves His anointed.
 He answers him from His holy heaven with saving
 strength of His right hand.
 8 (7) Some have chariots, some have horses,
 but we remember the Name of *ADONAI* our God.
 9 (8) They have collapsed and fallen,
 but we rise up and support each other.
 10 (9) *ADONAI*, save the king!
 Answer us on the day we call!

The Victorious King

21 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) *ADONAI*, the king rejoices in Your strength!
 How greatly he delights in Your salvation.
 3 (2) You granted him his heart's desire,
 and You did not withhold the request of his lips. *Se-
 lah*
 4 (3) For You met him with the best blessings.
 You set on his head a crown of pure gold.
 5 (4) He asked You for life, You gave it to him,
 length of days forever and ever.
 6 (5) His glory is great through Your salvation.
 Honor and majesty You bestow on him.
 7 (6) For You bestow on him eternal blessings,
 gladden him with joy in Your presence.
 8 (7) For the king trusts in *ADONAI*,
 and in the lovingkindness of *Elyon*
 he will not be shaken.
 9 (8) Your hand will find all Your enemies.
 Your right hand will overtake those who hate You.
 10 (9) You will make them like a fiery furnace
 at the time of Your appearing.
 In His wrath *ADONAI* will swallow them up
 and fire will consume them.
 11 (10) You destroy their offspring from earth,
 their seed from the children of men.
 12 (11) Though they intended evil against You
 and devised a plot, they cannot succeed.
 13 (12) For You make them turn their backs.
 You aim Your bowstrings at their faces.
 14 (13) Be exalted, *ADONAI*, in Your strength!
 We will sing and praise Your might.

Suffering Servant

22 (0) For the music director, on "The Doe of the
 Dawn," a psalm of David.

† cf. Rom. 15:9. †† cf. Rom. 10:18.

2 (1) My God, my God,
 why have You forsaken me?
 Distant from my salvation
 are the words of my groaning. †
 3 (2) O my God, I cried out by day, but You did not answer,
 by night, but there was no rest for me.
 4 (3) Yet You are holy,
 enthroned on the praises of Israel.
 5 (4) In You our fathers put their trust.
 They trusted, and You delivered them.
 6 (5) They cried to You and were delivered.
 In You they trusted, and were not disappointed.
 7 (6) Am I a worm, and not a man?
 Am I a scorn of men, despised by people?
 8 (7) All who see me mock me.
 They curl their lips, shaking their heads:
 9 (8) "Rely on *ADONAI*! Let Him deliver him!
 Let Him rescue him—since he delights in Him!" ††
 10 (9) Yet You brought me out of the womb,
 made me secure at my mother's breasts.
 11 (10) From the womb I was cast on You—
 from my mother's womb You have been my God.
 12 (11) Be not far from me!
 For trouble is near—
 there is no one to help.
 13 (12) Many bulls have surrounded me.
 Strong bulls of Bashan encircled me.
 14 (13) They open wide their mouths against me,
 like a tearing, roaring lion.
 15 (14) I am poured out like water,
 and all my bones are disjointed.
 My heart is like wax—
 melting within my innards.
 16 (15) My strength is dried up like a clay pot,
 my tongue clings to my jaws.
 You lay me in the dust of death.
 17 (16) For dogs have surrounded me.
 A band of evildoers has closed in on me.
 They pierced ‡ my hands and my feet.
 18 (17) I can count all my bones.
 They stare, they gape at me.
 19 (18) They divide my clothes among them,
 and cast lots for my garment. ††
 20 (19) But You, *ADONAI*, be not far off!
 O my strength! Come quickly to my aid!
 21 (20) Deliver my soul from the sword—
 my only one from the power of the dog.
 22 (21) Save me from the lion's mouth.
 From the horns of the wild oxen rescue me.
 23 (22) I will declare Your Name to my brothers.
 I will praise You amid the congregation. ††
 24 (23) You who fear *ADONAI*, praise Him!
 All Jacob's descendants, glorify Him!
 Revere Him, all you seed of Israel.

† cf. Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34. †† cf. Matt. 27:43. ‡ Or like a lion †† cf. Matt. 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke: 23:34; John 19:24. †† cf. Heb. 2:12.

25 (24) For He has not despised or disdained the suffering of the lowly one.
 Nor has He hidden His face from him,
 but when he cried to Him, He heard.
 26 (25) From You is my praise in the great assembly.
 I will fulfill my vows before those who fear Him.
 27 (26) Let the poor eat and be satisfied.
 Let them who seek after Him praise *ADONAI*.
 May your hearts live forever!
 28 (27) All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to *ADONAI*.
 All the families of the nations will bow down before You.
 29 (28) For the kingdom belongs to *ADONAI*,
 and He rules over the nations.
 30 (29) All the rich of the earth will feast and worship.
 Everyone who goes down to the dust will kneel before Him—
 even the one who could not keep his own soul alive.
 31 (30) His posterity will serve him, telling
 the next generation about my Lord.
 32 (31) They will come and declare His righteousness
 to a people yet to be born—
 because He has done it!

ADONAI -Roeh

23 (0) A psalm of David.
 (1) *ADONAI* is my shepherd, I shall not want.
 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
 He leads me beside still waters.
 3 He restores my soul.
 He guides me in paths of righteousness
 for His Name's sake.
 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
 I will fear no evil, for You are with me:
 Your rod and Your staff comfort me.
 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
 You have anointed my head with oil, my cup overflows.
 6 Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life,
 and I will dwell in the House of *ADONAI* forever.

The King of Glory

24 (0) A psalm of David.
 (1) The earth is *ADONAI*'s and all that fills it— †††
 the world, and those dwelling on it.
 2 For He founded it upon the seas,
 and established it upon the rivers.
 3 Who may go up on the mountain of *ADONAI*?
 Who may stand in His holy place?
 4 One with clean hands and a pure heart,
 who has not lifted his soul in vain,
 nor sworn deceitfully.

††† cf. Deut. 10:24; Ps. 89:11; 1 Cor. 10:26.

⁵ He will receive a blessing from *ADONAI*,
 righteousness from God his salvation.
⁶ Such is the generation seeking Him,
 seeking Your face, even Jacob! *Selah*
⁷ Lift up your heads, O gates,
 and be lifted up, you everlasting doors:
 that the King of glory may come in.
⁸ "Who is this King of glory?"
ADONAI strong and mighty,
ADONAI mighty in battle!
⁹ Lift up your heads, O gates,
 and lift them up, you everlasting doors:
 that the King of glory may come in.
¹⁰ "Who is this King of glory?"
ADONAI - Tzva'ot —He is the King of glory! *Selah*

Teach Me Your Paths

25 (0) Of David.
 (1) To You, *ADONAI*, I lift up my soul.
² O my God, in You I trust,
 so I will not be ashamed,
 and my enemies will not gloat over me.
³ Surely no one who waits for You will be ashamed.
 But the treacherous without cause will be ashamed.
⁴ Show me Your ways, *ADONAI*.
 Teach me Your paths.
⁵ Guide me in Your truth, and teach me,
 for You are God, my salvation,
 for You I wait all day.
⁶ Remember, *ADONAI*,
 Your compassions and Your mercies—
 for they are from eternity.
⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my rebel-
 lion.
 According to Your mercy remember me,
 for the sake of Your goodness, *ADONAI*.
⁸ Good and upright is *ADONAI*.
 Therefore, He directs sinners in the way.
⁹ He guides the humble in what is right,
 and teaches the humble His way.
¹⁰ All *ADONAI*'s ways are lovingkindness
 and truth
 to those who keep His covenant and His testi-
 monies.
¹¹ For Your Name's sake, *ADONAI*,
 pardon my guilt, for it is great.
¹² Who is this man who fears *ADONAI*?
 He will instruct him in the way he should choose.
¹³ His soul abides in goodness,
 and his offspring will inherit the land.
¹⁴ The secret of *ADONAI* is for those who fear Him.
 He makes His covenant known to them.
¹⁵ My eyes are always looking to *ADONAI*,
 for He will pull my feet out of the net.
¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me,
 for I am lonely and afflicted.
¹⁷ The troubles of my heart increase.
 Bring me out of my distress.

¹⁸ See my affliction and my suffering,
 and take away all my sins.
¹⁹ See my enemies, how many they are—
 they hate me with violent hatred.
²⁰ Guard my soul and deliver me.
 Let me not be ashamed, for I take refuge in You.
²¹ May integrity and uprightness protect me—
 for I wait for You.
²² Redeem Israel, O God,
 from all their troubles.

Walking with Integrity

26 (0) Of David.
 (1) Vindicate me, *ADONAI*,
 for I have walked in my integrity,
 and trusted in *ADONAI* without wavering.
² Probe me, *ADONAI*, and test me,
 refine my mind and my heart.
³ For Your love is before my eyes
 and I have walked in Your truth.
⁴ I have not sat with men of falsehood,
 nor do I consort with hypocrites.
⁵ I detest the company of evildoers,
 and do not sit with the wicked.
⁶ I will wash my hands in innocence,
 so I can walk around Your altar, *ADONAI*,
⁷ hearing the voice of thanksgiving
 while proclaiming all Your wonders.
⁸ *ADONAI*, I love the House where You live,
 the place where Your glory dwells.
⁹ Do not take my soul away with sinners,
 nor my life with people of bloodshed—
¹⁰ in whose hands are wicked schemes,
 whose right hand is full of bribes.
¹¹ But I—I will walk in my integrity.
 Redeem me and be gracious to me.
¹² My feet stand on level ground.
 In congregations I will bless *ADONAI*.

Let Your Heart Take Courage

27 (0) Of David.
 (1) *ADONAI* is my light and my salvation:
 whom should I fear?
ADONAI is the stronghold of my life:
 whom should I dread?
² When evildoers approached me to devour my flesh
 —my adversaries and my foes—they stumbled and
 fell.
³ Though an army camp besieges me, my heart will
 not fear.
 Though war breaks out against me, even then will I
 be confident.
⁴ One thing have I asked of *ADONAI*,
 that will I seek:
 to dwell in the House of *ADONAI*
 all the days of my life,
 to behold the beauty of *ADONAI*,

and to meditate in His Temple.
⁵ For in the day of trouble He will hide me in His *sukkah*,
 conceal me in the shelter of His tent,
 and set me high upon a rock.
⁶ Then will my head be high above my enemies
 around me.
 In His Tabernacle I will offer sacrifices with shouts of
 joy.
 I will sing, yes, sing praises to *ADONAI*.
⁷ Hear, *ADONAI*, when I call with my voice,
 be gracious to me and answer me.
⁸ To You my heart says: "Seek My face."
 Your face, *ADONAI*, I seek.
⁹ Do not hide Your face from me.
 Do not turn Your servant away in anger.
 You have been my help.
 Do not abandon me or forsake me,
 O God my salvation.
¹⁰ Though my father and my mother
 forsake me, *ADONAI* will take me in.
¹¹ Teach me Your way, *ADONAI*,
 and lead me on a level path—
 because of my enemies.
¹² Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes.
 For false witnesses rise up against me,
 breathing out violence.
¹³ Surely I trust that I will see the goodness
 of *ADONAI* in the land of the living.
¹⁴ Wait for *ADONAI*.
 Be strong, let your heart take courage,
 and wait for *ADONAI*.

Hoshia-na!

28 (0) Of David.
 (1) To You, *ADONAI*, I call—
 my Rock, do not be deaf to me.
 If You were silent to me,
 I would become like those going down to the Pit.
² Hear the sound of my pleas,
 when I cry to You for help,
 when I lift up my hands toward Your holy Sanctuary.
³ Do not drag me away with the wicked and with do-
 ers of iniquity,
 who speak peace with their neighbors,
 while evil is in their hearts.
⁴ Repay them for their deeds, their evil acts.
 Repay them for the deeds of their hands.
 Bring back on them what they deserve.
⁵ Since they show no regard for the deeds of *ADONAI*
 nor the work of His hands,
 He will tear them down
 and never build them up.
⁶ Blessed be *ADONAI*, because He has heard
 the sound of my supplications.
⁷ *ADONAI* is my strength and my shield. †
 My heart trusts in Him, and I was helped.

† cf. Eph. 6:16.

Therefore, my heart leaps for joy,
 and I will praise Him with my song.
⁸ *ADONAI* is their strength—
 a stronghold of salvation for His anointed.
⁹ Save Your people, bless Your inheritance,
 shepherd them and carry them forever.

God Thunders throughout Creation

29 (0) A psalm of David.
 (1) Ascribe to *ADONAI*, O sons of God,
 ascribe to *ADONAI* glory and strength.
² Ascribe to *ADONAI* the glory of His Name.
 Bow down to *ADONAI* in the beauty of holiness.
³ The voice of *ADONAI* is over the waters.
 The God of glory thunders—
ADONAI is over mighty waters.
⁴ The voice of *ADONAI* is powerful.
 The voice of *ADONAI* is full of majesty.
⁵ The voice of *ADONAI* breaks the cedars.
 Yes, *ADONAI* shatters cedars of Lebanon.
⁶ He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
 Sirion like a young wild ox.
⁷ The voice of *ADONAI* hews out flames of fire.
⁸ The voice of *ADONAI* shakes the desert.
ADONAI shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
⁹ The voice of *ADONAI* makes the deer writhe in birth
 and strips forests bare,
 and in His Temple all are saying, "Glory!"
¹⁰ *ADONAI* sits enthroned over the flood.
 Yes, *ADONAI* sits as King forever.
¹¹ *ADONAI* gives strength to His people.
ADONAI blesses His people with *shalom*.

Joy Comes in the Morning

30 (0) A psalm, a song for the dedication of the
 Temple, of David.
² (1) I will exalt You, *ADONAI*,
 for You have lifted me up,
 and did not let my enemies gloat over me.
³ (2) *ADONAI* my God, I cried to You for help,
 and You healed me.
⁴ (3) *ADONAI*, You brought my soul up from *Sheol*.
 You kept me alive, so I would not go down to the Pit.
⁵ (4) Sing praise to *ADONAI*, His faithful ones,
 and praise His holy name.
⁶ (5) For His anger lasts for only a moment,
 His favor is for a lifetime.
 Weeping may stay for the night,
 but joy comes in the morning.
⁷ (6) When I felt secure, I said:
 "I will never be shaken."
⁸ (7) *ADONAI*, in Your favor
 You made my mountain stand strong.
 When You hid Your face,
 I was terrified.
⁹ (8) To You, *ADONAI*, I called,
 and to my Lord I made my plea:

¹⁰ (9) "What gain is there in my blood,
in my going down to the Pit?
Will the dust praise You?
Will it declare Your truth?"
¹¹ (10) Hear, *ADONAI*, and be gracious to me.
ADONAI, be my help."
¹² (11) You turned my mourning into dancing.
You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.
¹³ (12) So my glory will sing to You and not be silent.
ADONAI my God, I will praise You forever.

Refuge, *Sukkah*, Shelter

31 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
² (1) In You, *ADONAI*, have I taken refuge:
Let me never be put to shame.
In Your righteousness, deliver me.
³ (2) Turn Your ear to me, rescue me quickly.
Be a rock of refuge for me, a stronghold for my deliverance.
⁴ (3) Since You are my rock and my fortress,
You lead me and guide me for Your Name's sake.
⁵ (4) Free me from the net they hid for me,
for You are my refuge.
⁶ (5) Into Your hand I commit my spirit. †
You have redeemed me, *ADONAI*, God of truth.
⁷ (6) I detest those who continue to watch worthless idols,
but I trust in *ADONAI*.
⁸ (7) I will be glad and rejoice in Your lovingkindness,
for You saw my affliction.
You knew the troubles of my soul.
⁹ (8) You did not hand me over to the enemy.
You set my feet in a wide-open place.
¹⁰ (9) Be gracious to me, *ADONAI*,
for I am in distress.
My eyes waste away with grief,
my soul and my body as well.
¹¹ (10) For my life is consumed in sorrow
and my years in sighing.
My strength fails because of my anguish
and my bones waste away.
¹² (11) Because of all my adversaries
I am the contempt of my neighbors
and a dread to my acquaintances.
Seeing me on the street, they flee from me.
¹³ (12) I am as forgotten as a dead man.
I have become like a broken vessel.
¹⁴ (13) For I have heard the whispering of many.
There is terror on every side
as they conspire against me
and plot to take my life.
¹⁵ (14) But I have trusted in You, *ADONAI*.
I said: "You are my God."
¹⁶ (15) My times are in Your hands.
Deliver me from the hands of my foes and from those
who pursue me.
¹⁷ (16) Make Your face shine on Your servant.

† cf. Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59.

Save me in Your lovingkindness.
¹⁸ (17) *ADONAI*, let me not be ashamed,
for I have called upon You.
Let the wicked be ashamed—
let them be silent in *Sheol*.
¹⁹ (18) Let the lying lips be mute.
For they speak arrogantly against the righteous,
with pride and contempt.
²⁰ (19) How great is Your goodness,
which You have stored up for those who fear You,
which You have given to those who take refuge in You,
before the children of men.
²¹ (20) In the shelter of Your presence
You hide them from people's plots.
You conceal them in a *sukkah*
from the strife of tongues.
²² (21) Blessed be *ADONAI*,
for He has shown me His wonderful love
in a besieged city.
²³ (22) I said in my alarm,
"I have been cut off from Your sight!"
But You heard the sound of my pleas
when I cried out to You.
²⁴ (23) Love *ADONAI*, all His *kedoshim*!
ADONAI preserves all the faithful,
but the proud He pays back in full.
²⁵ (24) *Chazak*! Let your heart take courage, ††
all you who wait for *ADONAI*.

Confess, Return and Learn

32 (0) Of David, a contemplative song.
⁽¹⁾ Blessed is the one whose transgression is
forgiven,
whose sin is pardoned.
² Blessed is the one whose guilt *ADONAI* does not
count,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit. †
³ When I kept silent,
my bones became brittle
through my groaning all day long.
⁴ For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me.
My strength was drained as in the droughts of summer.
Selah
⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to You
and did not hide my iniquity. I said:
"I confess my transgressions to *ADONAI*,"
and You forgave the guilt of my sin. ††
Selah
⁶ So let everyone who is godly pray to You
in a time when You may be found.
When great floodwaters rise,
they will not reach him.
⁷ You are my hiding place—
You will protect me from distress.

†† cf. 1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10. † cf. Rom. 4:7-8. †† cf. 1 John 1:9.

You surround me with songs of deliverance. *Selah*
 8 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

I will give counsel—My eye is on you.

9 Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding, and must be held in with bit and bridle or they will not come to you."

10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but lovingkindness surrounds the one who trusts in *ADONAI*.

11 Be glad in *ADONAI* and rejoice, you righteous, and shout for joy, all who are upright in heart.

All Creation Praise the Creator

33 Sing for joy to *ADONAI*, you righteous. Praise is fitting for the upright.

2 Praise *ADONAI* with the harp.

Sing praises to Him with a ten string lyre.

3 Sing to Him a new song! †

Play skillfully amid shouts of joy.

4 For the word of *ADONAI* is upright and all His work is done in faithfulness.

5 He loves righteousness and justice.

The earth is full of the love of *ADONAI*.

6 By *ADONAI*'s word were the heavens made, and all their host by the breath of His mouth.

7 He gathers the waters of the sea together in a heap. He lays up deep waters in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear *ADONAI*.

Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

9 For He spoke, and it came to be.

He commanded, and it stood firm.

10 *ADONAI* foils the purpose of the nations.

He thwarts the plans of the peoples.

11 The plan of *ADONAI* stands forever, the purposes of His heart from generation to generation.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is *ADONAI*, the people He chose for His own inheritance.

13 *ADONAI* looks down from heaven.

He observes all humanity.

14 From His dwelling place He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth—

15 He who fashions the hearts of all, who discerns all their deeds.

16 No king is saved by his great army, no warrior is delivered by great strength.

17 A horse is a false hope for victory, nor can its great strength save.

18 Behold, the eyes of *ADONAI* are on those who fear Him,

waiting for His love,

19 to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

20 Our soul waits for *ADONAI*—

He is our help and our shield.

21 Our heart rejoices in Him,

because we trusted in His holy Name.

22 Let Your lovingkindness, *ADONAI*, be upon us, as we have waited for You.

Taste and See

34 (0) Of David, when he feigned insanity before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left.

2 (1) I will bless *ADONAI* at all times.

His praise is continually in my mouth.

3 (2) My soul boasts in *ADONAI*.

The humble ones hear of it and rejoice.

4 (3) Magnify *ADONAI* with me

and let us exalt His Name together.

5 (4) I sought *ADONAI*, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.

6 (5) They who looked to Him were radiant, and their faces will never be ashamed.

7 (6) This poor man cried, and *ADONAI* heard, and saved him out of all his troubles.

8 (7) The angel of *ADONAI* encamps around those who fear Him,

and delivers them.

9 (8) Taste and see how good *ADONAI* is.

Blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.

10 (9) Fear *ADONAI*, His *kedoshim*, for those who fear Him lack nothing.

11 (10) Young lions may lack, and go hungry, but those who seek *ADONAI* want for no good thing.

12 (11) Come, children, listen to me:

I will teach you the fear of *ADONAI*.

13 (12) Who is the one who delights in life, and loves to see good days?

14 (13) Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking treachery.

15 (14) Depart from evil and do good.

Seek *shalom* and pursue it. ††

16 (15) The eyes of *ADONAI* are on the righteous, and His ears are attentive to their cry.

17 (16) The face of *ADONAI* is against evildoers, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

18 (17) The righteous cry out and *ADONAI* hears, and delivers them from all their troubles.

19 (18) *ADONAI* is close to the brokenhearted, and saves those crushed in spirit.

20 (19) Many are the distresses of the righteous, but *ADONAI* delivers him out of them all.

21 (20) He keeps all his bones— not one of them is broken. ‡

22 (21) Evil kills the wicked—

those who hate the righteous will be held guilty.

23 (22) *ADONAI* redeems the soul of His servants—no one who takes refuge in Him will be held guilty.

† cf. Rev. 5:9.

†† cf. 1 Pet. 3:10-12. ‡ cf. John 19:33-36.

Justice for the Oppressed

35 (0) A psalm of David.
 (1) *ADONAI*, oppose those who oppose me.
 Fight those who fight me.
 2 Take hold of shield and buckler,
 and rise up to my help.
 3 Draw out also a spear and battle-axe.
 Stop those who pursue me.
 Say to my soul: "I am your salvation."
 4 May those who seek my life
 be ashamed and disgraced.
 May they be turned back and humiliated
 —those who plot evil against me.
 5 May they be like chaff before the wind,
 with the angel of *ADONAI* driving them off.
 6 May their way be dark and slippery,
 with the angel of *ADONAI* pursuing them.
 7 For without cause they hid their net for me,
 and without cause they dug a pit for my soul.
 8 Let ruin come upon him by surprise.
 Let the net he hid entangle himself
 —into that same pit let him fall.
 9 Then my soul will rejoice in *ADONAI*
 and delight in His salvation.
 10 All my bones will say:
 " *ADONAI*, who is like You,
 rescuing the poor from one too strong for him,
 the poor and needy from one who robs him?"
 11 Violent witnesses rise up.
 They question me about things I know nothing
 about.
 12 They repay me evil for good—
 my soul is forlorn.
 13 But as for me, when they were sick,
 my clothing was sackcloth.
 I afflicted my soul with fasting,
 my prayer kept returning to my heart.
 14 I went about mourning as though for my own
 friend or brother.
 I bowed down dressed in black as though for my own
 mother.
 15 But at my stumbling they gathered in glee.
 Wretches gathered against me whom I did not know,
 tearing at me without ceasing.
 16 They mocked profanely, as if at a feast,
 they gnashed at me with their teeth.
 17 My Lord, how long will You look on?
 Rescue my soul from their ravages—
 my solitary existence from the lions.
 18 I praise You in the great assembly,
 acclaiming You among a throng of people.
 19 Do not let my deceitful enemies gloat over me with-
 out cause,
 nor let those who hate me for nothing wink an eye. †
 20 For they never speak *shalom*,

but devise deceitful words against the quiet ones in
 the land.

21 Yes, they open their mouth wide against me, say-
 ing:

"Aha! Aha! Our own eyes have seen it!"

22 You have seen it, *ADONAI* —be not silent!
ADONAI, be not far from me.

23 Arise, awaken to my defense,
 to my cause—my God and my Lord!

24 Vindicate me, *ADONAI* my God,
 according to Your justice,
 and do not let them gloat over me.

25 Don't let them say in their heart:
 "Aha! Just what we wanted!"

Don't let them say:

"We swallowed him up!"

26 May they be ashamed and humiliated,
 those who rejoice over my misery.

May they who exalt themselves over me
 be clothed with shame and disgrace.

27 May they shout for joy and be glad,
 those who delight in my righteous cause.

May they always say:

"Exalted be *ADONAI*, who delights in His servant's
shalom."

28 Then my tongue will declare aloud
 Your justice and Your praises all day.

With God Is the Fountain of Life

36 (0) For the music director, of David the servant
 of *ADONAI*.
 2 (1) An oracle of Transgression—within my heart, to
 the wicked one:
 "There is no fear of God before his eyes. ††
 3 (2) For he flatters himself in his own eyes,
 too much to notice his iniquity—or hate it.
 4 (3) (3) His mouth's words are iniquity and deceit.
 He has ceased to be wise and do good.
 5 (4) Even on his bed he plans sin.
 He puts himself on a path that is no good, never re-
 fusing evil."
 6 (5) Your love, *ADONAI*, is in the heavens,
 Your faithfulness up to the skies.
 7 (6) Your righteousness is like the mountains of God.
 Your judgments are like the great deep.
 You preserve man and beast, *ADONAI*.
 8 (7) How precious is Your love, O God!
 The children of men find refuge in the shadow of
 Your wings.
 9 (8) They drink their fill from the abundance of Your
 House.
 You give them drink from the river of Your delights.
 10 (9) For with You is the fountain of life—
 in Your light we see light.
 11 (10) Continue Your lovingkindness to those who
 know You,
 and Your justice to the upright in heart.

† cf. John 15:25.

†† cf. Rom. 3:18.

¹² (11) May the foot of pride never tread on me,
nor the hand of the wicked drive me away.

¹³ (12) There the evildoers lie fallen—
thrown down, not able to rise!

Inheritance of the *Kedoshim*

37 (0) Of David.

(1) Do not fret because of evildoers,
nor be envious of them who do wrong.
² For like the grass they soon wither
and fade like a green herb.
³ Trust in *ADONAI* and do good.
Dwell in the land, feed on faithfulness.
⁴ Delight yourself in *ADONAI*,
and He will give you the requests of your heart.
⁵ Commit your way to *ADONAI*.
Trust in Him and He will do it.
⁶ He will bring out your vindication as light,
and your cause will shine as noonday.
⁷ Be still before *ADONAI* and wait patiently for Him.
Do not fret over one prospering in his way,
over one carrying out wicked schemes.
⁸ Put away anger and turn from wrath.
Do not fret—it only leads to doing evil.
⁹ For evildoers will be cut off,
but those who wait for *ADONAI*—
they will inherit the land.
¹⁰ Yet a little while,
and the wicked will be no more.
Yes, you will look at his place,
but he will not be there.
¹¹ But the meek will inherit the land,
and delight in abundant *shalom*.
¹² The wicked plots against the righteous
and gnashes at him with his teeth.
¹³ The Lord laughs at him—
for He sees his day is coming.
¹⁴ The wicked have unsheathed their swords and
have bent their bows
to bring down the poor and needy,
to slay those whose conduct is upright.
¹⁵ Their swords will pierce their own hearts,
and their bows will be broken.
¹⁶ Better a little that the righteous have
than the wealth of many wicked.
¹⁷ For the arms of the wicked will be broken,
while *ADONAI* upholds the righteous.
¹⁸ *ADONAI* knows the days of the blameless—
their inheritance endures forever.
¹⁹ They will not be ashamed in an evil time
and in days of famine they will be satisfied.
²⁰ For the wicked will perish,
and the enemies of *ADONAI* will be like the beauty of
the fields—
they will vanish—vanish like smoke.
²¹ The wicked borrows and does not repay,
but the righteous is a gracious giver.
²² For His blessed ones inherit the land.

But those He curses will be cut off.

²³ From *ADONAI* a man's steps are made firm,
when He delights in his way.

²⁴ Though he stumble,
he will not fall headlong,
for *ADONAI* is holding his hand.

²⁵ I was young and now I am old,
yet I have never seen the righteous one forsaken,
nor his children begging for bread.

²⁶ All day long he is gracious and lends.
So his offspring will be a blessing.

²⁷ Turn from evil and do good,
so you may live forever.

²⁸ For *ADONAI* loves justice
and does not abandon His godly ones.

They will be preserved forever,
but the seed of the wicked will be cut off.

²⁹ The righteous will inherit the land
and dwell in it forever.

³⁰ The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom
and his tongue speaks justice.

³¹ The *Torah* of his God is in his heart.
His steps do not slip.

³² The wicked lies in wait for the righteous,
seeking to slay him.

³³ But *ADONAI* will not leave him in his hand,
or let him be condemned when judged.

³⁴ Wait for *ADONAI* and keep His way,
and He will exalt you to inherit the land.
When the wicked are cut off, you will see it.

³⁵ I have seen a wicked, ruthless man
flourishing like a leafy tree in native soil.

³⁶ But once he passed by, he was no more.
Though I looked for him, he could not be found.

³⁷ Notice the man of integrity and watch the up-
right—
for the man of *shalom* has a future.

³⁸ But transgressors will be destroyed altogether.
The future of the wicked will be cut off.

³⁹ Yet the salvation of the righteous is from *ADONAI*.
He is their stronghold in time of trouble.

⁴⁰ *ADONAI* helps them and delivers them.
He rescues them from the wicked and saves them—
because they take refuge in Him.

A Burden Too Heavy for Me

38 (0) A psalm of David, for a memorial.

² (1) *ADONAI*, do not rebuke me in Your anger
or discipline me in Your wrath.

³ (2) For Your arrows have sunk deep into me
and Your hand has pressed down on me.

⁴ (3) There is no health in my flesh because of Your
indignation.

There is no wholeness in my bones because of my
sin.

⁵ (4) For my iniquities are on my head—
like a burden too heavy for me.

⁶ (5) My wounds are foul and festering

because of my foolishness.
⁷ (6) I am bent over, bowed down greatly.
 All day I walk about in mourning.
⁸ (7) For my heart is filled with burning pain,
 and there is no health in my body.
⁹ (8) I am numb and utterly crushed.
 I groan because of anguish in my heart.
¹⁰ (9) My Lord, all my longing is before You,
 and my sighing is not hidden from You.
¹¹ (10) My heart pounds, my strength fails me.
 The light of my eyes—also, not with me.
¹² (11) My friends and my companions stay away
 from my wound,
 and my kinsmen stand far off.
¹³ (12) They who seek my life set traps.
 Those who seek my hurt threaten destruction, utter-
 ing lies all day.
¹⁴ (13) But I, like someone deaf, hear nothing,
 like a mute, not opening his mouth.
¹⁵ (14) Yes, I am like one who cannot hear,
 whose mouth has no arguments.
¹⁶ (15) But I wait for You, *ADONAI*—
 You will answer, O Lord my God.
¹⁷ (16) For I said: “Don’t let them gloat over me
 or exalt themselves over me, when my foot slips.”
¹⁸ (17) For I am about to fall,
 and my pain is before me constantly.
¹⁹ (18) So I confess my guilt.
 I am troubled because of my sin.
²⁰ (19) My lively enemies are numerous.
 Many hate me wrongfully.
²¹ (20) Those who repay evil for good oppose me
 because I pursue what is good.
²² (21) Do not forsake me, *ADONAI*.
 O my God, be not far from me.
²³ (22) Hurry to my aid, my Lord, my salvation.

Make Me Know the Number of My Days

39 (0) For the music director, for Jeduthun, a
 psalm of David.
² (1) I said:
 “I will guard my ways, so I will not sin with my
 tongue.
 I will muzzle my mouth while the wicked are before
 me.”
³ (2) So I became utterly speechless,
 kept silent even from good,
 but my anguish was stirred up.
⁴ (3) My heart was hot within me,
 while I was musing, the fire burned.
 Then I spoke with my tongue:
⁵ (4) “Let me know, *ADONAI*, my end
 and what the number of my days is.
 Let me know how short-lived I am.
⁶ (5) Behold, You made my days mere handbreadths,
 and my lifetime as nothing before You.
 Surely all humanity is but vapor. *Selah*
⁷ (6) Everyone goes about as a mere phantom.

Surely they are making an uproar in vain, heaping up
 stuff—
 yet not knowing who will gather it. †
⁸ (7) And now, my Lord, what do I wait for?
 My hope is in You.
⁹ (8) Deliver me from all my transgressions.
 Do not make me the scorn of a fool.
¹⁰ (9) I am speechless, not opening my mouth
 —for You have done it.
¹¹ (10) Remove Your scourge from me.
 I perish by the blow of Your hand.
¹² (11) With rebukes You chasten one for iniquity
 and You consume like a moth what he finds pleasure
 in.
 Surely all humanity is but a vapor. *Selah*
¹³ (12) Hear my prayer, *ADONAI*,
 and listen to my cry—
 do not keep silent at my tears.
 For with You I am an outsider, a sojourner,
 as all my fathers were.
¹⁴ (13) Turn your gaze away from me, so I may smile
 again,
 before I go, and am no more.”

Written about Me in the Scroll

40 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
² (1) I waited patiently for *ADONAI*.
 He bent down to me and heard my cry.
³ (2) He brought me up out of the slimy pit, out of the
 mud and mire.
 Then He set my feet on a rock.
 He made my steps firm.
⁴ (3) He put a new song in my mouth—
 a hymn of praise to our God.
 Many will see and fear,
 and trust in *ADONAI*.
⁵ (4) Blessed is the one
 who put his confidence in *ADONAI*,
 who has not turned to the arrogant,
 nor to those who fall into falsehood.
⁶ (5) Many things You have done, *ADONAI* my God
 —Your plans for us are wonderful—
 there is none to be compared to You!
 If I were to speak and tell of them,
 they would be too many to count!
⁷ (6) Sacrifice and offering You did not desire
 —my ears You have opened—
 burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.
⁸ (7) Then I said: “Here I am, I have come—
 in the scroll of a book it is written about me.
⁹ (8) I delight to do Your will, O my God.
 Yes, Your *Torah* is within my being.”
¹⁰ (9) I proclaim good news of righteousness in the
 great assembly.
 Behold, I am not shutting my lips—
ADONAI, You know!

† cf. Luke 12:20.

¹¹ (10) I did not hide Your righteousness within my heart.

Rather I declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation.

I did not conceal Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great assembly.

¹² (11) *ADONAI*, do not withhold Your compassions from me.

Let Your mercy and Your truth always protect me.

¹³ (12) For evils beyond number surround me, my sins have overtaken me—I cannot see—

they are more than the hairs of my head—and my heart fails me.

¹⁴ (13) *ADONAI*, please deliver me!

ADONAI, come quickly to help me!

¹⁵ (14) Let those who seek my life to sweep it away be put to shame and humiliated.

Let those who wish me evil be turned back in disgrace.

¹⁶ (15) Let those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!"

be appalled over their own shame.

¹⁷ (16) Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You.

Let those who love Your salvation continually say: "*ADONAI* be magnified!"

¹⁸ (17) But I—I am poor and needy—yet my Lord is mindful of me.

You are my help and my deliverer—O my God, do not delay!

Even My Close Friend

41 (0) For the music director: a psalm of David.

² (1) Blessed is the one who considers the wretched—

ADONAI will deliver him in the evil day.

³ (2) *ADONAI* will protect him and keep him alive. He will be made blessed in the land.

You will not give him over to the desire of his foes.

⁴ (3) *ADONAI* will strengthen him on his sickbed.

May You restore him completely from his bed.

⁵ (4) I said: "*ADONAI*, have mercy on me.

Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."

⁶ (5) My enemies speak evil about me:

"When will he die and his name perish?"

⁷ (6) And if someone of them comes to see me, he speaks falsely.

He stores up evil in his heart, then he goes out and chatters.

⁸ (7) All who hate me whisper together about me. They imagine the worst about me:

⁹ (8) "Something evil was poured into him—he will not get up again from the place where he lies."

¹⁰ (9) Even my own close friend, whom I trusted, who ate my bread,

has lifted up his heel against me. †

¹¹ (10) But You, *ADONAI*, have mercy on me,

and raise me up, so I may repay them.

¹² (11) By this I know that You delight in me: that my enemy does not shout in triumph over me.

¹³ (12) You uphold me in my integrity and set me before Your face forever.

¹⁴ (13) Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

Amen and amen!

My Soul Thirsts for God

42 (0) For the music director, a contemplative song of the sons of Korah.

² (1) As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for You, O God.

³ (2) My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When will I come and appear before God?

⁴ (3) My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all day: "Where is your God?"

⁵ (4) These things I remember as I pour out my soul within me.

For I used to go along with the throng, walking with them to the House of God, with a voice of joy and praise,

a multitude keeping a festival.

⁶ (5) Why are you downcast, O my soul?

Why are you murmuring within me?

Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, for the salvation of His presence.

⁷ (6) My God, my soul is downcast within me!

Therefore, I remember You from the land of Jordan and from the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mitzar.

⁸ (7) Deep calls to deep in the roar of Your waterfalls.

All Your waves and breakers have swept over me.

⁹ (8) By day *ADONAI* commands His love, and at night His song is with me—

a prayer to the God of my life.

¹⁰ (9) I will say to God my Rock:

"Why have You forgotten me?"

Why do I go about mourning, under the oppression of the enemy?"

¹¹ (10) As with a crushing in my bones, my adversaries taunt me,

by saying to me all day, "Where is your God?"

¹² (11) Why are you downcast, O my soul?

Why are you murmuring within me?

Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him,

the salvation of my countenance and my God.

Send Forth Your Light

43 Vindicate me, O God, and champion

my cause against an ungodly nation.

From a deceitful and unjust man, deliver me!

² For You are my God, my stronghold.

Why have You spurned me?

Why do I go about gloomy because of the oppression of the enemy?

† cf. Matt. 26:23; Luke 22:21.

³ Send forth Your light and Your truth—
let them guide me.
Let them bring me to Your holy mountain
and to Your dwelling places.

⁴ Then I will come to the altar of God,
to the God of my exceeding joy,
and praise You upon the harp
—O God, my God.

⁵ Why are You downcast, O my soul?
Why are you murmuring within me?
Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him,
the salvation of my countenance.

Arise, O God of Our Fathers

44 (0) For the music director, a psalm of the sons
of Korah, a contemplative song.

² (1) We have heard with our ears, O God
—our fathers have told us—
of a work You did in their days, in days of old.

³ (2) With Your hand You displaced nations, but You
planted them.

You afflicted peoples, and You drove them out.

⁴ (3) For it was not by their own sword that they took
possession of the land,

nor did their own arm save them.

But it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of
Your face—

for You favored them.

⁵ (4) You are my King, O God—
command victories for Jacob!

⁶ (5) Through You we push back our foes.
Through Your Name we trample those rising up
against us.

⁷ (6) For I do not trust in my bow,
nor can my sword save me.

⁸ (7) For You saved us from our oppressors
and put to shame those who hated us.

⁹ (8) In God we make our boast all day
and Your Name we praise forever. *Selah*

¹⁰ (9) Yet You have spurned and humiliated us,
and no longer go out with our armies.

¹¹ (10) You make us retreat before the enemy.
Those who hate us have plundered us.

¹² (11) You gave us to be devoured like sheep [†]
and have scattered us among the nations.

¹³ (12) You are selling Your people cheaply—
not even getting a great price for them.

¹⁴ (13) You made us a taunt for our neighbors,
a scorn and ridicule for those around us.

¹⁵ (14) You have made us a byword among the na-
tions,
head-wagging among the peoples.

¹⁶ (15) All day my disgrace is before me,
and my face is covered with shame—

¹⁷ (16) because of the sound of taunting and reviling
from the face of a vengeful enemy.

¹⁸ (17) All this came upon us, though we did not for-
get You,

nor were we false to Your covenant.

¹⁹ (18) Our heart did not turn back,
nor did our steps stray from Your path.

²⁰ (19) Yet You crushed us in a place of jackals,
covered us with the shadow of death.

²¹ (20) If we had forgotten the Name of our God
or stretched our hands to a foreign god,

²² (21) would God not have discovered it?
For He knows the secrets of the heart.

²³ (22) But for Your sake we are slain all day.
We are counted as sheep for slaughter. ^{††}

²⁴ (23) Awake! Why do you sleep, my Lord?
Wake up! Do not cast us off forever.

²⁵ (24) Why do You hide Your face
and forget our misery and oppression?

²⁶ (25) For our soul sinks down to the dust.
Our belly cleaves to the earth.

²⁷ (26) Arise, be our help,
and redeem us
for Your mercy's sake.

A Royal Wedding Song

45 (0) For the music director, according to "Lilies."
Of the sons of Korah, a contemplative song, a
love song.

² (1) My heart is stirred with a good word.

I speak my verses to the king.

My tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

³ (2) You are the most handsome of the sons of men.
Grace pours from your lips.

Therefore, God has blessed you forever.

⁴ (3) Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one,
in your splendor and your majesty.

⁵ (4) In your majesty ride victoriously,
on behalf of truth, meekness, and justice.

Let your right hand display awesome things.

⁶ (5) Your arrows are sharp.

Peoples fall beneath you—
into the heart of the king's enemies.

⁷ (6) Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
and a scepter of justice is the scepter of Your king-
dom.

⁸ (7) You have loved righteousness and hated wicked-
ness.

Therefore, God, your God, anointed you with the oil
of gladness above your companions. [‡]

⁹ (8) All your robes have myrrh, aloes, and cassia.
From ivory palaces, stringed instruments
make you glad.

¹⁰ (9) Kings' daughters are among your honored
women.

At your right hand stands the queen
in gold of Ophir.

¹¹ (10) "Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your
ear.

[†] cf. Rom. 8:36.

^{††} cf. Rom. 8:36. [‡] cf. Heb. 1:8-9.

Forget your people and your father's house.
 12 (11) Then the king will desire your beauty.
 Honor him, for he is your lord.
 13 (12) A daughter of Tyre comes with a gift.
 The richest people will court your favor."
 14 (13) All glorious is the king's daughter within the
 palace—
 her gown is interwoven with gold. †
 15 (14) She will be led to the king in embroidered gar-
 ments.
 Her virgins, her companions following her, are com-
 ing in to you.
 16 (15) They are led in with joy and gladness—
 they enter into the palace of the king.
 17 (16) Your sons will take your fathers' place.
 You will make them princes throughout the land.
 18 (17) I will cause your name to be remembered in
 all generations.
 Therefore, the nations will praise you forever and
 ever.

He Makes Wars Cease

46 (0) For the music director, of the sons of Korah,
 according to Alamothe, a song.
 2 (1) God is our refuge and strength,
 an ever present help in trouble.
 3 (2) Therefore we will not fear,
 though the earth change,
 though the mountains topple into the heart of the
 seas,
 4 (3) though its waters roar and foam,
 though the mountains quake at their swelling. *Selah*
 5 (4) There is a river whose streams make glad the
 city of God—
 the holy dwelling place of *Elyon*. ††
 6 (5) God is in the midst of her, she will not be shak-
 en.
 God will help her when morning dawns.
 7 (6) Nations are in uproar, kingdoms totter,
 He utters His voice, the earth melts!
 8 (7) *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* is with us.
 The God of Jacob is our stronghold. *Selah*
 9 (8) Come, see the works of *ADONAI*,
 who brings devastations on the earth.
 10 (9) He makes wars cease to the end of the earth.
 He breaks the bow and shatters the spear.
 He burns chariots with fire.
 11 (10) "Be still, and know that I am God.
 I am exalted among the nations.
 I am exalted in the earth."
 12 (11) *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* is with us.
 The God of Jacob is our strong tower. *Selah*

In Celebration of God's Reign

47 (0) For the music director, a psalm for the sons
 of Korah.

2 (1) Clap your hands, all you peoples!
 Shout to God with the voice of joy!
 3 (2) For *ADONAI Elyon* is awesome,
 a great King over all the earth.
 4 (3) He subdues peoples under us,
 and nations under our feet.
 5 (4) He chooses our inheritance for us,
 the glory of Jacob whom He loved. *Selah*
 6 (5) God is gone up amidst shouting,
ADONAI amidst the sound of the *shofar*.
 7 (6) Sing praises to God, sing praises!
 Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
 8 (7) For God is the King of all the earth.
 Sing praises with a skillful song.
 9 (8) God reigns over the nations.
 God sits upon His holy throne.
 10 (9) The princes of the peoples are gathered as a
 people of the God of Abraham.
 For the shields of earth belong to God—
 He is greatly exalted!

Consider Zion's Towers

48 (0) A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah.
 2 (1) Great is *ADONAI*, and greatly to be praised
 in the city of our God—His holy mountain.
 3 (2) A beautiful height—the joy of the whole earth—
 is Mount Zion, on the northern side of the city of the
 great King. ‡
 4 (3) God, in her palaces,
 is known as a stronghold.
 5 (4) For behold, the kings assembled,
 they advanced together.
 6 (5) They saw, then they were astounded,
 they fled in terror.
 7 (6) Trembling seized them there,
 pain like a woman in labor.
 8 (7) With an east wind
 You broke the ships of Tarshish.
 9 (8) As we have heard, so have we seen,
 in the city of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*,
 in the city of our God.
 God will establish her forever. *Selah*
 10 (9) We have meditated on Your lovingkindness, O
 God,
 in the midst of Your Temple.
 11 (10) Like Your Name, O God,
 so is Your praise
 to the ends of the earth.
 Your right hand is full of righteousness.
 12 (11) Mount Zion is glad,
 the daughters of Judah rejoice,
 because of Your judgments.
 13 (12) Walk about Zion, go around her.
 Count her towers.
 14 (13) Consider her ramparts,
 go through her palaces,
 so you may describe it to the next generation.

† cf. Exod. 39:2-3; Rev. 19:7-8. †† cf. Ezek. 47:9, 12; Rev. 22:1-2.

‡ cf. Matt. 5:35.

¹⁵ (14) For this God is our God, forever and ever!
He will guide us to the end.

Rich and Poor Alike

49 (0) For the music director: a psalm of the sons of Korah.
² (1) Hear this, all you people.
Give ear, all you inhabitants of the world,
³ (2) both low and high,
rich and poor together.
⁴ (3) My mouth speaks wisdom,
My heart's meditation is understanding.
⁵ (4) I will turn my ear to a proverb.
I will utter my riddle on the harp:
⁶ (5) Why should I fear in evil days?
when the iniquity of my deceivers surrounds me?
⁷ (6) Or those trusting in their wealth,
boasting about their great riches?
⁸ (7) No man can redeem his brother,
or give to God a ransom for him.
⁹ (8) For the redemption of a soul is costly—
so, one should stop trying forever.
¹⁰ (9) Will he live forever—
and never see the Pit?
¹¹ (10) Surely he must see, even wise men die.
The fool and the brutish will alike perish,
leaving their wealth to others. †
¹² (11) Their inward thought is:
their houses are eternal,
their dwellings for generation after generation.
They name their lands after themselves.
¹³ (12) But the pompous man will not endure—
he is like the beasts that perish.
¹⁴ (13) Such is the way of the self-confident,
and their followers who approve their sayings. *Selah*
¹⁵ (14) Like sheep they are destined for *Sheol*.
Death will be their shepherd
and the upright will rule over them in the morning.
Their image will decay in *Sheol*—
far from its lofty place.
¹⁶ (15) But God redeems my soul from the power of
Sheol—
for He receives me. *Selah*
¹⁷ (16) Do not be afraid when a man gets rich,
when his house's splendor increases.
¹⁸ (17) For when he dies he takes nothing away.
His splendor will not follow him down.
¹⁹ (18) Though during his life he congratulates him-
self,
and men praise you when you do well for yourself—
²⁰ (19) he will still join his fathers' company,
who will never see the light.
²¹ (20) A pompous man, without understanding—
he is like the beasts that perish.

A Sacrifice of Thanks

50 (0) A psalm of Asaph.
(1) God, *Elohim ADONAI* has spoken and sum-
moned the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
² Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.
³ Our God comes, and does not keep silent.
A fire is devouring before Him,
and it storms around Him mightily.
⁴ He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, to judge His people:
⁵ "Gather My *kedoshim* to Me,
who cut a covenant with Me with a sacrifice."
⁶ The heavens declare His righteousness,
for God Himself is Judge. *Selah*
⁷ "Hear, My people, and I will speak,
O Israel, and I will testify against you:
I am God, your God.
⁸ I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices,
for your burnt offerings are continually before Me.
⁹ I have no need of a bull from your house
nor goats from your pens.
¹⁰ For every beast of the forest is Mine,
and the cattle on a thousand hills.
¹¹ I know every bird of the mountains.
Everything moving in the field is Mine.
¹² If I were hungry, I would not tell you—
for the world is Mine and all it contains!
¹³ Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?
¹⁴ Offer God a sacrifice of thank offerings,
then fulfill your vows to *Elyon*.
¹⁵ Call upon Me in the day of trouble.
When I rescue you, you will honor Me."
¹⁶ But to the wicked, God says:
"What are you doing, reciting My laws
and taking My covenant in your mouth?
¹⁷ For you hate discipline,
and you cast My words behind you.
¹⁸ When you see a thief, you are pleased with him,
and your portion is with adulterers.
¹⁹ You have unleashed your mouth for evil
and harnessed your tongue for deceit.
²⁰ You sit, speaking against your brother,
slandering your own mother's son.
²¹ These things you have done—should I keep silent?
You thought I was just like you—but I reprove you,
and set the case before your eyes.
²² Now consider this, you who forget God.
Or else I will tear you in pieces with no one to rescue
you.
²³ A sacrifice of praise honors Me,
and to the one who orders his way,
I will show the salvation of God."

† cf. Ps. 39:7(6); Eccl. 2:16-18, 21; Luke 12:20.

Create in Me a Clean Heart

51 (0) For the music director: a psalm of David, ² (0) when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he went to Bathsheba.

³ (1) Be gracious to me, O God,
according to Your mercy.
According to Your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.
⁴ (2) Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
⁵ (3) For I know my transgressions
and my sin is ever before me.
⁶ (4) Against You, You only, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in Your sight,
so that You are just when You speak,
and blameless when You judge.
⁷ (5) Behold, I was born in iniquity and in sin
when my mother conceived me.
⁸ (6) Surely You desire truth in the inner being.
Make me know wisdom inwardly.
⁹ (7) Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean.
Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
¹⁰ (8) Let me hear joy and gladness,
so the bones You crushed may rejoice.
¹¹ (9) Hide Your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
¹² (10) Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
¹³ (11) Do not cast me from Your presence—
take not Your *Ruach ha-Kodesh* from me.
¹⁴ (12) Restore to me the joy of Your salvation
and sustain me with a willing spirit.
¹⁵ (13) Then will I teach transgressors Your ways
and sinners will return to You.
¹⁶ (14) Deliver me from bloodguilt, O God—
God of my salvation.
Then my tongue will sing for joy of Your righteous-
ness.
¹⁷ (15) O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.
¹⁸ (16) For You would not delight in sacrifice, or I
would give it,
nor be pleased by burnt offerings.
¹⁹ (17) The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.
A broken and a contrite heart, O God,
You will not despise.
²⁰ (18) In Your favor do good to Zion.
Build up the walls of Jerusalem.
²¹ (19) Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices
and whole burnt offerings.
Then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

Treacherous Tongue!

52 (0) For the music director: a contemplative
song of David, ² (0) when Doeg the Edomite

came and reported to Saul telling him, "David went to Ahimelech's house."

³ (1) Why do you brag about evil, mighty man?
God's lovingkindness is every day.
⁴ (2) Your tongue plots destruction,
like a sharp razor, working deceit.
⁵ (3) You love evil instead of good,
lying rather than speaking right. *Selah*
⁶ (4) You love only devouring words—
treacherous tongue!
⁷ (5) God will pull you down forever,
and snatch you, rip you out of your tent,
and uproot you from the land of the living. *Selah*
⁸ (6) Then the righteous will see and fear,
and laugh at him:
⁹ (7) "Here is the man who did not make God his
stronghold.
Instead he trusted in his great riches—
and was strong in his evil desire."
¹⁰ (8) But I—I am like an olive tree flourishing in the
House of God.
I trust in God's lovingkindness forever and ever.
¹¹ (9) I will praise You forever for what You have
done.
I will hope in Your Name, for it is good,
in the presence of Your *kedoshim* .

A Fool Denies God

53 (0) For the music director: on Mahalath, a con-
templative song of David.
² (1) The fool says in his heart:
"There is no God."
They are corrupt, commit vile injustice.
There is no one who does good.
³ (2) God looks down from the heavens
on the children of men,
to see if anyone understands,
who seeks after God.
⁴ (3) All have turned aside—
together they have become corrupt.
There is no one who does good—
no, not even one!
⁵ (4) Will the evildoers never learn?
They consume My people as they would eat bread,
and never call upon God.
⁶ (5) There they are in great dread—
where there is nothing to fear.
For God has scattered the bones of those besieging
you.
You have put them to shame,
for God has rejected them.
⁷ (6) Who will give salvation for Israel out of Zion?
When God restores His captive people,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad!

Surely God Is My Helper

54 (0) For the music director, on stringed instruments, a contemplative song of David, ² (0) when the Ziphites came and said to Saul: "Is not David hiding himself among us?"

³ (1) O God, save me by Your Name, vindicate me by Your might.

⁴ (2) O God, hear my prayer, listen to the words of my mouth.

⁵ (3) For strangers have risen up against me. Violent men seek after my soul.

They do not set God before them. *Selah*

⁶ (4) Surely God is my helper.

My Lord is the supporter of my soul.

⁷ (5) Let evil return to my foes.

Silence them with Your truth!

⁸ (6) I will sacrifice a freewill offering to You.

I will praise Your name, *ADONAI*, for it is good.

⁹ (7) For He has delivered me from all trouble, and my eye has gazed upon my enemies.

Betrayal by a Friend

55 (0) For the music director, on stringed instruments, a contemplative song of David.

² (1) Give ear, O God, to my prayer and do not ignore my plea for help.

³ (2) Listen to me and answer me.

I am restless in my complaint and moan—

⁴ (3) because of the voice of the enemy, because of the pressure of the wicked.

For they thrust trouble on me, and in anger bear a grudge against me.

⁵ (4) My heart shudders within me and the terrors of death sweep over me.

⁶ (5) Fear and trembling come upon me and horror has overwhelmed me.

⁷ (6) So I said, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and find rest.

⁸ (7) Surely I would flee far away.

I would stay in the wilderness. *Selah*

⁹ (8) I would hurry to my shelter from the rushing wind of the storm."

¹⁰ (9) Lord, confuse and confound their speech, for I see violence and strife in the city.

¹¹ (10) Day and night they make the rounds on her walls.

Iniquity and mischief are within her.

¹² (1) Ruins are in her midst.

Oppression and deceit never leave her square.

¹³ (12) For if it were an enemy taunting me, I could endure it.

If my foe was exalting himself over me, I could hide from him.

¹⁴ (13) But it is you, a man like me—my companion and my close friend!

¹⁵ (14) Together we enjoyed great fellowship.

We used to walk with the throng in the House of God.

¹⁶ (15) Let desolation come upon them, let them go down alive into *Sheol*—for evil is in their dwelling, among them.

¹⁷ (16) As for me, I will call on God, and *ADONAI* will save me.

¹⁸ (17) Evening, morning and noon, I complain and moan,

then He hears my voice.

¹⁹ (18) He will redeem my soul in *shalom* from the battle against me.

For many are striving with me.

²⁰ (19) God will hear and humble them—yes, the One enthroned of old. *Selah* Nothing changes—they do not fear God.

²¹ (20) My companion put forth his hands against those at peace with him, as he violates his covenant.

²² (21) Smoother than butter was his speech, yet war was in his heart.

His words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.

²³ (22) Cast your burden on *ADONAI*, and He will sustain you. †

He will never let the righteous be shaken.

²⁴ (23) But You, O God, will bring them down to the Pit of destruction.

Bloodthirsty, deceitful men will not live out half their days.

But I—I will trust in You.

In God I Trust

56 (0) For the music director: "A Silent Dove Far Away," a Michtam of David, when the Philistines had seized him in Gath.

² (1) Be gracious to me, O God!

For man has crushed me, fighting all day he oppresses me.

³ (2) My foes trample me all day.

For many are fighting me arrogantly.

⁴ (3) In a day when I am afraid,

I will put my trust in You.

⁵ (4) In God—I keep praising His word—in God I trust, I will not fear.

What can mere flesh do to me?

⁶ (5) All day they twist my words.

All their thoughts are against me for evil.

⁷ (6) They stir up strife; they lie hidden.

They mark my steps, eager to take my soul.

⁸ (7) In spite of such sin, will they escape?

In fierce anger, O God, cast down such people!

⁹ (8) You have recorded my wanderings.

You put my tears in Your bottle.

Are they not in Your book?

¹⁰ (9) Then my enemies will turn back in the day I call.

This I know—that God is for me.

¹¹ (10) In God—I keep praising His word—

† cf. 1 Pet. 5:7.

in *ADONAI*—I keep praising His word—
 12 (11) in God I trust, I will not be afraid.
 What can man do to me?
 13 (12) I am under vows to You, O God.
 I will present thank offerings to You.
 14 (13) For You have delivered my soul from death
 and my feet from stumbling,
 that I may walk before God in the light of life.

Be Exalted over All the Earth

57 (0) For the music director, "Do Not Destroy," a
 Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul, in
 the cave.

2 (1) Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me,
 for in You my soul takes refuge.
 In the shadow of Your wings I take refuge,
 until destruction passes by.
 3 (2) I will cry out to *El Elyon*,
 to God who accomplishes it for me.
 4 (3) He will send from heaven and save me.
 He rebukes the one trampling on me. *Selah*
 God is sending His mercy and His truth.
 5 (4) My soul is in the midst of lions.
 I lie among those breathing fire—
 sons of men whose teeth are spears and arrows,
 whose tongue is a sharp sword.
 6 (5) Be exalted, O God, above the heavens.
 Let Your glory be over all the earth!
 7 (6) They spread a net for my steps,
 my soul is bowed down.
 They have dug a pit before me—
 they fell into it themselves. *Selah*
 8 (7) My heart is steadfast, O God,
 my heart is steadfast.
 I will sing, yes, I will make music.
 9 (8) Awake, my glory! Awake, harp and lyre!
 I will awaken the dawn.
 10 (9) I will praise You, my Lord, among the peoples.
 I will sing praises to You among the nations.
 11 (10) For Your lovingkindness is great up to the
 heavens,
 and Your truth to the skies.
 12 (11) Be exalted, O God, above the heavens.
 Let Your glory be over all the earth!

God Really Judges

58 (0) For the music director: "Do Not Destroy," a
 Michtam of David.
 2 (1) Do you really speak of justice, O "gods"?
 Do you judge with fairness, sons of man?
 3 (2) No, in heart you devise injustice.
 Your hands weigh out violence on earth.
 4 (3) The wicked are strangers from the womb.
 Speaking lies, they go astray from birth.
 5 (4) Their venom is like a serpent's venom,
 like a deaf cobra shutting its ear—
 6 (5) not hearing the voice of charmers,

or a cunning spell binder.
 7 (6) O God, break their teeth in their mouths.
 Tear out the fangs of young lions, *ADONAI*.
 8 (7) Let them flow away like water that runs off.
 When he bends his bow, let the arrows be cut off.
 9 (8) Like a slug melting away as it slithers,
 like a woman's miscarriage,
 may they never see the sun.
 10 (9) Even before your pots can feel a thorn
 —whether alive or ablaze—
 He will sweep the wicked away.
 11 (10) The righteous one will rejoice
 when he beholds vengeance,
 when he washes his feet in the blood of the wicked.
 12 (11) Then men will say:
 "There really is a reward for the righteous.
 There really is a God who judges on earth!"

God Is My Strong Tower

59 (0) For the music director: "Do Not Destroy," a
 Michtam of David, when Saul sent men to watch
 the house to kill him.

2 (1) Deliver me from my enemies, my God!
 Set me on high, away from those who rise up against
 me.
 3 (2) Deliver me from workers of iniquity.
 Rescue me from bloodthirsty men.
 4 (3) For behold, they lie in wait for me.
 Defiant men stir up strife against me—
 not for my transgression or sin, *ADONAI*.
 5 (4) For no guilt of mine, they run and set things up.
 Awake! Help me! Look!
 6 (5) For You are *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot*, the God of Is-
 rael!
 Rouse Yourself to punish all the nations.
 Show no mercy to any iniquitous traitors. *Selah*
 7 (6) They return at evening, snarling like a dog,
 prowling about the city.
 8 (7) See, they are spewing with their mouth
 —swords in their lips—
 "After all, who is listening?"
 9 (8) But You, *ADONAI*, are laughing at them.
 You scoff at all the nations.
 10 (9) O my strength, I watch for You—
 for God is my strong tower.
 11 (10) My God in His lovingkindness will go before
 me.
 God will let me look down on my foes.
 12 (11) Do not slay them, lest my people forget.
 With Your power shake them
 and bring them down, O Lord our shield.
 13 (12) The sin of their mouth is the words of their
 lips.
 So let them be caught in their pride,
 and for uttering a curse and a lie.
 14 (13) Consume them in wrath,
 consume them till they are no more.

Let them know that God rules over Jacob to the ends of the earth. *Selah*

¹⁵ (14) They return at evening, snarling like a dog, prowling about the city.

¹⁶ (15) They wander around for food.

If they are not full, they stay up all night.

¹⁷ (16) But I—I sing of Your strength!

Yes, in the morning I sing aloud of Your lovingkindness.

For You have been my fortress,
a refuge in the day of my trouble.

¹⁸ (17) O my strength, to You I sing praises.

For God is my strong tower—
my God of lovingkindness.

Song of Victory over Edom

60 (0) For the music director, on the “Lily of the Covenant,” a Michtam of David, for teaching, ² (0) when he fought with Aram-Naharaim and with Aram-Zobah, and Joab returned and struck down twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

³ (1) O God, You have spurned us.

You have broken out against us.

You have been angry. Turn back to us!

⁴ (2) You made earth shake; You split it open.

Heal its fractures—for it shudders.

⁵ (3) You made Your people see hardship.

You made us drink wine of staggering.

⁶ (4) To those who fear You,

You gave a banner, to be unfurled before the archers.

Selah

⁷ (5) Save with Your right hand and answer us,
so that Your beloved may be delivered.

⁸ (6) God has spoken in His holiness:

“I will exult!

I will parcel out Shechem and measure off the valley of Succoth.

⁹ (7) Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine,
Ephraim is a helmet for my head,
Judah is my scepter.

¹⁰ (8) Moab is my washbasin,
On Edom I toss my sandal,
Philistia, cry aloud because of me!”

¹¹ (9) Who will bring me into the fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?

¹² (10) Should it not be You, O God—
who spurned us and no longer goes out with our
armies?

¹³ (11) Give us aid against the adversary,
for the help of man is worthless.

¹⁴ (12) With God we will do mighty things,
and He will trample our foes.

Lead Me to the Rock

61 (0) For the music director, on string instrument, of David.

² (1) Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer.

³ (2) From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

⁴ (3) For You have been a refuge for me,
a tower of strength before the enemy.

⁵ (4) Let me dwell in Your tent forever.

Let me take refuge in the shelter of Your wings. *Selah*

⁶ (5) For You have heard my vows, O God.

You have given the inheritance of those who fear
Your Name.

⁷ (6) May You add days to the king's days.

May his years span many generations.

⁸ (7) May he be enthroned before God forever.

Appoint mercy and truth to protect him.

⁹ (8) So I will sing praise to Your Name forever,
to fulfill my vows day after day.

My Rock and My Salvation

62 (0) For the music director, on Jeduthun. A psalm of David.

² (1) My soul, wait in stillness, only for God—
from Him comes my salvation.

³ (2) He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress—I will never be moved.

⁴ (3) How long will all of you assault a man,
to crush him, like a leaning wall,
a fence to be torn down?

⁵ (4) They only plot to topple him from his rank.
Delighting in falsehood, they bless with their mouth,
but inwardly they curse. *Selah*

⁶ (5) My soul, wait in stillness, only for God—
for from Him comes my expectation.

⁷ (6) He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my strong tower—I will not be moved.

⁸ (7) On God, my salvation and my glory is the rock of
my strength.

My refuge is in God.

⁹ (8) Trust in Him at all times, you people.
Pour out your heart in His presence.

God is our refuge. *Selah*

¹⁰ (9) Sons of Adam are a vapor,
sons of man are an illusion.

In balanced scales they go up—
altogether they are less than a breath.

¹¹ (10) Do not trust in extortion,
and do not put vain hope in plunder.

Though these things increase riches,
do not set your heart on them.

¹² (11) Once God has spoken,
twice I have heard this:
might belongs to God.

¹³ (12) Also Yours, O Lord, is lovingkindness.
For You reward a man for his work. †

† cf. Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:6.

You Are My God

63 (0) A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.
 2 (1) O God, You are my God, earnestly I seek You. My soul thirsts for You. My flesh longs for You in a dry and weary land, where there is no water.
 3 (2) So, I looked for You in the Sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory.
 4 (3) Since Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You.
 5 (4) So I will bless You as long as I live. In Your name I lift up my hands. †
 6 (5) My soul is satisfied as with fat and oil, so my mouth praises You with joyful lips.
 7 (6) When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You through the night watches.
 8 (7) For You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy.
 9 (8) My soul clings to You—Your right hand upholds me.
 10 (9) But those who seek my soul to destroy it will go down to the depths of the earth.
 11 (10) They will be gutted by the sword, and become a prey for jackals.
 12 (11) But the king will rejoice in God. All who swear by Him will boast, when the mouth speaking lies is shut.

Protect Me from Conspiracies

64 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
 2 (1) Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint. Protect my life from terror of the enemy.
 3 (2) Hide me from the conspiracy of evildoers, from the tumult of workers of iniquity,
 4 (3) who sharpened their tongue like a sword, and aimed their arrow—bitter words,
 5 (4) to shoot from hiding at the innocent, shooting suddenly at him, with no fear.
 6 (5) They are firming up their evil plan. They talk about setting secret traps. They asked, “Who would see them?”
 7 (6) They are plotting injustices: “We have completed a perfect plot!” A man’s inward part and heart are deep.
 8 (7) But God will shoot them with an arrow—suddenly their wounds will appear.
 9 (8) So their tongue will be their downfall. All who see them will flee away.
 10 (9) Then all men will fear. So they will declare the work of God, and ponder what He has done.
 11 (10) The righteous will be glad in *ADONAI* and take refuge in Him.

† cf. 1 Tim. 2:8.

Let all the upright in heart give glory!

Praise Is Awaiting You in Zion

65 (0) For the music director, a psalm, a song of David.
 2 (1) Praise is awaiting You in Zion, O God, and to You the vow will be fulfilled.
 3 (2) O You who hear prayer, to You all flesh will come.
 4 (3) Records of sins overwhelm me—You will atone for our transgressions.
 5 (4) Blessed is the one You choose and bring near to dwell in Your courts! We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your House—Your holy Temple.
 6 (5) You respond to us in righteousness with awe-inspiring works—O God of our salvation—hope of all ends of the earth and farthest seas,
 7 (6) who establishes mountains by His power, being girded with might,
 8 (7) who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the tumult of the peoples.
 9 (8) Those dwelling in the uttermost parts stand in awe of Your signs. You make morning and evening shout for joy.
 10 (9) You visit the land and make it abundant, greatly enriching it—the stream of God is full of water. You prepare their grain, for so You have prepared the earth.
 11 (10) You drench her furrows, leveling the ridges. You soften her with showers, blessing her growth.
 12 (11) You crown the year with Your goodness. Your wagon tracks drip with abundance.
 13 (12) Pastures of the wilderness overflow and hills are robed with joy.
 14 (13) Meadows are clothed with flocks and valleys are covered with grain—they shout for joy, yes, they sing!

How Awesome Your Deeds

66 (0) For the music director, 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 cringe before You.
 4 All the earth bows down to You, and sings praises to You. All sing praises to Your Name.” *Selah*
 5 Come and see the works of God.

How awesome His deeds for the children of Adam!
 6 He turned the sea into dry land.
 They crossed the river on foot.
 There let us rejoice in Him!
 7 He rules by His might forever.
 His eyes keep watch on the nations.
 Let no rebels exalt themselves. *Selah*
 8 Bless our God, O peoples!
 Let the sound of His praise be heard.
 9 Keeping our soul in life,
 He has not let our foot slip.
 10 For You have tested us, O God—
 You have purified us, as silver is refined.
 11 You brought us into a net.
 You laid a burden on our backs.
 12 You caused men to ride over our heads.
 We went through fire and water.
 Yet You brought us out to superabundance.
 13 With burnt offerings I will come to Your House,
 fulfilling my vows to You
 14 that my lips uttered and mouth spoke,
 when I was in trouble.
 15 To You I will present burnt offerings of fat animals,
 with the sweet smoke of rams.
 I will offer bulls with goats. *Selah*
 16 Come and listen, all you who fear God.
 I will tell what He has done for my soul.
 17 I cried out to Him with my mouth,
 and exaltation was on my tongue.
 18 If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
 the Lord would not have listened.
 19 But surely God has heard.
 He has listened to my voice in prayer.
 20 Blessed be God, who has not turned away my
 prayer,
 nor His lovingkindness from me.

Let All Peoples Praise You

67 (0) For the music director, with stringed instruments, a psalm, a song.

2 (1) May God be gracious to us and bless us.
 May He cause His face to shine upon us— *Selah*
 3 (2) so that Your way may be known on earth,
 and Your salvation among all nations.
 4 (3) Let the peoples praise You, O God.
 Let all the peoples praise You.
 5 (4) Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
 for You will judge the peoples fairly,
 and guide the nations on the earth. *Selah*
 6 (5) Let the peoples praise You, O God.
 Let all the peoples praise You.
 7 (6) The earth has yielded its harvest—
 God, our God will bless us.
 8 (7) God will bless us,
 and all the ends of the earth will fear Him.

68 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David, a song.

2 (1) Let God arise!

Let His enemies be scattered!
 Let those who hate Him flee before Him.
 3 (2) As smoke is blown away,
 may You blow them away.
 As wax melts before the fire,
 may the wicked perish before God.
 4 (3) But let the righteous be glad.
 Let them exult before God.
 Let them rejoice with gladness.
 5 (4) Sing to God, sing praises to His Name.
 Prepare the road for Him who rides through the
 deserts,
 whose Name is *ADONAI*—
 and rejoice before Him.
 6 (5) A father of orphans, defender of widows,
 is God in His holy dwelling.
 7 (6) God settles the lonely in a home.
 He leads prisoners out to prosperity.
 But the rebellious live in a parched land.
 8 (7) O God, when You went out before Your people,
 when You marched through the desert— *Selah*—
 9 (8) the earth shook, the heavens rained
 at the presence of God—the One of Sinai—
 at the presence of God, God of Israel.
 10 (9) You poured down abundant rain, O God.
 You sustained Your weary inheritance.
 11 (10) Your community settled in it.
 In Your goodness, O God, You provided for the poor.
 12 (11) The Lord gives the word—
 a great company of women proclaims the good news.
 13 (12) "Kings of armies, flee, flee!"
 She who stays at home divides the spoil.
 14 (13) When you lie among the campfires,
 wings of a dove were covered with silver
 and her feathers with shimmering gold.
 15 (14) When *Shaddai* scattered kings there,
 it was snowing on Zalmon.
 16 (15) Mount Bashan is a mountain of God.
 Mount Bashan is a mountain of peaks.
 17 (16) Why do you gaze with envy, you mountain
 peaks,
 at the mountain God desired for His dwelling?
 Yes, *ADONAI* will dwell there forever!
 18 (17) The chariots of God are thousands and thou-
 sands
 —my Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness.
 19 (18) You went up on high.
 You led captivity captive.
 You received gifts from humanity, †
 even from the rebellious—
 so that God might dwell there.
 20 (19) Blessed be my Lord!
 Day by day He bears our burdens—
 the God of our salvation! *Selah*
 21 (20) God is for us—a God of deliverance.
ADONAI my Lord has escapes from death.
 22 (21) Surely God crushes the head of His foes,

† cf. Eph. 4:8.

the hairy scalp of one walking in his guilt.

²³ (22) My Lord said:

"I will bring them back from Bashan,
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea.

²⁴ (23) So your foot may wade in blood,
and your dogs' tongue may have their share of your
enemies' blood."

²⁵ (24) They have seen Your processions, O God—
the processions of my God, my King, into the Sanctu-
ary:

²⁶ (25) The singers go before, the musicians last,
between maidens beating tambourines.

²⁷ (26) "Bless God in the congregations—
ADONAI, from the fountain of Israel."

²⁸ (27) There Benjamin, the youngest, is leading
them,

there the throng of Judah's princes,

there the princes of Zebulun,

there the princes of Naphtali.

²⁹ (28) Your God commanded your strength.

Strengthen, O God,

You who have acted for us.

³⁰ (29) From Your Temple above Jerusalem,
kings bring You tribute.

³¹ (30) Rebuke the beast of the reeds,
the herd of bulls with the calves,
peoples trampling down pieces of silver.
He has scattered the peoples who delight in war!

³² (31) Nobles come from Egypt.

Cush runs to stretch her hands to God.

³³ (32) Sing to God, kingdoms of the earth,
sing praises to the Lord— *Selah* —

³⁴ (33) to Him who rides upon the ancient heavens of
heavens.

Look, He utters His voice, a mighty voice!

³⁵ (34) Ascribe strength to God—

His majesty is over Israel

and His strength is in the skies.

³⁶ (35) O God, You are awesome from Your holy
places.

The God of Israel gives strength and power to the
people.

Blessed be God!

Scorn and Disgrace, Gall and Vinegar

69 (0) For the music director, on "Lilies," of David.

² (1) Save me, O God,
for the waters
have reached my soul.

³ (2) I have sunk in deep mud,
and there is no footing,
I have come into deep waters,
and a flood sweeps over me.

⁴ (3) I am worn out by my crying,
my throat is parched,
my eyes fail, waiting for my God.

⁵ (4) Those who hate me without a cause †

outnumber the hairs of my head.

Powerful are my enemies who would destroy me with
lies.

What I did not steal, must I restore?

⁶ (5) O God, You know my folly,
nor are my trespasses hidden from You.

⁷ (6) May those who hope in You
not be ashamed because of me,

my Lord, *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* .

May those who seek You
not be disgraced because of me,
O God of Israel.

⁸ (7) For I have endured scorn for Your sake.
Disgrace has covered my face.

⁹ (8) I have become a stranger to my brothers,
a foreigner to my mother's children.

¹⁰ (9) For zeal for Your House consumed me—
the insults of those who insulted You have fallen on
me. ††

¹¹ (10) When I wept and fasted—
that became a reproach to me.

¹² (11) When I put on sackcloth,
I became a joke to them.

¹³ (12) Those who sit at the gate chatter about me,
and I am the song of the drunkards.

¹⁴ (13) But as for me, my prayer to You, *ADONAI* , is for
a time of favor.

O God, in Your great love, answer me with the truth
of Your salvation.

¹⁵ (14) Deliver me from the mire—
do not let me sink.

Deliver me from those who hate me,
out of the deep waters.

¹⁶ (15) Do not let floodwaters sweep over me,
nor the deep swallow me up,
nor the Pit shut its mouth over me.

¹⁷ (16) Answer me, *ADONAI* , for good is Your mercy.
With Your great compassion, turn to me.

¹⁸ (17) Hide not Your face from Your servant.
For I am in distress—answer me quickly.

¹⁹ (18) Draw near to my soul and redeem it.
Ransom me because of my foes.

²⁰ (19) You know my reproach, my shame, my dis-
grace.

All my adversaries are before You.

²¹ (20) Scorn has broken my heart, so I am sick.
I looked for sympathy, but there was none,
for comforters, but found none.

²² (21) They put gall in my food,
and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. ‡

²³ (22) Let their table before them be a snare,
and what should have been for their well-being,
let it be a trap.

²⁴ (23) Let their eyes be darkened so they cannot see
and their backs be bent forever. ††

²⁵ (24) Pour out Your indignation on them.

†† *cf. John 2:17; Rom. 15:3. ‡ cf. Matt. 27:34, 48; Mark 15:23,*
36. †† *cf. Rom. 11:9-10.*

† *cf. John 15:25.*

Let Your fierce anger overtake them.
²⁶ (25) Let their encampment be deserted.
 Let none dwell in their tents.
²⁷ (26) For they persecute the one You have smitten,
 so they tell of the pain
 of those You have wounded.
²⁸ (27) Add guilt to their guilt—
 may they not come into Your righteousness.
²⁹ (28) May they be wiped out of the book of life
 and not be recorded with the righteous. †
³⁰ (29) But I—I am afflicted and in pain.
 Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high.
³¹ (30) I will praise God's Name with a song,
 and magnify Him with praise.
³² (31) It will please *ADONAI* better than an ox
 or a bull with horns and hoofs.
³³ (32) The humble will see it and be glad.
 You who seek God, let your hearts revive.
³⁴ (33) For *ADONAI* hears the needy
 and does not despise His captive people.
³⁵ (34) Let heaven and earth praise Him,
 the seas and everything moving in them.
³⁶ (35) For God will save Zion,
 and rebuild the cities of Judah.
 Then they will dwell there and possess it.
³⁷ (36) The children of His servants will inherit it
 and those who love His Name will dwell there.

My Help and My Deliverer

70 (0) For the music director, of David, for a
 memorial.
² (1) O God, come quickly to deliver me,
ADONAI, to help me.
³ (2) May they be put to shame and disgrace
 who seek my life.
 May they be turned back in humiliation
 who delight in my hurt.
⁴ (3) May those who say, "Aha! Aha!"
 be turned away because of their shame.
⁵ (4) But may all who seek You
 rejoice and be glad in You.
 May those who love Your salvation
 always say, "Let God be magnified."
⁶ (5) But I am poor and needy—
 God, come quickly to me.
 You are my help and my deliverer—
ADONAI, do not delay.

My Hope When I Am Gray

71 In You, *ADONAI*, have I taken refuge.
 Let me never be ashamed.
² Deliver me and rescue me in Your justice.
 Turn Your ear to me and save me.
³ Be to me a sheltering rock where I may always go.
 Give the command to save me—
 for You are my rock and my fortress.

⁴ My God, rescue me out of the hand of the wicked,
 out of the grasp of an evil, ruthless man.
⁵ For You are my hope, *ADONAI* my Lord—
 my trust from my youth.
⁶ From my birth I have leaned on You.
 You took me out of my mother's womb.
 My praise is always about You.
⁷ I am like an ominous sign to many,
 but You are my strong refuge.
⁸ My mouth is filled with Your praise
 and with Your glory all day.
⁹ Do not cast me away in the time of old age.
 When my strength fails, do not forsake me.
¹⁰ For my enemies speak against me,
 Those who watch for my soul conspire together,
¹¹ saying: "God has forsaken him—
 Pursue and take him, for no one will deliver."
¹² O God, be not far from me!
 My God, come quickly to help me.
¹³ Let the accusers of my soul
 be disgraced and destroyed.
 Let those who seek to harm me
 be covered with scorn and confusion.
¹⁴ But I—I will hope continually
 and will praise You more and more.
¹⁵ My mouth will recount Your justice and Your salva-
 tion all day,
 though I do not know the sum of them.
¹⁶ I come because of the mighty deeds of *ADONAI* my
 Lord.
 I will remember Your righteousness—Yours alone.
¹⁷ God, You taught me from my youth,
 and I still keep declaring Your wonders.
¹⁸ So even until I am old and gray, O God, do not for-
 sake me,
 till I tell of Your strong arm to the next generation,
 Your might to all who are to come.
¹⁹ For Your righteousness, O God,
 reaches to high heaven.
 You have done great things—O God,
 who is like You?
²⁰ You made me see many troubles and evils
 —You will revive me again—
 from the depths of the earth
 You will bring me up again.
²¹ You will increase my greatness,
 and comfort me once again.
²² So I will praise You with the harp for your truth, O
 my God.
 I will sing praises to You with the lyre O Holy One of
 Israel.
²³ My lips will shout for joy
 —when I sing praises to You—
 and my soul, which You have redeemed.
²⁴ Also my tongue will tell of Your righteousness all
 day.
 For those who seek my hurt have been put to shame
 and confusion.

† cf. Rev. 3:5.

A Powerful King for the Poor

72 (0) Of Solomon.
 (1) Give the king Your judgments, O God,
 and Your righteousness to the king's son.
 2 May he judge Your people with righteousness,
 and Your poor ones with justice.
 3 Let the mountains bring *shalom* to the people,
 and the hills righteousness.
 4 May he vindicate the poor of the people,
 save the children of the needy,
 and crush the oppressor.
 5 Let them fear You while the sun endures,
 and while the moon lasts, throughout all genera-
 tions.
 6 May he be like rain falling on a mown field,
 like showers watering the ground.
 7 Let the righteous flourish in his days.
 Let *shalom* abound till the moon is no more.
 8 May he have dominion from sea to sea,
 and from the River to the ends of the earth.
 9 Let desert dwellers bow before him,
 and his enemies lick the dust.
 10 May kings of Tarshish and the islands bring tribute,
 kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.
 11 So let all kings bow down before him,
 and all nations serve him.
 12 For he rescues the needy crying for help,
 also the poor and the one with no helper.
 13 He will take pity on the poor and needy,
 and the souls of the needy he will save.
 14 From oppression and violence he redeems their
 soul,
 for precious is their blood in his sight.
 15 Long may he live!
 May gold from Sheba be given to him.
 May he pray for him continually,
 and bless him all day.
 16 Let there be abundance of grain in the land.
 Let it sway on the top of the hills,
 let its fruit be like Lebanon,
 and let people of the city flourish like grass of the
 field.
 17 May his name endure forever.
 May his name increase before the sun,
 and may all nations be blessed by him
 and call him blessed.
 18 Blessed be *ADONAI Elohim*, God of Israel,
 who alone does wonders.
 19 Blessed be His glorious Name forever.
 May all the earth be filled with His glory!
 Amen and Amen!
 20 The prayers of David son of Jesse are complete.

God Is the Strength of My Heart

73 (0) A psalm of Asaph.
 (1) Surely God is good to Israel,

to the pure in heart.
 2 But as for me, my feet almost slipped.
 My steps nearly slid out from under me.
 3 For I envied the arrogant,
 when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
 4 For there are no pains at their death,
 their body is healthy.
 5 They have none of humanity's trouble,
 nor are they plagued like others.
 6 Therefore, they put on pride as a necklace,
 and violence wraps around them like a garment.
 7 Their eyes bulge out from fatness.
 The imaginations of their hearts run wild.
 8 They scoff and wickedly plan evil.
 From on high they threaten.
 9 They set their mouth against heaven.
 Their tongue struts through the earth.
 10 Therefore His people return here,
 while they drink their fill.
 11 So they say: "How does God know?
 And does *Elyon* have knowledge?"
 12 Behold, such are the wicked—
 always at ease and amassing wealth.
 13 Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure,
 and washed my hands in innocence.
 14 For all day I have been stricken,
 my chastisement comes every morning.
 15 If I had said: "I will speak thus,"
 surely I would have betrayed a generation of Your
 children.
 16 But when I tried to make sense of this,
 it was troubling in my eyes—
 17 until I entered the Sanctuary of God,
 and perceived their end.
 18 Surely You put them in slippery places.
 You hurled them down to destruction.
 19 How suddenly they became a ruin—
 terminated, consumed by terrors.
 20 Like a dream when one awakes,
 thus when You arise, my Lord,
 You will despise their form.
 21 When my heart was embittered
 and I was pierced in my heart,
 22 I was brutish and ignorant.
 I was like a beast before You.
 23 Yet I am continually with You.
 You hold my right hand.
 24 You guide me with Your counsel,
 and afterward You will take me into glory.
 25 Whom have I in heaven but You?
 On earth there is none I desire besides You.
 26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
 but God is the strength of my heart
 and my portion forever.
 27 For behold, those far from You will perish.
 You put an end to all who like a harlot are unfaithful
 to You.
 28 But for me, it is good to be near God.

I have made my Lord *ADONAI* my refuge.
So I will tell of all Your works.

Intercession for Restoration of Zion

74 (0) A contemplative song of Asaph.
(1) Why have You cast us off forever, O God?
Why does Your anger smolder against the flock of Your pasture?
2 Remember Your congregation, which You purchased of old,
redeemed as the tribe of Your inheritance,
and Mount Zion, where You dwell.
3 Lift Your steps toward the perpetual ruins—
an enemy has done all evil to the Sanctuary!
4 Your adversaries have roared in the midst of Your meeting place.
They have set up their standards as signs.
5 It seemed like bringing up axes
into a thicket of trees—
6 and now all its carved work
they smash with hatchet and hammers!
7 They set Your Sanctuary on fire,
burning it to the ground.
They defiled the dwelling place of Your Name.
8 They said in their hearts: "Let us crush them totally!"
They burned down all the meeting places of God in the land.
9 We do not see our signs.
No longer is there any prophet—
and no one among us knows how long.
10 How long, O God, will the adversary mock?
Will the enemy revile Your Name forever?
11 Why do You hold back Your hand, Your right hand?
Draw it out of Your bosom and consume them!
12 Yet God is my King of old,
working salvation in the midst of the land.
13 You split the sea with Your power.
You smashed the monsters' heads in the waters.
14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan,
giving him as food to the desert dwellers.
15 You opened up spring and brook.
You dried up ever-flowing rivers.
16 The day is Yours, the night also is Yours.
You provided moon and sun.
17 You set all the borders of earth.
You made summer and winter.
18 Remember how the enemy mocked, *ADONAI*,
and how foolish people despised Your Name.
19 Do not deliver Your turtledove's soul to the wild beast.
Do not forget the life of Your afflicted ones forever.
20 Look upon the covenant—for haunts of violence
fill the dark places of earth.
21 Do not let the oppressed turn back in shame.
But let the poor and needy praise Your Name.
22 Rise up O God, and defend Your cause.
Remember how the fool mocks You all day.
23 Do not forget the noise of Your foes,

the uproar of those rising up against You,
ascending continually.

He Lowers One and Lifts Another

75 (0) For the music director: "Do not Destroy," a psalm of Asaph, a song.
2 (1) We praise You, we praise God,
for Your Name is near.
People declare Your wonders.
3 (2) "When I appoint a set time,
I Myself will judge uprightly.
4 (3) When the earth wavers with living on it,
I Myself hold its pillars firm. *Selah*
5 (4) I say to the arrogant, 'No more boasting!'
And to the wicked,
'Do not be lifting up your horn.'
6 (5) Do not lift your horn up high.
Do not speak with outstretched neck."
7 (6) For exaltation comes
not from the east nor from the west,
nor even from the desert.
8 (7) For God is the Judge:
He lowers one and lifts up another.
9 (8) For in the hand of *ADONAI* is a cup of foaming
wine mixed with spices,
and He pours it out.
Surely all the wicked of the earth will drink,
draining it down to the dregs. †
10 (9) But I—I will declare it forever,
I will sing praise to the God of Jacob.
11 (10) I will cut off all the horns of the wicked,
but the horns of the righteous will be lifted up.

Who Can Stand in Your Presence?

76 (0) For the music director, on stringed instruments: a psalm of Asaph, a song.
2 (1) In Judah God is known.
In Israel His Name is great.
3 (2) In Salem is His *sukkah*
and His dwelling place in Zion.
4 (3) There He broke the fiery shafts of the bow,
the shield, the sword, and the battle. *Selah*
5 (4) You are brilliant,
more majestic than nourishing mountains.
6 (5) The valiant have been plundered—
they slumbered in their sleep.
The mighty could not lift their hands.
7 (6) At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both horse and rider lay dead asleep.
8 (7) You are awesome, yes You are!
Who can stand in Your presence once You are angry?
9 (8) From heaven You pronounced judgment.
The earth feared and was still—
10 (9) when God rose up to judgment,
to save all the humble of the land. *Selah*
11 (10) For wrath upon man will bring You praise,

† cf. Rev. 14:10.

a remnant of wrath You put on as a belt.
 12 (11) Make vows to *ADONAI* your God and fulfill them.

Let all around Him bring tribute to the One who is to be feared.

13 (12) He cuts off the breath of princes.
 The kings of earth are in awe of Him.

Remember the Wonders

77 (0) For the music director, on Jeduthun: a psalm of Asaph.

2 (1) My voice to God—and I cried out,
 my voice to God—and He heard me!

3 (2) In the day of my trouble I seek my Lord.
 At night my hand stretches out untiringly.

My soul refuses to be comforted.

4 (3) I remember God and I moan.
 I muse, and my spirit grows faint. *Selah*

5 (4) You hold my eyelids open—
 I am so troubled—I cannot speak.

6 (5) I ponder the days of old,
 the years long ago.

7 (6) In the night I remember my song.
 I meditate with my heart

and my spirit is searching.

8 (7) “Will the Lord reject forever
 and never again show favor?”

9 (8) Has His mercy vanished forever?
 Has His promise come to an end forever?

10 (9) Has God forgotten to be gracious?
 Or has He in anger withdrawn his mercies?” *Selah*

11 (10) Then I said: “It wounds me—
 that the right hand of *Elyon* has changed.”

12 (11) I will remember the deeds of *ADONAI*.
 Yes, I will muse about Your wonders of old.

13 (12) I will meditate also on all Your work
 and consider Your deeds.”

14 (13) O God, Your way is holy.
 What god is great like God?

15 (14) You are the God who works wonders.
 You have made Your power known among the peoples.

16 (15) With your arm You redeemed Your people,
 the children of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*

17 (16) The waters saw You, O God,
 the waters saw You and writhed,
 even the depths shook.

18 (17) The clouds poured out water,
 the skies resounded,
 Your arrows flashed back and forth.

19 (18) The sound of Your thunder was in the whirlwind.

Lightning lit up the world.
 The earth trembled and shook.

20 (19) Your way was in the sea,
 and Your path in the mighty waters,
 but Your footprints were not seen.

21 (20) You led Your people like a flock,

by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Israel from Moses to David

78 (0) A contemplative song of Asaph.

(1) Listen, my people, to my teaching.

Turn your ears to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth with a parable.

I will utter perplexing sayings from of old,

3 which we have heard and known,

and our fathers have told us.

4 We will not hide them from their children,
 telling to the next generation the praises of *ADONAI*
 and His strength and the wonders He has done.

5 For He established a testimony in Jacob
 and ordained *Torah* in Israel,
 which He commanded our fathers to teach their children,

6 so that the next generation might know,
 even the children yet to be born:

they will arise and tell their children.

7 Then they will put their trust in God,
 not forgetting the works of God,

but keeping His *mitzvot*.

8 So they will not be like their fathers—
 a stubborn and rebellious generation,
 a generation that did not prepare its heart,
 whose spirit was not loyal to God.

9 The sons of Ephraim were archers armed with bows,
 yet they turned back in the day of battle.

10 They did not keep God’s covenant
 and refused to walk in His *Torah*.

11 They forgot His deeds
 and His wonders that He had shown them.

12 He did miracles in front of their fathers
 in the land of Egypt, in the plain of Zoan.

13 He split the sea and led them through,
 and He made the water stand like a wall.

14 By day He led them with a cloud
 and all night with a light of fire.

15 He split apart rocks in the wilderness
 and gave them drink as abundant as the depths.

16 So He brought streams out of a rock,
 and made waters flow down like rivers. †

17 Yet they added more sinning against Him,
 rebelling against *Elyon* in the desert.

18 They put God to the test in their heart
 by demanding food for their craving.

19 Then they spoke against God, saying,
 “Can God set a table in the wilderness?”

20 See, He struck the rock,
 waters gushed out, streams overflowed.

But can He give bread?

Will He provide meat for His people?”

21 When *ADONAI* heard, He was angry.

A fire was kindled against Jacob,
 and fury also rose against Israel.

22 For they did not believe in God

† cf. 1 Cor. 10:4.

or trust in His salvation.
²³ Yet He commanded the skies above
 and opened the doors of heaven,
²⁴ and rained down *manna* upon them to eat,
 and gave them grain of heaven. †
²⁵ Man did eat the bread of angels.
 He sent them abundant provision.
²⁶ He loosed the east wind in the skies,
 and by His power He drove the south wind.
²⁷ He rained meat upon them like dust,
 and winged fowl like sand of the seas.
²⁸ And He let it fall amidst their camp,
 all around their tents.
²⁹ So they ate and were very full—
 for He gave them their desire.
³⁰ No longer a stranger from their desire,
 while their food was still in their mouths,
³¹ the anger of God rose against them
 and slew the stoutest of them,
 and struck down young men of Israel.
³² Despite all this they sinned still more,
 and did not trust in His wonders.
³³ So He ended their days in futility
 and their years in terror.
³⁴ But when He slew them,
 then they sought Him, and turned back,
 and desired God eagerly.
³⁵ Then they remembered that God was their Rock
 and *El Elyon* their Redeemer.
³⁶ But they flattered Him with their mouth
 and kept lying to Him with their tongue.
³⁷ For their heart was not steadfast with Him,
 nor were they faithful to His covenant.
³⁸ But He is compassionate,
 forgives iniquity and does not destroy.
 Yes, many times He restrains His anger,
 and does not stir up all His wrath.
³⁹ For He remembered that they are but flesh,
 a passing breath that never returns.
⁴⁰ How often they rebelled against Him in the wilder-
 ness,
 and grieved Him in the desert!
⁴¹ Again and again they tested God,
 and pained the Holy One of Israel.
⁴² They did not remember His hand—
 the day He redeemed them from the foe,
⁴³ when He displayed His signs in Egypt
 and His wonders in the plain of Zoan.
⁴⁴ He turned their rivers into blood,
 so they could not drink from their streams.
⁴⁵ He sent on them flies to devour them,
 and frogs to devastate them,
⁴⁶ and gave their crops to the grasshopper,
 and their labor to the locust.
⁴⁷ He destroyed their vines with hail,
 and their sycamore trees with frost,
⁴⁸ and gave over their cattle to the hail,

and their flocks to fiery bolts.
⁴⁹ He sent on them the fury of His anger
 —wrath and indignation and trouble—
 a band of evil angels.
⁵⁰ He cleared a path for His anger.
 He spared not their soul from death,
 but gave their life over to the plague.
⁵¹ He struck down all the firstborn in Egypt,
 the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.
⁵² But He brought His people out like sheep,
 and led them in the wilderness like a flock.
⁵³ He led them to safety, so they did not fear,
 but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
⁵⁴ Then He brought them to His holy territory,
 to the mountain His right hand had gotten.
⁵⁵ He drove out nations before them,
 and allotted them an inheritance.
 He settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.
⁵⁶ Yet they tested and rebelled against *El Elyon* ,
 and did not keep His decrees.
⁵⁷ Like their fathers they turned and were treacher-
 ous.
 They turned aside like a faulty bow.
⁵⁸ For they provoked Him
 with their high places,
 so they aroused His jealousy
 with their graven images.
⁵⁹ God heard and was furious,
 and He greatly detested Israel.
⁶⁰ He abandoned the tabernacle of Shiloh,
 the tent He pitched among men.
⁶¹ He gave up His strength into captivity,
 and His glory into the adversary's hand.
⁶² He gave His people over to the sword,
 when He was angry at His inheritance.
⁶³ Fire consumed their young men,
 and their virgins had no wedding songs.
⁶⁴ Their priests fell by the sword,
 and their widows could not weep.
⁶⁵ Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,
 as a warrior shaking off wine.
⁶⁶ He beat back His foes,
 putting them to lasting scorn.
⁶⁷ Then He detested Joseph's tent
 and chose not the tribe of Ephraim.
⁶⁸ Instead He chose the tribe of Judah,
 Mount Zion, which He loved.
⁶⁹ He built His Sanctuary like the heights,
 like the earth that He established forever.
⁷⁰ He also chose David His servant
 and took him from the sheepfolds,
⁷¹ from following nursing ewes.
 He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people,
 and Israel His inheritance.
⁷² So He shepherded them with the integrity of His
 heart,
 and led them with His skillful hands.

† cf. John 6:31.

A Lament over Jerusalem

79 (0) A Psalm of Asaph.
 (1) God, the nations have invaded Your inheritance,
 defiled Your holy Temple,
 and reduced Jerusalem to ruins.
 2 They gave the carcasses of Your servants as food to the birds of the skies,
 the flesh of Your *kedoshim* to the beasts of the earth.
 3 They poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem,
 and there was no one to bury them.
 4 We have become a taunt to our neighbors,
 a scorn and derision to those around us.
 5 How long, *ADONAI*, will You be angry?
 Forever?
 Will Your jealousy keep blazing like fire?
 6 Pour out Your wrath
 on the nations that do not acknowledge You,
 on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name.
 7 For they have devoured Jacob
 and laid waste his country.
 8 Do not hold against us the sins of our fathers.
 May Your mercies come quickly to meet us,
 for we are brought very low.
 9 Help us, God of our salvation—
 for the sake of the glory of Your Name.
 Deliver us, and atone for our sins—
 for Your name's sake.
 10 Why should the nations say:
 "Where is their God?"
 Before our eyes, let it be known among the nations
 that You avenge the shed blood of Your servants.
 11 Let the prisoner's groan come to You.
 By Your great arm preserve those who are doomed
 to die.
 12 Pay back into the midst of our neighbors sevenfold
 their reproach—
 the reproach they hurled at You, my Lord.
 13 So we, Your people, the flock of Your pasture,
 will praise You forever.
 From generation to generation
 we will recount Your praise.

Restore Us, Revive Us

80 (0) For the music director, on "Lilies," † a testimony: a psalm of Asaph.
 2 (1) Give ear, Shepherd of Israel,
 You who lead Joseph like a flock.
 You who are enthroned upon the *cheruvim*, shine forth!
 3 (2) Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh,
 stir up Your might, and come to save us.
 4 (3) O God, restore us, make Your face shine,
 and we will be saved.

5 (4) *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, how long will You be angry
 with the prayer of Your people?
 6 (5) You have fed them the bread of tears
 and made them drink a measure of tears.
 7 (6) You make us a contention to our neighbors,
 and our enemies mock as they please.
 8 (7) *Elohei-Tzva'ot*, restore us, and make Your face
 shine,
 and we will be saved.
 9 (8) You pulled out a vine from Egypt.
 You drove out nations and planted it.
 10 (9) You cleared a place for it,
 and it took deep root and filled the land.
 11 (10) The mountains were covered by its shade,
 the mighty cedars with its branches.
 12 (11) It sent out its branches to the sea,
 and its shoots to the river.
 13 (12) Why have You broken down its fences,
 so all who pass by the way pick its fruit?
 14 (13) A boar from the forest ravages it,
 whatever moves in the field feeds on it.
 15 (14) *Elohei-Tzva'ot*, please return!
 Look down from heaven and see!
 Now take care of this vine—
 16 (15) the shoot Your right hand planted—
 the son You strengthened for Yourself.
 17 (16) It is burned with fire, it is cut down.
 They perish from the rebuke of Your face.
 18 (17) Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right
 hand—
 the son of man
 You made strong for Yourself.
 19 (18) Then we will not turn away from You.
 Revive us, and we will call on Your Name.
 20 (19) *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot*, restore us.
 Make Your face shine, and we will be saved.

Hear O Israel

81 (0) For the music director, on the Gittite lyre, of Asaph.
 2 (1) Sing for joy to God our strength,
 shout to the God of Jacob!
 3 (2) Lift up a song and sound a tambourine,
 a sweet lyre with a harp.
 4 (3) Blow the *shofar* at the New Moon,
 at the full moon for the day of our festival.
 5 (4) For it is a decree for Israel,
 an ordinance of the God of Jacob.
 6 (5) He set it up as a testimony in Joseph,
 when He went throughout the land of Egypt,
 I heard a language I did not understand.
 7 (6) "I relieved his shoulder of the burden,
 his hands were set free from the basket.
 8 (7) You called out in trouble, and I rescued you.
 I answered you from the hiding place of thunder.
 I tested you at the waters of Meribah. *Selah*
 9 (8) Hear, My people, I will admonish you—
 if you would listen to Me, O Israel!

† Hebrew *Shoshanim*

¹⁰ (9) Let there be no foreign god among you,
and you shall not worship any alien god.
¹¹ (10) I am *ADONAI* your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.
¹² (11) "But My people did not listen to My voice.
Israel was not willing to be Mine.
¹³ (12) So I gave them over
to the stubbornness of their heart,
to walk in their own counsels.
¹⁴ (13) Oh that My people would listen to Me,
that Israel would walk in My ways!
¹⁵ (14) I would soon subdue their enemies,
and turn My hand against their foes.
¹⁶ (15) Those who hate *ADONAI* would cringe before
Him—
their time of doom would be forever.
¹⁷ (16) But you would be fed with the finest wheat,
with honey out of a rock would I satisfy you."

A Rebuke for Unjust Judges

82 (0) A psalm of Asaph.
(1) God takes His stand in the assembly of God.
He judges among the "gods":
² "How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? *Selah*
³ Give justice to the poor and fatherless.
Be just to the afflicted and destitute.
⁴ Rescue the weak and needy.
Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked.
⁵ They know nothing;
they understand nothing—
they walk about in darkness.
All of earth's foundations are shaken.
⁶ I said: 'You are 'gods',
and you are all sons of *Elyon*, †
⁷ yet you will die like men,
and will fall like any of the princes."
⁸ Arise, O God, judge the earth!
For You possess all the nations.

Nations Conspire against Israel

83 (0) A song: a psalm of Asaph.
² (1) God, do not keep silent.
Do not hold Your peace, O God.
Do not be still.
³ (2) For look, Your enemies make an uproar.
Those who hate You lift up their head.
⁴ (3) They make a shrewd plot against Your people,
conspiring against Your treasured ones.
⁵ (4) "Come," they say, "let's wipe them out as a na-
tion!
Let Israel's name be remembered no more!"
⁶ (5) For with one mind they plot together.
Against You do they make a covenant.
⁷ (6) The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,

Moab and the Hagrites,
⁸ (7) Gebal, Ammon and Amalek,
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre,
⁹ (8) even Assyria has joined them,
becoming a strong arm for Lot's sons. *Selah*
¹⁰ (9) Do to them as You did to Midian,
to Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River,
¹¹ (10) who perished at En-dor—
they became as dung for the ground.
¹² (11) Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb—
all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
¹³ (12) who said,
"Let us take possession of the pasturelands of God."
¹⁴ (13) My God, make them like tumbleweed,
like chaff before the wind.
¹⁵ (14) As a fire burns a forest,
and as a flame sets mountains ablaze,
¹⁶ (15) so pursue them with Your tempest,
and terrify them with Your storm.
¹⁷ (16) Cover their faces with shame,
so they may seek Your Name— *ADONAI* .
¹⁸ (17) Let them be ashamed and dismayed forever.
Let them be humiliated and perish.
¹⁹ (18) Let them know that You alone
—whose Name is *ADONAI* —
are *El Elyon* over all the earth.

Pilgrim Road to *ADONAI*'s Courts

84 (0) For the music director, upon the Gittite lyre,
a psalm of the sons of Korah.
² (1) How lovely are Your tabernacles,
ADONAI -Tzva'ot !
³ (2) My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of
ADONAI .
My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
⁴ (3) Even the sparrow has found a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay
her young
—near Your altars, *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* —
my King and my God!
⁵ (4) Blessed are they who dwell in Your House
—they are ever praising You. *Selah*
⁶ (5) Blessed is one whose strength is in You,
in whose heart are the pilgrim roads.
⁷ (6) Passing through the valley of Baca,
they make it a spring.
The early rain covers it with blessings.
⁸ (7) They go from strength to strength—
every one of them appears before God in Zion.
⁹ (8) *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* , hear my prayer,
give ear, O God of Jacob. *Selah*
¹⁰ (9) O God, look at our shield,
and look upon the face of Your anointed.
¹¹ (10) For a day in Your courts is better
than a thousand anywhere else.
I would rather stand at the threshold of the House of
my God
than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

† cf. Luke 6:35; John 10:34.

¹² (11) For *ADONAI Elohim* is a sun † and a shield.
ADONAI gives grace and glory.
 No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

¹³ (12) *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*,
 blessed is the one
 who trusts in You.

Restore Your People from Captivity

85 (0) For the music director, a psalm of the sons of Korah.

² (1) *ADONAI*, will you favor Your land?
 Will You restore Jacob from captivity?

³ (2) Will You bear away Your people's iniquity,
 Will You pardon all their sin? ††

Selah

⁴ (3) Will You withdraw all Your wrath?
 Will You turn from Your burning anger? ‡

⁵ (4) Restore us, O God of our salvation,
 and renounce Your indignation with us.

⁶ (5) Will You be angry with us forever?
 Will You prolong Your anger from generation to generation?

⁷ (6) Will You not revive us again,
 so Your people may rejoice in You?

⁸ (7) Show us Your mercy, *ADONAI*,
 and grant us Your salvation.

⁹ (8) Let me hear what God *ADONAI* will say.
 For He will speak *shalom* to His people, and to His *kedoshim* —

but let them not turn back to folly.

¹⁰ (9) Surely His salvation is near those who fear Him,
 so that glory may dwell in our land.

¹¹ (10) Lovingkindness and truth meet together.
 Righteousness and *shalom* kiss each other.

¹² (11) Truth will spring up from the earth,
 and justice will look down from heaven.

¹³ (12) Yes, *ADONAI* will give what is good,
 and our land will yield its produce.

¹⁴ (13) Righteousness is going before Him
 and prepares a way for His feet.

Slow to Anger, Full of *Chesed*

86 (0) A prayer of David.

(1) Turn Your ear, *ADONAI*, and answer me,
 for I am weak and needy.

² Watch over my soul, for I am godly.
 You are my God—

save Your servant who trusts in You.
³ Be gracious to me, my Lord,

for to You I cry all day.

⁴ Gladden the soul of Your servant,
 for to You, my Lord, I lift up my soul.

⁵ For You, my Lord, are good,
 and ready to forgive

and full of mercy to all who call upon You.

⁶ Give ear, *ADONAI*, to my prayer,
 listen to the voice of my supplications.

⁷ In the day of my trouble I call upon You,
 for You will answer me.

⁸ There is none like You among the gods,
 my Lord, there are no deeds like Yours.

⁹ All nations You have made will come
 and bow down before You, my Lord,
 and they will glorify Your Name.

¹⁰ For You are great, and do wonders—
 You alone are God.

¹¹ Teach me Your way, *ADONAI*,
 that I may walk in Your truth.

Give me an undivided heart to fear Your Name.

¹² I praise You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
 and glorify Your Name forever.

¹³ For great is Your lovingkindness toward me.

You have delivered my soul from the lowest part of *Sheol*.

¹⁴ God, the proud have risen up against me
 and a gang of ruthless people have sought my life,
 and have not set You before them.

¹⁵ But You, my Lord,
 are a compassionate and gracious God,
 slow to anger, full of love and truth.

¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me.

Give Your strength to Your servant,
 and save the son of Your maidservant.

¹⁷ Make me a sign for good,
 so that those who hate me may see it and be
 ashamed.

For You, *ADONAI*, have helped me and comforted me.

This One Was Born in Zion

87 (0) A psalm of the sons of Korah, a song.

(1) His foundation is in the holy mountains.

² *ADONAI* loves the gates of Zion
 more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

³ Glorious things are spoken of you,
 city of God. *Selah*

⁴ "I will mention Rahab and Babylon among those
 who acknowledge Me—

behold Philistia and Tyre, with Cush:
 "This one was born there.""

⁵ But of Zion it will be said:

"This one and that one were born in her."
 And *Elyon* Himself will establish her.

⁶ *ADONAI* will count in the register of the peoples:
 "This one was born there." *Selah*

⁷ Then singing and dancing—
 all my fountains of joy are in you!

Cry of Desperation

88 (0) A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah, for
 the music director, for singing Mahalath, a con-
 templative song †† of Heman the Ezrahite.

† cf. Rev. 21:23. †† cf. Matt. 9:6; 1 John 1:9. ‡ cf. Rom. 5:9.

‡† Hebrew *maskil*

2 (1) *ADONAI*, God of my salvation,
 day and night I cried out before You.
 3 (2) Let my prayer come before You.
 Turn Your ear to my cry.
 4 (3) For my soul is full of troubles,
 and my life draws near to *Sheol*.
 5 (4) I am counted with those who go down into the
 Pit.
 I have become as one with no strength—
 6 (5) abandoned among the dead,
 like the slain that lie in the grave,
 whom You remember no more—
 cut off from Your hand.
 7 (6) You have laid me in the lowest places,
 in dark places, in the depths.
 8 (7) Your wrath lies heavily on me.
 You afflicted me with all Your waves. *Selah*
 9 (8) You have put my companions far from me.
 You have made me repulsive to them.
 I am shut in and I cannot go out.
 10 (9) My eye fails from affliction.
 I call upon You every day, *ADONAI*.
 I spread out my hands to You.
 11 (10) Will You work wonders for the dead?
 Or will the departed spirits rise up praising You? *Se-*
lah
 12 (11) Will Your love be declared in the grave?
 Or Your faithfulness in the place of ruin?
 13 (12) Will Your wonders be known in the darkness?
 Your righteousness in the land of oblivion?
 14 (13) But I—I cried out to You, *ADONAI*,
 and in the morning my prayer meets You.
 15 (14) *ADONAI*, why do You spurn me?
 Why do You hide Your face from me?
 16 (15) From my youth I have been afflicted and close
 to death.
 I suffer Your terrors—I am desperate!
 17 (16) Your fury has swept over me.
 Your terrors have cut me off.
 18 (17) Like water they surge around me all day.
 They close in on me together.
 19 (18) Friend and loved one You took far from me.
 Darkness has become my companion.

Covenant with David's Seed

89 (0) A contemplative song of Ethan the Ezrahite.
 2 (1) I will sing of the love of *ADONAI* forever.
 To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness
 with my mouth.
 3 (2) For I said, "Let your lovingkindness be built up
 forever!
 The heavens—let Your faithfulness be made firm
 there!"
 4 (3) "I have made a covenant with My chosen one.
 I have sworn to David My servant:
 5 (4) 'Forever I will establish your seed,
 and will build your throne from generation to genera-
 tion.'" †

Selah
 6 (5) The heavens praise Your wonders, *ADONAI*
 —Your faithfulness, too—
 in the assembly of the *kedoshim*.
 7 (6) For who in the skies can compare to *ADONAI*?
 Who is like *ADONAI* among the sons of gods?
 8 (7) God is greatly feared in the council of the holy
 ones,
 and awesome above all around Him.
 9 (8) *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot*, who is like You, mighty
ADONAI,
 with Your faithfulness all around You?
 10 (9) You rule over the swelling of the sea.
 When its waves mount up, You still them.
 11 (10) You crushed Rahab like a slain one.
 You scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm.
 12 (11) The heavens are Yours, also Yours the earth
 —the world and its fullness—
 You have founded them.
 13 (12) You created the north and the south.
 Tabor and Hermon sing for joy at Your Name.
 14 (13) Your arm is mighty,
 Your hand is strong,
 exalted is Your right hand. ††
 15 (14) Righteousness and justice are the foundation
 of Your throne.
 Lovingkindness and truth go before You.
 16 (15) Blessed are the people who know the joyful
 shout, ‡
 They walk in the light of Your presence, *ADONAI*.
 17 (16) They rejoice in Your Name all day,
 and by Your righteousness they are exalted.
 18 (17) For You are the glory of their strength,
 and by Your favor our horn is exalted.
 19 (18) For our shield belongs to *ADONAI*,
 and our king to the Holy One of Israel.
 20 (19) Then You spoke in vision to Your godly ones,
 and said:
 "I have bestowed help on a warrior.
 I have exalted one chosen from among the people.
 21 (20) I have found David My servant.
 With My holy oil I have anointed him.
 22 (21) With him My hand will be established.
 Surely My arm will strengthen him.
 23 (22) No enemy will exact tribute from him,
 no son of wickedness will oppress him.
 24 (23) I will crush his adversaries before him,
 and strike down those who hate him.
 25 (24) My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be
 with him,
 and by My Name his horn will be exalted.
 26 (25) I will also set his hand over the sea,
 his right hand over the rivers.
 27 (26) He will call to Me: 'You are my Father, ††
 my God and the rock of my salvation.'
 28 (27) I also will set him as firstborn— ‡

† cf. Luke 1:33. †† cf. Heb. 1:3. ‡ Hebrew *teruah shofar*
blast †† cf. John 8:54. ‡‡ cf. Rev. 1:5.

the highest of the kings of earth. † ††
 29 (28) I will maintain My love for him forever,
 and My covenant with him will be firm.
 30 (29) His seed I will establish forever,
 and his throne as the days of heaven.
 31 (30) "If his sons forsake My *Torah* ,
 and do not walk in My judgments,
 32 (31) if they violate My decrees,
 and do not keep My *mitzvot* ,
 33 (32) then I will punish their transgression with the
 rod,
 and their iniquity with flogging.
 34 (33) But I will not withdraw My lovingkindness
 from him,
 nor will I betray My faithfulness.
 35 (34) I will not violate My covenant,
 nor alter what My lips have uttered.
 36 (35) Once for all I have sworn by My holiness
 —surely I will not lie to David—
 37 (36) his descendants will endure forever,
 and his throne as the sun before Me,
 38 (37) and as the moon, established forever,
 and a trustworthy witness in the sky." *Selah*
 39 (38) But You have cast off and spurned,
 You have become furious with Your anointed one.
 40 (39) You have renounced the covenant of Your ser-
 vant.
 You have defiled his crown even to the ground.
 41 (40) You have broken down all his walls.
 You reduced his strongholds to ruin.
 42 (41) All who pass by have plundered him.
 He has become a taunt to his neighbors.
 43 (42) You exalted the right hand of his foes
 and made all his enemies rejoice.
 44 (43) You turned back the edge of his sword
 and have not supported him in battle.
 45 (44) You brought his splendor to an end,
 and cast his throne down to the ground.
 46 (45) You cut short the days of his youth.
 You covered him with shame. *Selah*
 47 (46) How long, *ADONAI* , will You hide Yourself?
 Forever?
 Will Your fury keep burning like fire?
 48 (47) Remember how short my life span is!
 For what futility have You created all the children of
 men?
 49 (48) What man can live and not see death?
 Can he deliver himself from the clutches of *Sheol* ?
Selah
 50 (49) Where is Your former lovingkindness, my Lord,
 which You swore to David in Your faithfulness? ‡
 51 (50) Remember, my Lord, the mockery against
 Your servants
 that I bear in my heart from so many peoples.
 52 (51) How Your enemies have mocked, *ADONAI* ,
 how they have mocked

† cf. Rev. 19:16. †† In most English translation, 89:27-28 are
 verses 26-27. ‡ cf. Acts 13:34.

the footsteps of Your Anointed One! ††
 53 (52) Blessed be *ADONAI* forever.
 Amen and Amen.

Get a Heart of Wisdom

90 (0) A prayer of Moses the man of God.
 (1) My Lord, You have been our dwelling
 from generation to generation.
 2 Before the mountains were born,
 or You gave birth to the earth and the world,
 even from everlasting to everlasting,
 You are God!
 3 You turn mankind back to dust, saying,
 "Return, children of Adam!"
 4 For a thousand years in Your sight
 are like a day just passing by,
 or like a watch in the night.
 5 You sweep them away in their sleep.
 In the morning they are like sprouting grass—
 6 in the morning it flourishes and springs up,
 by evening it withers and dries up.
 7 For we are consumed by Your anger
 and terrified by Your wrath.
 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 under Your
 wrath.
 We spent our years like a sigh.
 10 The span of our years is seventy
 —or with strength, eighty—
 yet at best they are trouble and sorrow.
 For they are soon gone, and we fly away.
 11 Who knows the power of Your anger?
 Your fury leads to awe of you.
 12 So teach us to number our days,
 so that we may get a heart of wisdom.
 13 Relent, *ADONAI* ! How long?
 Have compassion on Your servants.
 14 Satisfy us in the morning with Your love,
 so we may sing for joy
 and be glad all our days.
 15 Gladden us for as many days as You have humbled
 us,
 as many years as we have seen misery.
 16 Let Your work appear to Your servants,
 and Your splendor on their children.
 17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us.
 Establish the work of our hands for us—
 yes, establish the work of our hands.

Dwell in the Shelter of *Elyon*

91 He who dwells in the shelter of *Elyon* ,
 will abide in the shadow of *Shaddai* .
 2 I will say of *ADONAI* ,
 "He is my refuge and my fortress,
 my God, in whom I trust.

†† cf. Matt. 27:29, 41; Luke 23:36.

3 For He will rescue you from the hunter's trap
 and from the deadly pestilence.
 4 He will cover you with His feathers,
 and under His wings you will find refuge.
 His faithfulness is body armor and shield.
 5 You will not fear the terror by night,
 nor the arrow that flies by day,
 6 nor the plague that stalks in darkness,
 nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.
 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 on with your eyes
 and see the wicked paid back.
 9 For you have made *Elyon* your dwelling,
 even *ADONAI*, who is my refuge,
 10 so no evil will befall you
 nor any plague come near your tent.
 11 For He will give His angels charge over you,
 to guard you in all your ways.
 12 Upon their hands they will lift you up,
 lest you strike your foot against a stone. †
 13 You will tread upon the lion and cobra,
 trample the young lion and serpent.
 14 "Because he has devoted his love to Me,
 I will deliver him.
 I will set him securely on high,
 because he knows My Name.
 15 When he calls on Me, I will answer him.
 I will be with him in trouble, rescue him, and honor
 him.
 16 With long life will I satisfy him
 and show him My salvation."

It Is Good to Praise

92 (0) A psalm, a song for the *Shabbat*.
 2 (1) It is good to praise *ADONAI*
 and to make music to Your Name, *Elyon*,
 3 (2) to declare Your love in the morning
 and Your faithfulness at night,
 4 (3) with a ten-string harp,
 with resounding music on the lyre.
 5 (4) For You made me glad, *ADONAI*, by Your deeds.
 I sing for joy at the works of Your hands.
 6 (5) How great are Your works, *ADONAI*!
 How profound are Your thoughts!
 7 (6) A brutish man does not know,
 nor does a fool understand.
 8 (7) Though the wicked spring up like grass,
 and all evildoers flourish,
 it is only to be ruined forever.
 9 (8) But You, *ADONAI*, are exalted forever.
 10 (9) For behold, Your enemies, *ADONAI*
 —behold Your enemies perish—
 all evildoers are scattered.
 11 (10) But You exalted my horn like that of a wild ox.
 I am anointed with fresh oil.

† cf. Matt. 4:6; Luke 4:10-11.

12 (11) My eye can gaze on those lying in wait for me.
 My ears hear about evildoers rising up against me.
 13 (12) The righteous will flourish like a palm tree.
 He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
 14 (13) Planted in the House of *ADONAI*,
 they will flourish in the courts of our God.
 15 (14) They will still yield fruit in old age.
 They will be full of sap and freshness.
 16 (15) They declare, " *ADONAI* is upright, my Rock
 —there is no injustice in Him."

Majestic and Unshakable

93 *ADONAI* reigns—He is robed in majesty!
ADONAI has robed and armed Himself with
 strength.
 Yes, the world is firmly established—unshakable.
 2 Your throne is established from of old.
 You are from everlasting.
 3 The floods have lifted up, *ADONAI*,
 the floods have lifted up their voice,
 the floods lift up their crashing waves.
 4 More than the sounds of many waters—
 more majestic than the breakers of the sea—
 so majestic is *ADONAI* on high!
 5 Your testimonies are very sure.
 Holiness befits Your House, *ADONAI*, for endless days.

He Will Not Abandon His People

94 God of vengeance, *ADONAI*,
 God of vengeance, shine forth!
 2 Rise up, O Judge of the earth!
 Pay back to the proud what they deserve.
 3 How long will the wicked, *ADONAI*,
 how long will the wicked gloat?
 4 They gush out, they speak arrogance—
 all the evildoers keep boasting.
 5 They crush Your people, *ADONAI*,
 and afflict Your heritage.
 6 They slay the widow and the outsider,
 and murder the fatherless.
 7 So they say: " *ADONAI* does not see—
 the God of Jacob pays no attention."
 8 Pay attention, stupid among the people!
 Fools, when will you comprehend?
 9 He who planted the ear, does He not hear?
 He who formed the eye, does He not see?
 10 He who chastens nations, will He not rebuke—
 One who teaches humanity knowledge?
 11 *ADONAI* knows human thoughts—
 they are but a breath.
 12 Blessed is the one You discipline, *ADONAI*,
 and teach him from Your *Torah*,
 13 to give him rest from days of trouble
 —until a pit is dug for the wicked.
 14 For *ADONAI* will not forsake His people.
 He will never abandon His inheritance. ††

†† cf. Rom. 11:2.

15 For rightness will be restored to justice,
 and all the upright in heart will follow it.
 16 Who will rise up for me against the wicked?
 Who will stand up for me against evildoers?
 17 Unless *ADONAI* had been my help,
 my soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of si-
 lence.
 18 If I say: "My foot has slipped,"
 Your mercy, *ADONAI*, will hold me up.
 19 When my troubling thoughts multiply within me,
 Your consolations comfort my soul.
 20 Can a throne of corruption be aligned
 with You—planning distress by decree?
 21 They band together against the life of the right-
 eous,
 and condemn innocent blood. †
 22 But *ADONAI* has been my fortress
 and my God the rock of my refuge.
 23 He will repay them for their wickedness,
 and will annihilate them in their evil.
ADONAI our God will annihilate them.

Today, Hear His Voice

95 O come, let us sing for joy to *ADONAI*.
 Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.
 2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving.
 Let us shout joyfully to Him with songs.
 3 For *ADONAI* is a great God
 and a great King above all gods.
 4 In His hand are the depths of the earth,
 the mountain peaks are His also.
 5 The sea is His—He made it,
 and His hands formed the dry land.
 6 Come, let us worship and bow down.
 Let us kneel before *ADONAI* our Maker. ††
 7 For He is our God,
 and we are the people of His pasture,
 the flock of His hand.
 Today, if you hear His voice:
 8 "Do not harden your heart as at Meribah,
 as in the day of Massah in the wilderness,
 9 when your fathers tested Me,
 they challenged Me, even though they had seen My
 work.
 10 For forty years I loathed that generation.
 So I said: 'It is a people whose heart goes astray,
 who do not know My ways.'
 11 Therefore I swore in My anger,
 'They shall never enter into My rest.'"

Sing a New Song

96 Sing to *ADONAI* a new song!
 Sing to *ADONAI*, all the earth.
 2 Sing to *ADONAI*, bless His Name.
 Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to
 day.

† cf. Matt. 27:4. †† cf. Phil. 2:10.

3 Declare His glory among the nations,
 His marvelous deeds among all peoples.
 4 For great is *ADONAI*, and greatly to be praised.
 He is to be feared above all gods.
 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
 but *ADONAI* made the heavens.
 6 Splendor and majesty are before Him.
 Strength and beauty are in His Sanctuary.
 7 Ascribe to *ADONAI*, O families of peoples.
 Ascribe to *ADONAI* glory and strength.
 8 Ascribe to *ADONAI* the glory of His Name.
 Bring an offering and come into His courts.
 9 Bow down to *ADONAI* in holy splendor.
 Tremble before Him, all the earth.
 10 Say among the nations: " *ADONAI* reigns!"
 The world is firmly established—it will not move.
 He will judge the peoples with fairness.
 11 Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice.
 Let the sea roar—and all that fills it.
 12 Let the land exult—and all that is in it.
 Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy—
 13 before *ADONAI*, for He is coming!
 For He is coming to judge the earth.
 He will judge the world with righteousness
 and the peoples in His faithfulness. ‡

Exalted above All Gods

97 *ADONAI* reigns, let the earth rejoice,
 let the many islands be glad.
 2 Clouds and darkness are all around Him.
 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His
 throne.
 3 Fire goes before Him
 and burns up His adversaries on every side.
 4 His lightning lights up the world—
 the earth sees and trembles.
 5 The mountains melt like wax
 at the presence of *ADONAI*,
 at the presence of the Lord of all earth.
 6 The heavens declare His righteousness,
 and all the peoples have seen His glory.
 7 Let all who serve graven images be ashamed—who
 boast in idols.
 Bow down before Him, all you gods!
 8 Zion hears and is glad,
 and the daughters of Judah rejoice,
 because of Your judgments, *ADONAI*.
 9 For You, *ADONAI*, are *Elyon* above all the earth.
 You are exalted far above all gods.
 10 You who love *ADONAI*, hate evil!
 He watches over the souls of His godly ones.
 He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.
 11 Light is sown for the righteous
 and gladness for the upright in heart.
 12 Rejoice in *ADONAI*, you righteous ones,
 and praise His holy Name.

‡ cf. Rev. 19:11.

Creation Rejoices in His Salvation

98 (0) A psalm.
 (1) Sing to *ADONAI* a new song,
 for He has done marvelous things.
 His right hand and His holy arm
 have won victory for Him.
² *ADONAI* has made His salvation known.
 He has revealed His righteousness before the eyes of
 the nations.
³ He has remembered His lovingkindness,
 His faithfulness to the house of Israel.
 All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of
 our God.
⁴ Shout joyfully to *ADONAI*, all the earth.
 Break forth, sing for joy, and sing praises.
⁵ Sing praises to *ADONAI* with the harp,
 with the harp and a voice of melody.
⁶ With trumpets and sound of the *shofar*
 blast a sound before the King, *ADONAI*.
⁷ Let the sea roar and all within it,
 the world and those who dwell in it.
⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands,
 let the mountains sing for joy together—
⁹ before *ADONAI*, for He is coming to judge the earth.
 He will judge the world with righteousness
 and the peoples with fairness.

Worship at His Holy Hill

99 *ADONAI* reigns, let the peoples tremble.
 He is enthroned upon the *cheruvim*—let the
 earth shake!
² *ADONAI* is great in Zion
 and He is exalted above all the peoples.
³ Let them praise Your great
 and awesome Name: holy is He.
⁴ The might of a king loves justice.
 You have established fairness.
 You executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.
⁵ Exalt *ADONAI* our God
 and worship at His footstool: holy is He.
⁶ Moses and Aaron were among His *kohanim*—
 also Samuel among those calling on His Name.
 They called on *ADONAI* and He answered them.
⁷ He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud.
 They kept His testimonies, and the decree that He
 gave them.
⁸ *ADONAI* our God, You answered them.
 A forgiving God You were to them, though You
 avenged their misdeeds.
⁹ Exalt *ADONAI* our God,
 and worship at His holy hill,
 for holy is *ADONAI* our God.

Enter His Gates with Thanksgiving

100 (0) A psalm of thanksgiving.
 (1) Shout joyfully to *ADONAI*, all the earth!

² Serve *ADONAI* with gladness.
 Come before His presence with joyful singing.
³ Know that *ADONAI*, He is God.
 It is He who has made us, and we are His.
 We are His people, the sheep of His pasture.
⁴ Enter His gates with thanksgiving
 and His courts with praise!
 Praise Him, bless His Name.
⁵ For *ADONAI* is good.
 His lovingkindness endures forever,
 and His faithfulness to all generations.

Pledge of Integrity

101 (0) A psalm of David.
 (1) I will sing of lovingkindness and justice.
 To You, *ADONAI*, I will sing praises.
² I will behave wisely in the way of integrity
 —when will You come to me?
 I walk in my house with integrity in my heart.
³ No base thing will I set before my eyes.
 Twisted behavior I hate—it will not cling to me.
⁴ A perverse heart will depart from me.
 I will know nothing evil.
⁵ Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret
 —him I will silence.
 Who has haughty eyes and a proud heart
 —him I will not tolerate.
⁶ My eyes are on the trustworthy of the land,
 to be in my company.
 One walking in a blameless way will serve me.
⁷ No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house.
 No one who utters lies will endure before my eyes.
⁸ Each morning I silence all the land's wicked ones—
 to cut off from *ADONAI*'s city every evildoer.

Prayer in Affliction

102 (0) A prayer of the afflicted one, when he is
 faint and pours out his lament before *ADONAI*:
² (1) *ADONAI*, hear my prayer,
 let my cry come to You.
³ (2) Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my
 distress.
 Turn Your ear to me—in the day I call,
 answer me quickly.
⁴ (3) For my days vanished like smoke,
 and my bones were burned like coals.
⁵ (4) My heart is stricken and withered like grass,
 so that I even forget to eat my bread.
⁶ (5) Because of the sound of my groaning,
 my bones cling to my flesh.
⁷ (6) I am like a pelican of the desert,
 like an owl of the waste places.
⁸ (7) I lie awake, like a lonely bird on a roof.
⁹ (8) My enemies taunt me all day.
 My deriders use my name to curse.
¹⁰ (9) For I have eaten ashes like bread,
 and mixed my drink with tears—

11 (10) because of Your indignation and wrath,
 for You have picked me up and tossed me aside.
 12 (11) My days are like a lengthening shadow,
 and I wither away like grass.
 13 (12) But You, *ADONAI*, sit enthroned forever.
 Your renown is from generation to generation.
 14 (13) You will arise and have compassion on Zion,
 for it is time to show favor to her,
 for the appointed time has come,
 15 (14) for her stones are dear to Your servants,
 and they cherish her dust.
 16 (15) So the nations will fear *ADONAI*'s Name
 and all the kings of the earth Your glory.
 17 (16) For *ADONAI* has rebuilt Zion.
 He has appeared in His glory.
 18 (17) He has turned to the prayer of the destitute,
 and has not despised their prayer.
 19 (18) Let it be written for a generation to come,
 that a people to be created may praise *ADONAI*.
 20 (19) For He looks down from His holy height,
 from heaven *ADONAI* gazes on the earth,
 21 (20) to hear the groaning of the prisoner,
 to set free those condemned to death,
 22 (21) to declare the Name of *ADONAI* in Zion
 and His praise in Jerusalem,
 23 (22) when the peoples and the kingdoms
 assemble to worship *ADONAI*.
 24 (23) He brought down my strength in midcourse.
 He shortened my days.
 25 (24) I say, "My God,
 do not take me up in the middle of my days.
 Your years endure through all generations!
 26 (25) Long ago You founded the earth,
 the heavens are the work of Your hands.
 27 (26) They will perish, but You will remain.
 All of them will wear out like a garment.
 Like clothing You change them, so they change.
 28 (27) But You are the same,
 and Your years will never end.
 29 (28) The children of Your servants will live.
 Their descendants will be established before You."

As a Father Has Compassion

103 (0) Of David.
 (1) Bless *ADONAI*, O my soul,
 and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.
 2 Bless *ADONAI*, O my soul,
 and forget not all His benefits:
 3 He forgives all your iniquity.
 He heals all your diseases.
 4 He redeems your life from the Pit.
 He crowns you with lovingkindness and compassions.
 5 He satisfies your years with good things,
 so that your youth is renewed like an eagle.
 6 *ADONAI* executes justice—
 judgments for all who are oppressed.
 7 He made His ways known to Moses,
 His deeds to the children of Israel.

8 *ADONAI* is compassionate and gracious,
 slow to anger, and plentiful in mercy.
 9 He will not always accuse,
 nor will He keep His anger forever.
 10 He has not treated us according to our sins,
 or repaid us according to our iniquities.
 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
 so great is His mercy for 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 *ADONAI* has compassion on those who fear Him.
 14 For He knows our frame.
 He remembers that we are but dust.
 15 As for man, his days are like grass—
 he flourishes like a flower of the field,
 16 but when the wind blows over it, it is gone,
 and its place is no longer known.
 17 But the mercy of *ADONAI* is from everlasting to ever-
 lasting
 on those who revere Him,
 His righteousness to children's children,
 18 to those who keep His covenant,
 who remember to observe His instructions.
 19 *ADONAI* has set up His throne in the heavens,
 and His kingdom rules over all.
 20 Bless *ADONAI*, you angels of His:
 mighty in strength, performing His word,
 upon hearing the utterance of His word.
 21 Bless *ADONAI*, all you His armies,
 His servants who do His will.
 22 Bless *ADONAI*, all His works everywhere in His do-
 minion.
 Bless *ADONAI*, O my soul!

ADONAI Rejoices in His Works!

104 Bless *ADONAI*, O my soul.
ADONAI my God, You are very great!
 You are clothed with splendor and majesty—
 2 wrapping Yourself in light as a robe,
 stretching out heaven like a curtain,
 3 laying beams for His upper rooms in waters,
 making the clouds His chariot,
 walking on the wings of the wind,
 4 making His angels spirits,
 His servants a flaming fire.
 5 He set the earth upon its foundations,
 so it should not totter forever and ever.
 6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment—
 the waters standing above the mountains.
 7 At Your rebuke the waters fled.
 At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away.
 8 The waters go up the mountains,
 then down to the valleys—
 to the place that You assigned to them.
 9 You set a boundary to the waters
 that they may not cross over,
 so they may not return to cover the earth.

10 You make springs gush into the valleys.
 They run between the mountains.
 11 They give drink to all the beasts of the field—
 the wild donkeys quench their thirst.
 12 Beside them the birds of the sky dwell—
 they sing among the branches.
 13 He waters mountains from His upper rooms.
 The earth is full of the fruit of Your labors.
 14 He causes grass to spring up for the cattle,
 and vegetation for man to cultivate,
 to bring forth bread out of the earth,
 15 wine that makes man's heart glad,
 oil to make his face shine,
 and bread that sustains man's heart.
 16 The trees of *ADONAI* are satisfied,
 the cedars of Lebanon that He planted,
 17 where birds make their nests,
 and the stork—her home is the fir trees.
 18 The high mountains are for wild goats,
 the cliffs a refuge for rock badgers.
 19 He made the moon for appointed times,
 the sun knows its going down.
 20 You bring darkness, so it becomes night,
 when all the beasts of the forest prowl.
 21 The young lions roar for prey,
 seeking their food from God.
 22 But when the sun rises, they gather
 and lie down in their dens.
 23 Man goes out to his work,
 and to his labor until the evening.
 24 *ADONAI*, how countless are Your works!
 In wisdom You made them all—
 the earth is full of Your creatures.
 25 There is the sea, vast and wide,
 teeming with gliding things innumerable,
 living creatures, both small and large.
 26 There, ships go to and fro.
 Leviathan—You formed to frolic there.
 27 They all look to You to give them
 their food at the right time.
 28 When You give it to them, they gather it up.
 When You open Your hand, they are satisfied with
 good.
 29 But when You hide Your face—they are dismayed.
 You take away their breath—they perish,
 and return to their dust.
 30 You send forth Your *Ruach*—they are created,
 and You renew the face of the earth.
 31 May the glory of *ADONAI* endure forever!
 May *ADONAI* rejoice in His works!
 32 He looks at the earth, and it trembles.
 He touches the mountains, and they smoke.
 33 I will sing to *ADONAI* as long as I live!
 I will sing praise to my God yet again!
 34 Let my meditation be sweet to Him.
 I—I will rejoice in *ADONAI*.
 35 Let sinners vanish from the earth
 and let the wicked be no more.

Bless *ADONAI*, O my soul. *Halleluyah*!

Tell His Wonders for Israel

105 Praise *ADONAI*, call upon His Name.
 Make known His deeds among the peoples.
 2 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him—
 tell about all His wonders!
 3 Glory in His holy Name.
 Let the heart of those who seek *ADONAI* rejoice.
 4 Seek *ADONAI* and His strength,
 seek His face always.
 5 Remember His wonders that He has done,
 His miracles and the judgments of His mouth,
 6 O seed of Abraham, His servant,
 O children of Jacob, His chosen ones.
 7 He is *ADONAI* our God.
 His judgments are in all the earth.
 8 He remembers His covenant forever—
 the word He commanded for a thousand genera-
 tions—
 9 which He made with Abraham,
 and swore to Isaac,
 10 and confirmed to Jacob as a decree,
 to Israel as an everlasting covenant,
 11 saying, "To you I give the land of Canaan,
 the portion of your inheritance."
 12 When they were but few in number,
 few indeed, and foreigners in it, †
 13 wandering from nation to nation,
 from one kingdom to another people,
 14 He allowed no one to oppress them—
 for their sake He rebuked kings:
 15 "Touch not My anointed ones,
 and do My prophets no harm."
 16 He called down a famine on the land.
 He broke the whole supply of bread.
 17 He sent a man before them—
 Joseph, sold as a slave.
 18 They hurt His feet with shackles,
 he was put in irons—
 19 till the time that his word came true—
 the word of *ADONAI* proved him true!
 20 The king sent and released him.
 The ruler of the peoples set him free.
 21 He made him lord of his house,
 ruler over all his possessions,
 22 to discipline his princes at his will,
 and teach his elders wisdom.
 23 Then Israel came into Egypt,
 Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
 24 He made His people very fruitful,
 and made them more numerous than their foes.
 25 He turned their hearts to hate His people,
 to deal shrewdly with His servants.
 26 He sent Moses His servant,
 and Aaron, whom He had chosen.
 27 They performed His signs among them

† cf. Heb. 11:9.

—miracles in the land of Ham.
²⁸ He sent darkness, and it was dark,
 so they did not rebel against His words.
²⁹ He turned their waters into blood,
 causing their fish to die.
³⁰ Their land swarmed with frogs,
 even in their royal chambers.
³¹ He spoke, and a swarm of gnats came
 within all their borders.
³² He gave them a rain of hail,
 flames of fire throughout their land.
³³ He struck their vines and their fig trees
 and shattered the trees of their country.
³⁴ He spoke, and the locust came
 —young locusts without number—
³⁵ to eat up every green thing in their land
 and eat up the fruit of their ground.
³⁶ Then He struck all the firstborn in their land,
 the firstfruits of all their vigor.
³⁷ Then He brought them out with silver and gold,
 and no one among His tribes faltered.
³⁸ Egypt was glad when they left—
 for dread of them had fallen on them.
³⁹ He spread a cloud as a covering
 and fire to give light at night.
⁴⁰ They asked, and He brought quail,
 and satisfied them with the bread of heaven. †
⁴¹ He opened a rock, and waters gushed out,
 flowed as a river in dry places.
⁴² For He remembered His holy word
 to Abraham His servant.
⁴³ So He brought forth His people with joy,
 His chosen ones with singing.
⁴⁴ He gave them the lands of the nations,
 so they inherited the labor of the peoples
⁴⁵ so that they might keep His statutes
 and observe His laws.
Halleluyah!

ADONAI Still Faithful to Israel

106 *Halleluyah!*
 Praise *ADONAI*, for He is good,
 for His lovingkindness endures forever.
² Who can speak of *ADONAI*'s mighty acts
 or declare His praise?
³ Blessed are those who maintain justice,
 who do what is right at all times.
⁴ Remember me, *ADONAI*,
 when You show favor to Your people.
 Visit me with Your salvation,
⁵ so I may behold the prosperity of Your chosen ones,
 exult in the joy of Your nation,
 and give praise with Your inheritance.
⁶ We have sinned with our fathers,
 we have committed iniquity,
 we have acted wickedly.
⁷ Our fathers in Egypt did not ponder Your wonders.

† *cf. John 6:31-40.*

Nor did they remember Your abundant lovingkind-
 ness,
 but rebelled by the sea—at the Sea of Reeds.
⁸ Yet He saved them for His Name's sake,
 to make His mighty power known.
⁹ He rebuked the Sea of Reeds
 and it dried up,
 and He led them through the depths as through a
 wilderness.
¹⁰ So He saved them from the hand of those who hat-
 ed them,
 redeemed them from the enemy's hand.
¹¹ The waters covered their adversaries—
 not one of them was left.
¹² Then they believed His words.
 They were singing His praise.
¹³ How quickly they forgot His works,
 and would not wait for His counsel!
¹⁴ In the wilderness they craved ravenously,
 in the desert they tested God.
¹⁵ So He gave them what they asked for,
 but sent a wasting disease among them.
¹⁶ Then they envied Moses in the camp,
 and also Aaron, the holy one of *ADONAI*.
¹⁷ The earth opened up, swallowed Dathan,
 and covered the company of Abiram.
¹⁸ Also a fire blazed in their company,
 a flame consumed the wicked.
¹⁹ They made a calf in Horeb
 and worshiped a molten image.
²⁰ Thus they exchanged their glory
 for an image of a grass-eating ox.
²¹ They forgot God their Savior,
 who had done great things in Egypt—
²² miracles in the land of Ham,
 awesome things by the Sea of Reeds.
²³ So He commanded their extermination,
 had not Moses, His chosen one,
 stood in the breach before Him,
 to turn His wrath from destroying them.
²⁴ Then they scorned the pleasing land—
 they did not trust in His word.
²⁵ Instead, they grumbled in their tents.
 They would not listen to *ADONAI*'s voice.
²⁶ Therefore He swore to them
 that He would make them fall in the desert,
²⁷ and disperse their offspring among the nations,
 and scatter them through the lands.
²⁸ Then they yoked themselves to Baal of Peor,
 and ate the sacrifices of dead things.
²⁹ So they provoked Him with their deeds,
 and a plague broke out among them.
³⁰ But Phinehas stood up and intervened,
 so the plague was stopped.
³¹ It was credited to him as righteousness,
 from generation to generation forever.
³² By the waters of Meribah they angered Him,
 and trouble came on Moses because of them.

³³ For they embittered his spirit
 and he spoke rashly with his lips.
³⁴ They did not destroy the peoples,
 as *ADONAI* had commanded them.
³⁵ Instead they mingled with the nations
 and learned their practices.
³⁶ They worshiped their idols,
 which became a snare to them.
³⁷ They even sacrificed their sons
 and their daughters to demons.
³⁸ They shed innocent blood—
 the blood of their sons and their daughters,
 sacrificed to the idols of Canaan.
 So the land was desecrated with blood.
³⁹ So they defiled themselves by their deeds,
 and prostituted themselves by their practices.
⁴⁰ Therefore the anger of *ADONAI* was kindled against
 His people,
 and He abhorred His inheritance.
⁴¹ He handed them to the nations—
 those who hated them ruled over them.
⁴² Their enemies oppressed them,
 so they were subdued under their hand.
⁴³ Many times He delivered them,
 but they kept rebelling deliberately,
 and so sank low into their iniquity.
⁴⁴ Yet He saw their distress,
 when He heard their cry,
⁴⁵ remembered His covenant to them, †
 and relented in the greatness of His mercy.
⁴⁶ He caused them to be pitied
 in the presence of all their captors.
⁴⁷ Save us, *ADONAI* our God,
 and gather us from the nations,
 so we may praise Your holy Name
 and triumph in Your praise.
⁴⁸ Blessed be *ADONAI*, the God of Israel,
 from everlasting even to everlasting!
 Let all the people say, " *Amen!* "
Halleluyah!

His *Chesed* and His Wonders

107 Praise *ADONAI*, for He is good,
 for His lovingkindness endures forever.
² Let the redeemed of *ADONAI* say so—
 whom He redeemed from the hand of the foe,
³ whom He gathered out of the lands,
 from the east and from the west,
 from the north and from the sea.
⁴ Some wandered in a desert, a wasteland.
 They found no way to an inhabited city.
⁵ Hungry and thirsty,
 their souls ebbed away.
⁶ So they cried out to *ADONAI* in their distress,
 and He delivered them out of their troubles.
⁷ Then He led them by a straight way
 to go to a city where they could live.

† cf. Luke 1:67-79.

⁸ Let them praise *ADONAI* for His mercy
 and His wonders for the children of men,
⁹ for He satisfies the thirsty soul
 and fills the hungry soul with goodness.
¹⁰ Some sat in darkness and deep gloom,
 prisoners in misery and iron chains,
¹¹ for they had defied God's words,
 and spurned the counsel of *Elyon*.
¹² So He humbled their heart with trouble.
 They stumbled, and no one was helping.
¹³ So they cried out to *ADONAI* in their distress,
 and He delivered them out of their troubles.
¹⁴ He brought them out of darkness
 and deep gloom, breaking their chains.
¹⁵ Let them praise *ADONAI* for His mercy,
 and His wonders for the children of men,
¹⁶ for He shattered bronze gates,
 and broke into pieces iron bars.
¹⁷ Some became fools because of their rebellious
 ways,
 and were afflicted due to their iniquities.
¹⁸ Their soul abhorred all food,
 and they drew near the gates of death.
¹⁹ So they cried out to *ADONAI* in their distress,
 and He delivered them out of their troubles.
²⁰ He sent His word and healed them,
 and rescued them from their pits.
²¹ Let them praise *ADONAI* for His mercy,
 and His wonders for the children of men.
²² Let them sacrifice thank offerings
 and tell of His works with joyful singing.
²³ Some go out to the sea in ships,
 doing business on the mighty waters.
²⁴ They saw the works of *ADONAI*,
 and His wonders in the deep.
²⁵ For He spoke and raised a stormy wind,
 lifting up towering waves.
²⁶ They mounted up to the sky
 and plunged down to the depths.
 In their peril their souls melted away.
²⁷ They reeled and staggered like a drunk,
 and all their skill was bewildered.
²⁸ So they cried out to *ADONAI* in their distress,
 and He brought them out of their troubles.
²⁹ He stilled the storm to a whisper—
 the waves were hushed. ††
³⁰ They were glad when it became calm,
 and He led them to their desired haven.
³¹ Let them praise *ADONAI* for His mercy,
 and His wonders to the children of men.
³² Let them exalt Him in the congregation of the peo-
 ple,
 and praise Him at the assembly of elders.
³³ He turns rivers into a wilderness
 and springs of water into thirsty ground,
³⁴ and a fruitful land into a salt waste,
 because of the evil of its inhabitants.

†† cf. Luke 8:24-25.

35 He turns a desert into a pool of water,
a dry land into springs of water.
36 There He brings the hungry to live,
and they establish a city for a dwelling.
37 So they sow fields and plant vineyards
that yield a fruitful harvest.
38 He blesses them, they multiply greatly,
and He does not let their herds diminish,
39 after they were few and crushed
by oppression, calamity, and sorrow.
40 He pours contempt on princes,
making them wander in trackless waste.
41 But He lifts the needy high above affliction,
and makes their families like a flock.
42 The upright see it and are glad,
and all iniquity shuts its mouth.
43 Who is wise?
Let him observe these things,
and consider *ADONAI*'s lovingkindness.

With God We Do Valiantly

108 (0) A song, a psalm of David.
2 (1) My heart is steadfast, O God.
I will sing, sing praises with all my soul.
3 (2) Awake, harp and lyre—
I will awaken the dawn!
4 (3) I will give thanks to You, *ADONAI*, among the
peoples,
I will sing praises to You among the nations.
5 (4) For Your love is higher than the heavens,
Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.
6 (5) Be exalted, O God, above the heavens,
let Your glory be above all the earth.
7 (6) Let Your beloved ones be delivered.
Save with Your right hand, answer me!
8 (7) God has spoken in His Sanctuary:
"I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem,
and measure out the valley of Succot.
9 (8) Gilead is Mine, Manasseh is Mine.
Also Ephraim is a helmet for My head,
Judah is My scepter.
10 (9) Moab is My washbowl.
I throw My shoe on Edom.
I shout in triumph over Philistia."
11 (10) Who will bring me into the fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
12 (11) O God, have You not spurned us?
Will You go out no more with our armies?
13 (12) Give us help against the adversary—
for useless is deliverance through man.
14 (13) With God we will do valiantly—
and He will trample our foes.

Prayer against an Accuser

109 (0) For the music director, a psalm of David.
(1) O God of my praise, be not silent.
2 For the wicked and the deceitful

have opened their mouth against me.
They spoke to me with a lying tongue,
3 with hateful words surrounded me,
and fought against me without cause.
4 In return for my love they are my accusers,
but I am in prayer.
5 They repay me evil for good,
and hatred for my love.
6 Set a wicked man over him,
let an accuser † stand at his right hand.
7 When he is judged,
let him be found guilty,
and may his prayer be as sin.
8 Let his days be few,
let another take his position.
9 May his children be fatherless,
and his wife a widow.
10 Let his children wander and beg
and may they search in their ruins.
11 Let a creditor seize all he has,
and may strangers plunder his labor.
12 Let no one show him mercy,
or take pity on his fatherless children.
13 Let his posterity be cut off,
and his name be blotted out in the next generation.
14 May the guilt of his fathers be remembered before
ADONAI,
the sin of his mother never blotted out.
15 Let their sins be before *ADONAI* continually,
that He may cut off the memory of them from the
earth.
16 For he never remembered to show mercy.
But he persecuted a poor and needy man,
crushed in spirit, to put him to death.
17 How he loved cursing—
may it fall on him!
He had no pleasure in blessing—
may it be far from him!
18 He wore cursing like his robe,
until it filled his belly like water, and his bones like oil.
19 May it be like a cloak wrapped around him,
like a belt tied around him always.
20 Let this be *ADONAI*'s reward to my accusers,
and to those who speak evil against me.
21 But You, *ADONAI* my Lord,
deal with me for Your Name's sake.
Because Your lovingkindness is good, deliver me.
22 For I am afflicted and needy,
and my heart is wounded within me.
23 I fade away like an evening shadow,
shaken off like a locust.
24 My knees totter from fasting,
and my flesh is lean, with no fat.
25 And I have become a taunt to them.
When they see me, they wag their head.
26 Help me, *ADONAI* my God,
Save me through Your lovingkindness.

† Hebrew *satan*

27 Let them know that it is Your hand—
that You, *ADONAI*, have done it.
28 They may curse, but You bless.
When they arise, they will be ashamed,
but Your servant will rejoice.
29 My accusers will be clothed in disgrace,
and wrapped in shame as in a cloak.
30 I will greatly thank *ADONAI* with my mouth,
and in the midst of a throng will I praise Him.
31 For He stands at the right hand of the needy,
to save him from those who condemn his soul.

My Lord Is a *Kohen* Forever

110 (0) A psalm of David.
(1) *ADONAI* declares to my Lord:
"Sit at My right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet."[†]
2 *ADONAI* will extend your mighty rod from Zion:
"Rule in the midst of your enemies."^{††}
3 Your people will be a freewill offering in a day of
your power.
In holy splendors, from dawn's womb,
yours is the dew of your youth.
4 *ADONAI* has sworn, and will not change His mind:
"You are a *Kohen* forever according to the order of
Melchizedek."[‡]
5 My Lord is at your right hand.
He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.
6 He will judge among the nations, heaping up
corpses.
He will crush heads over the entire land.
7 He will drink from a stream along the way
—so His head will be exalted.

The Beginning of Wisdom

111 *Halleluyah*! I praise *ADONAI* with all my heart
in the company and congregation of the up-
right.
2 Great are the works of *ADONAI* —
searched out by all who delight in them.
3 Glorious and majestic is His work,
and His righteousness endures forever.
4 He made His wonders memorable.
ADONAI is gracious and full of compassion.
5 He gives food to those who fear Him.
He remembers His covenant forever.
6 He shows His people His powerful deeds,
giving them the heritage of the nations.
7 The works of His hands are truth and justice.
All His precepts are trustworthy—
8 they are upheld forever and ever,
made in truth and uprightness.
9 He has sent redemption to His people.
He has ordained His covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is His Name.

[†] cf. Matt. 22:44; Acts 2:34-35; 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 1:13. ^{††} cf.
Heb. 1:8; Rev. 12:5; 19:15. [‡] cf. Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17, 21.

10 The fear of *ADONAI* is the beginning of wisdom.
All who follow His precepts have good understand-
ing.
His praise endures forever!

Blessed Is the Righteous Man

112 *Halleluyah*! Happy is the man who fears
ADONAI,
who delights greatly in His *mitzvot*.
2 His offspring will be mighty in the land.
The generation of the upright will be blessed.
3 Wealth and riches are in his house,
and his righteousness endures forever.
4 Light shines in the darkness for the upright.
Gracious, compassionate, and just is he.
5 Good comes to a man who is gracious and lends.
He will order his affairs with fairness.
6 Surely he will never be shaken.
The righteous are remembered forever.
7 He is not afraid of bad news—
his heart is steadfast, trusting in *ADONAI*.
8 His heart is secure, he will not fear—
until he gazes on his foes.
9 He gives freely to the poor.
His righteousness endures forever.
His horn is lifted high in honor.
10 The wicked will see it and be indignant.
He will gnash with his teeth and waste away.
The desire of the wicked will perish.

From the Rising of the Sun

113 *Halleluyah*! Praise, O servants of *ADONAI*,
praise the Name of *ADONAI*.
2 Blessed be the Name of *ADONAI*
from now and forever.
3 From the rising of the sun to its going down
the Name of *ADONAI* is to be praised.
4 *ADONAI* is high above all nations,
His glory is above the heavens.
5 Who is like *ADONAI* our God,
enthroned on high,
6 who brings Himself down to look
upon heaven and upon earth?
7 He raises the poor from the dust,
lifts up the needy out of the dunghill,
8 to seat him with princes,
with the princes of His people.
9 He settles the barren woman in her home
as a joyful mother of children.
Halleluyah!

Passover Song

114 When Israel came out of Egypt,
Jacob's house from a people foreign-speaking,
2 Judah became His Sanctuary,
Israel His dominion.
3 The sea saw and fled,

the Jordan turned back.
 4 The mountains skipped like rams,
 the hills like lambs.
 5 Why was it, O sea, that you fled?
 O Jordan, that you turned back?
 6 O mountains, that you skipped like rams?
 O hills, like lambs?
 7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,
 at the presence of the God of Jacob,
 8 who turned the rock into a pool of water,
 the flint into a spring of water.

Bless the Maker of Heaven and Earth

115 Not to us, *ADONAI*, not to us,
 but to Your Name be the glory—
 because of Your love and Your faithfulness.
 2 Why should the nations say:
 “Where is their God now?”
 3 Our God is in the heavens—
 He does whatever pleases Him!
 4 Their idols are silver and gold,
 the work of human hands.
 5 They have mouths, but cannot speak;
 eyes, but cannot see.
 6 They have ears, but cannot hear;
 noses, but cannot smell.
 7 They have hands, but cannot feel;
 feet, but cannot walk,
 nor utter a sound with their throat.
 8 Those making them will become like them
 —everyone trusting in them.
 9 O Israel, trust in *ADONAI* —
 He is their help and their shield!
 10 O house of Aaron, trust in *ADONAI* —
 He is their help and their shield!
 11 O you who fear *ADONAI*, trust in *ADONAI* —
 He is their help and their shield!
 12 *ADONAI* has been mindful of us,
 He will bless:
 He will bless the house of Israel;
 He will bless the house of Aaron;
 13 He will bless those who fear *ADONAI*,
 the small together with the great.
 14 May *ADONAI* increase you more and more
 —you and your children.
 15 May you be blessed by *ADONAI*,
 Maker of heaven and earth.
 16 The heavens are the heavens of *ADONAI*,
 but the earth He gave to the children of men.
 17 The dead do not praise *ADONAI*,
 nor do any who go down into silence.
 18 But we—we will bless *ADONAI*
 both now and forever. *Halleluyah!*

Lift up the Cup of Salvation

116 I love *ADONAI*,
 for He hears my voice, my cries.

2 Because He has turned His ear to me,
 I will call on Him all my days.
 3 The ropes of death entangled me,
 and the torments of *Sheol* found me.
 I found trouble and sorrow.
 4 Then I called upon the Name of *ADONAI*:
 “*ADONAI*, save my soul!”
 5 *ADONAI* is gracious and righteous—
 yes, our God is compassionate.
 6 *ADONAI* protects the simple-hearted.
 When I was brought low, He saved me.
 7 Return to your rest, my soul,
 for *ADONAI* has been good to you.
 8 For You delivered my soul from death,
 my eyes from tears,
 my feet from stumbling.
 9 I will walk before *ADONAI*
 in the lands of the living.
 10 I trusted even when I said,
 “I am very afflicted”—
 11 even when I said in my haste,
 “All men are liars.”
 12 How can I repay *ADONAI*
 for all His bounties to me?
 13 I will lift up the cup of salvation,
 and call on the Name of *ADONAI*.
 14 I will fulfill my vows to *ADONAI*
 in the presence of all His people.
 15 Precious in the sight of *ADONAI*
 is the death of His *kedoshim*.
 16 O *ADONAI*! Surely I am Your servant.
 I am Your servant,
 the son of Your maidservant.
 You have freed me from my bonds.
 17 To You I will offer a sacrifice of praise,
 and will call on the Name of *ADONAI*.
 18 I will fulfill my vows to *ADONAI*
 in the presence of all His people,
 19 in the courts of the House of *ADONAI*,
 in your midst, O Jerusalem. *Halleluyah!*

Praise Him, All You Nations

117 Praise *ADONAI*, all you nations!
 Glorify Him, all you people.
 2 For great is His lovingkindness toward us,
 and *ADONAI*'s truth endures forever.
Halleluyah!

His *Chesed* Endures Forever

118 Praise † *ADONAI*, for He is good.
 For His lovingkindness endures forever.
 2 O let Israel say:
 “For His lovingkindness endures forever.”
 3 O let the house of Aaron say:
 “For His lovingkindness endures forever.”
 4 O let those who fear *ADONAI* say:

† Hebrew *hodu* Give thanks to

“For His lovingkindness endures forever.”
 5 Out of a tight place I called on *ADONAI* —
ADONAI answered me with a spacious place.
 6 *ADONAI* is for me—I will not fear!
 What can man do to me?
 7 *ADONAI* is for me, as my helper.
 I will see the downfall of those who hate me.
 8 It is better to take refuge in *ADONAI*
 than to trust in man.
 9 It is better to take refuge in *ADONAI*
 than to trust in princes.
 10 All nations surrounded me—
 in the Name of *ADONAI* I cut them off.
 11 They surrounded me, yes, all around me—
 in the Name of *ADONAI* I cut them off.
 12 They swarmed around me like bees—
 they were extinguished like burning thorns—
 in the Name of *ADONAI* I cut them off.
 13 You pushed me hard to make me fall,
 but *ADONAI* helped me.
 14 *ADONAI* is my strength and song,
 and He has become my salvation. †
 15 Shouts of joy and victory
 are in the tents of the righteous:
 “*ADONAI*’s right hand is mighty! ††
 16 *ADONAI*’s right hand is lifted high!
ADONAI’s right hand is mighty!”
 17 I will not die, but live,
 and proclaim what *ADONAI* has done!
 18 *ADONAI* has chastened me hard,
 but has not given me over to death.
 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
 that I may enter through them and praise *ADONAI* .
 20 This is the gate of *ADONAI* —
 the righteous will enter through it. ‡
 21 I give You thanks, because You have answered me
 and have become my salvation.
 22 The stone the builders rejected
 has become the capstone. ††
 23 It is from *ADONAI* :
 it is marvelous in our eyes!
 24 This is the day that *ADONAI* has made!
 Let us rejoice and be glad in it!
 25 *Hoshia-na!* Please, *ADONAI* , save now!
 We beseech You, *ADONAI* , prosper us!
 26 *Baruch ha-Ba b'Shem ADONAI* —
 Blessed is He who comes in the Name of *ADONAI* . ††
 We bless you from the House of *ADONAI* .
 27 *ADONAI* is God, and He has given us light.
 Join the festival with branches, up to the horns of the
 altar. †††
 28 You are my God, and I praise You.
 You are my God—I exalt You!
 29 Praise *ADONAI* , for He is good,

† cf. Luke 1:68-69. †† cf. Luke 1:51a. ‡ cf. Rev. 22:14. †† cf. Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:7.
 †† cf. Matt. 21:9; 23:39; Mark 11:9; Luke 13:35; 19:38; John 12:13.
 ††† Or bind the festival offering to the horns of the altar

for His lovingkindness endures forever.

Learn Torah Letter by Letter

ALEPH א

119 Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
 who walk in the *Torah* of *ADONAI* .
 2 Happy are those who keep His testimonies,
 who seek Him with a whole heart,
 3 who also do no injustice, but walk in His ways.
 4 You have commanded that Your precepts
 be kept diligently.
 5 Oh that my ways were steadfast
 to observe Your decrees!
 6 Then I would not be ashamed,
 when I consider all Your *mitzvot* .
 7 I will praise You with an upright heart
 as I learn Your righteous judgments.
 8 I will observe Your statutes.
 Never abandon me utterly!

BET ב

9 How can a young man keep his way pure?
 By guarding it according to Your word.
 10 With my whole heart have I sought You
 —let me not stray from Your *mitzvot* .
 11 I have treasured Your word in my heart,
 so I might not sin against You.
 12 Blessed are You, *ADONAI* .
 Teach me Your statutes.
 13 With my lips I rehearse
 all the rulings of Your mouth.
 14 I rejoice in the way of Your testimonies
 above all wealth.
 15 I will meditate on Your precepts,
 and regard Your ways.
 16 I will delight in Your decrees.
 I will never forget Your word.

GIMEL ג

17 Do good to Your servant
 that I may live and keep Your word.
 18 Open my eyes, so I may behold
 wonders from Your *Torah* .
 19 I am a temporary dweller on earth—
 do not hide Your *mitzvot* from me.
 20 My soul is crushed with longing
 for Your judgments at all times.
 21 You rebuke the proud, who are cursed,
 who wander from Your *mitzvot* .
 22 Take scorn and contempt away from me,
 for I have kept Your testimonies.
 23 Though princes sit and talk against me,
 Your servant meditates on Your decrees.
 24 For Your testimonies are my delight—
 they are also my counselors.

DALET ט

25 My soul clings to the dust.
 Revive me according to Your word!
 26 I told of my ways and You answered me.
 Teach me Your statutes.
 27 Help me discern the way of Your precepts,
 so I may meditate on Your wonders.
 28 My soul weeps with grief.
 Make me stand firm with Your word.
 29 Turn me away from the deceitful way,
 and be gracious to me with Your *Torah* .
 30 I have chosen the way of faithfulness.
 I have set my heart on Your judgments.
 31 I cling to Your testimonies.
ADONAI , do not put me to shame!
 32 I run the course of Your *mitzvot* ,
 for You open wide my heart.

HEY ה

33 Teach me the way of Your decrees, *ADONAI* ,
 and I will follow them to the end.
 34 Give me understanding,
 that I may keep Your *Torah*
 and observe it with all my heart.
 35 Help me walk in the path of Your *mitzvot* —
 for I delight in it.
 36 Turn my heart to Your testimonies
 and not to dishonest gain.
 37 Turn my eyes away from gazing at vanity
 but revive me in Your ways.
 38 Fulfill Your word to Your servant,
 which leads to reverence for You.
 39 Make the disgrace I dread pass away,
 for Your judgments are good.
 40 Behold, I long for Your precepts.
 Revive me by Your righteousness.

VAV ו

41 May Your lovingkindnesses come to me, *ADONAI* —
 Your salvation according to Your word—
 42 so I may answer the one taunting me,
 for I trust in Your word.
 43 Never snatch out of my mouth a word of truth,
 for I hope in Your judgments.
 44 So I may always keep Your *Torah* ,
 forever and ever,
 45 and walk about in freedom.
 For I have sought Your precepts.
 46 I will speak of Your testimonies
 before kings, and never be ashamed.
 47 I delight in Your *mitzvot* ,
 which I love.
 48 I reach out my hands for Your *mitzvot* ,
 which I love,
 and meditate on Your decrees.

ZAYIN ז

49 Remember the word to Your servant,
 on which You have made me hope.
 50 My comfort in my affliction is this:
 Your word has kept me alive.
 51 The arrogant have viciously ridiculed me,
 yet I did not turn away from Your *Torah* .
 52 I remember Your judgments from of old,
ADONAI , and comfort myself.
 53 Burning indignation grips me,
 because of the wicked who forsake Your *Torah* .
 54 Your decrees have become my songs
 in the house where I dwell.
 55 In the night I remember Your Name, *ADONAI* ,
 and keep watching over Your *Torah* .
 56 This is my own:
 that I keep Your precepts.

CHET ח

57 *ADONAI* is my portion.
 I promised to guard Your words.
 58 I have entreated Your favor with all my heart.
 Be gracious to me according to Your word.
 59 I have considered my ways
 and turned my feet back to Your testimonies.
 60 I hasten and do not delay
 to obey Your *mitzvot* .
 61 The ropes of the wicked are coiled around me,
 but I did not forget Your *Torah* .
 62 At midnight I rise to praise You,
 because of Your righteous rulings.
 63 I am a companion of all who fear You,
 of those who observe Your precepts.
 64 The earth is full of Your lovingkindness.
ADONAI —teach me Your decrees.

TET ט

65 You do good to Your servant,
ADONAI , according to Your word.
 66 Teach me good sense and knowledge,
 for I trusted in Your *mitzvot* .
 67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,
 but now I keep Your word.
 68 You are good and keep doing good—
 teach me Your decrees.
 69 Though the proud smeared a lie on me,
 with all my heart I keep Your precepts.
 70 Their minds are insensible,
 but Your *Torah* is my delight.
 71 It is good for me that I was afflicted,
 so that I may learn Your decrees.
 72 The *Torah* from Your mouth is better to me
 than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

YOD י

73 Your hands have made me and formed me.

Give me understanding that I may learn Your *mitzvot*

⁷⁴ Those in awe of You see me and rejoice,
because I put my hope in Your word.
⁷⁵ I know, *ADONAI*, Your judgments are just.
In faithfulness You have afflicted me.
⁷⁶ May Your lovingkindness comfort me,
according to Your promise to Your servant.
⁷⁷ Let Your tender mercies reach me,
Let me live, for Your *Torah* is my delight.
⁷⁸ May the proud be put to shame
for wronging me with a lie,
but I will meditate on Your precepts.
⁷⁹ Let those in awe of You return to me—
those who know Your testimonies.
⁸⁰ My heart will have integrity in following Your de-
crees,
so that I would not be ashamed.

KAF כ

⁸¹ My soul faints with longing for Your salvation,
but I still hope in Your word.
⁸² My eyes are worn out longing for Your promise,
saying, "When will You comfort me?"
⁸³ Though I became like a wineskin dried in smoke,
I do not forget Your decrees.
⁸⁴ How many are the days of Your servant?
When will You execute judgment on my persecutors?
⁸⁵ The proud have dug pits for me—
that is not in accord with Your *Torah*!
⁸⁶ All Your *mitzvot* are faithful.
They persecute me with a lie—help me!
⁸⁷ They almost finished me off on earth.
But I—I will not forsake Your precepts.
⁸⁸ Revive me with Your lovingkindness,
so I may keep Your mouth's testimony.

LAMED ל

⁸⁹ Forever, *ADONAI*,
Your word stands firm in the heavens.
⁹⁰ Your faithfulness endures from generation to gener-
ation.
You established the earth, and it stands.
⁹¹ Your judgments stand today,
for all things are Your servants.
⁹² If Your *Torah* had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.
⁹³ I will never forget Your precepts.
For with them You have kept me alive.
⁹⁴ I am Yours, save me!
For I have sought out Your precepts.
⁹⁵ The wicked wait for me to destroy me.
But I will study Your testimonies.
⁹⁶ I have seen a limit to all perfection,
yet Your commandment is boundless.

MEM מ

⁹⁷ O how I love Your *Torah*!
It is my meditation all day.
⁹⁸ Your *mitzvot* make me wiser than my enemies
—for they are mine forever.
⁹⁹ I have more insight than all my teachers,
for Your testimonies are my meditation.
¹⁰⁰ I have gained more understanding than all my el-
ders,
for I have kept Your precepts.
¹⁰¹ I kept my feet from every evil way,
in order to follow Your word.
¹⁰² I do not turn away from Your rulings,
for You Yourself have taught me.
¹⁰³ How sweet is Your word to my taste—
yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
¹⁰⁴ From Your precepts I get discernment,
therefore I hate every false way.

NUN נ

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path. †
¹⁰⁶ I have sworn and confirmed
to observe Your righteous rulings.
¹⁰⁷ I am severely afflicted.
Keep me alive, *ADONAI*, according to Your word.
¹⁰⁸ Please accept the freewill offerings of my mouth,
ADONAI,
and teach me Your rulings.
¹⁰⁹ My soul is continually in danger,
yet I have not forgotten Your *Torah*.
¹¹⁰ The wicked have set a snare for me,
yet I did not stray from Your precepts.
¹¹¹ Your testimonies I have as a heritage
forever, for they are my heart's joy.
¹¹² I turned my heart to do Your decrees,
forever, to the very end.

SAMECH ס

¹¹³ I hate double-minded ones,
but Your *Torah* I love.
¹¹⁴ You are my hiding place and my shield
—in Your word I hope.
¹¹⁵ Away from me, evildoers,
so I may keep the *mitzvot* of my God!
¹¹⁶ Sustain me according to Your word, so I may live,
and let me not be ashamed of my hope.
¹¹⁷ Support me and I will be saved,
and study Your decrees continually.
¹¹⁸ You despise all who wander from Your decrees,
for their deceitfulness is in vain.
¹¹⁹ All the wicked of the earth You remove like dross.
Therefore I love Your testimonies.
¹²⁰ My flesh shudders for fear of You,
and I am in awe of Your judgments.

† cf. John 8:12; 12:35.

AYIN ׀

121 I did what is just and right.
 Do not leave me to my oppressors.
 122 Guarantee Your servant's well-being.
 Do not let arrogant ones oppress me.
 123 My eyes fail, longing for Your salvation
 and for Your righteous word.
 124 Deal with Your servant as befits Your lovingkind-
 ness,
 and teach me Your statutes.
 125 I am Your servant, give me discernment,
 so I may understand Your testimonies.
 126 It is time for *ADONAI* to act—
 they have violated Your *Torah* !
 127 Therefore I love Your *mitzvot*
 more than gold, more than pure gold.
 128 Therefore I esteem all Your precepts as right in
 every way
 —every false way I hate.

PE פ

129 Your testimonies are wonderful.
 Therefore my soul obeys them.
 130 The unfolding of Your words gives light,
 giving understanding to the simple.
 131 I opened my mouth wide and panted,
 for I longed for Your *mitzvot* .
 132 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
 as is fitting to those who love Your Name.
 133 Direct my footsteps in Your word,
 and let no iniquity get mastery over me.
 134 Redeem me from human oppression,
 and I will keep Your precepts.
 135 Make Your face shine on Your servant,
 and teach me Your decrees.
 136 Streams of water run down from my eyes,
 because they do not observe Your *Torah* .

TZADEE צ

137 Righteous are You, *ADONAI* ,
 and Your judgments are upright.
 138 You have commanded righteousness,
 Your testimonies, and great faithfulness.
 139 My zeal has consumed me,
 because my foes forgot Your words.
 140 Your word is thoroughly refined,
 and Your servant loves it.
 141 I am insignificant and despised,
 yet I have not forgotten Your precepts.
 142 Your justice is righteousness forever,
 and Your *Torah* is truth.
 143 Trouble and anguish have overtaken me,
 yet Your *mitzvot* are my delight.
 144 Your testimonies are righteous forever
 —make me understand, so I may live.

KOF ק

145 I cried out with all my heart,
 "Answer me, *ADONAI* !
 I will keep Your decrees."
 146 I cried out to You, "Save me,
 and I will keep Your testimonies."
 147 I am up before dawn, crying for help—
 I put my hope in Your word.
 148 My eyes are up before every night watch,
 as I meditate on Your word.
 149 Hear my voice with Your lovingkindness.
 Revive me, *ADONAI* , with Your judgments.
 150 Pursuers of wicked schemes draw near—
 they are far from Your *Torah* .
 151 You are near, *ADONAI* ,
 and all Your *mitzvot* are truth.
 152 Long ago I learned from Your testimonies
 that You founded them firmly forever.

RESH ר

153 See my affliction and rescue me,
 for I do not forget Your *Torah* .
 154 Defend my cause and redeem me.
 Restore my life through Your word.
 155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
 for they do not seek after Your decrees.
 156 Great are Your mercies, *ADONAI* .
 Restore my life with Your judgments.
 157 Many are my persecutors and my foes.
 Yet I do not turn from Your testimonies.
 158 I see the treacherous and loathe them,
 because they do not keep Your word.
 159 See how I loved Your precepts.
 Restore my life, *ADONAI* , with Your lovingkindness.
 160 Truth is the essence of Your word,
 and all Your righteous rulings are eternal.

SHIN ש

161 Princes persecute me for no reason,
 but my heart is in awe of Your words.
 162 I rejoice in Your word,
 as one who finds great spoil.
 163 I hate and abhor falsehood,
 but Your *Torah* I love.
 164 Seven times a day I praise You,
 because of Your righteous judgments.
 165 Great peace have they who love Your *Torah* ,
 and nothing causes them to stumble.
 166 I hope for Your salvation, *ADONAI* ,
 and do Your *mitzvot* .
 167 My soul has observed Your testimonies
 and I love them exceedingly.
 168 I observe Your precepts and Your laws,
 for all my ways are before You.

TAV ך

169 Let my cry come to You, *ADONAI*.
Grant me understanding by Your word.
170 Let my supplication come before You.
Deliver me, according to Your promise.
171 My lips utter praise,
for You teach me Your statutes.
172 My tongue sings of Your word,
for all Your *mitzvot* are righteous.
173 Let Your hand be ready to help me,
for I have chosen Your precepts.
174 I long for Your deliverance, *ADONAI*,
and Your *Torah* is my delight.
175 Let my soul live and praise You,
and may Your rulings help me.
176 I have strayed like a lost sheep—seek Your servant.
For I did not forget Your *mitzvot*.

I Am for *Shalom*

120 (0) A Song of Ascents.
(1) In my trouble I cried out to *ADONAI*,
and He answered me.
2 *ADONAI*, deliver my soul from lying lips,
from a deceitful tongue.
3 What can be given to you,
and what more can be done to you, O deceitful
tongue?—
4 sharp arrows of the mighty,
with burning coals of a broom tree!
5 Woe to me, for I sojourn in Meshech,
for I dwell among the tents of Kedar!
6 My soul has too long dwelt
with those who hate *shalom*.
7 I am for *shalom* and thus I speak,
but they are for war!

He Watches over You

121 (0) A Song of Ascents.
(1) I will lift up my eyes to the mountains—
from where does my help come?
2 My help comes from *ADONAI*,
Maker of heaven and earth.
3 He will not let your foot slip.
Your Keeper will not slumber.
4 Behold, the Keeper of Israel
neither slumbers nor sleeps.
5 *ADONAI* is your Keeper.
ADONAI is your shadow at your right hand.
6 The sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
7 *ADONAI* will protect you from all evil.
He will guard your life.
8 *ADONAI* will watch over your coming and your going
from this time forth and forevermore.

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

122 (0) A Song of Ascents. Of David.
(1) I rejoiced when they said to me,
“Let us go to the House of *ADONAI*.”
2 Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem—
3 Jerusalem, built as a city
joined together.
4 There the tribes go up,
the tribes of *ADONAI*
—as a testimony to Israel—
to praise the Name of *ADONAI*.
5 For there thrones for judgment are set up,
the thrones of the house of David.
6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem—
“May those who love you be at peace!
7 May there be *shalom* within your walls—
quietness within your palaces.”
8 For the sake of my brothers and friends,
I now say: “*Shalom* be within you.”
9 For the sake of the House of *ADONAI* our God,
I will seek your good.

Be Gracious to Your Servants

123 (0) A Song of Ascents.
(1) To You I lift up my eyes—
You enthroned in the heavens.
2 Behold, as the eyes of slaves to the hand of their
master,
as the eyes of a slave-girl to the hand of her mis-
tress—
so our eyes look to *ADONAI* our God, till He shows us
favor.
3 Show us favor, *ADONAI*, show us favor!
For we have endured much contempt.
4 Our soul has had enough
of the scorn of those at ease,
the contempt of the proud.

Had He Not Been on Our Side

124 (0) A Song of Ascents. Of David.
(1) “Had *ADONAI* not been on our side”
—let Israel now say—
2 “Had *ADONAI* not been on our side,
when men rose up against us,
3 then they would have swallowed us alive,
when their wrath burned against us.
4 Then the waters would have engulfed us,
the torrent would have swept over our soul,
5 then the raging waters
would have swept over our soul.”
6 Blessed be *ADONAI*, who has not given us
as prey for their teeth.
7 Our soul has escaped like a bird
out of the snare of the trappers—
the snare is broken, and we escaped!
8 Our help is in the Name of *ADONAI*,

Maker of heaven and earth.

Like the Mountains around Jerusalem

125 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) Those who trust in *ADONAI* are like Mount Zion—
 it cannot be moved, but endures forever.
² As the mountains are around Jerusalem, so *ADONAI* is all around His people, both now and forever.
³ For a scepter of wickedness will not rest over the land of the righteous—lest the righteous set their hands to evil.
⁴ Do good, *ADONAI*, to the good, and to those upright in their hearts.
⁵ But as for those who turn aside to their crooked ways, *ADONAI* will lead them away with evildoers. *Shalom* be upon Israel.

Joyful Restoration of Zion

126 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) When *ADONAI* restored the captives of Zion, it was as if we were dreaming.
² Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with a song of joy. Then they said among the nations, “*ADONAI* has done great things for them.”
³ *ADONAI* has done great things for us—we are joyful!
⁴ Restore us from captivity, *ADONAI*, like streams in the Negev.
⁵ Those who sow in tears will reap with a song of joy.
⁶ Whoever keeps going out weeping, carrying his bag of seed, will surely come back with a song of joy, carrying his sheaves.

He Gives Sleep to His Children

127 (0) A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.
 (1) Unless *ADONAI* builds the house, the builders labor in vain.
 Unless *ADONAI* watches over the city, the watchman stands guard in vain.
² In vain you rise up early and stay up late, eating the bread of toil—
 for He provides for His beloved ones even in their sleep.
³ Behold, children are a heritage of *ADONAI*—the fruit of the womb is a reward.
⁴ As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of one’s youth.
⁵ Happy is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they speak with their enemies at the gate.

Blessing on Those Who Fear God

128 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) Happy is everyone in awe of *ADONAI*, who walks in His ways,
² for you will eat the labor of your hands. You will be blessed and it will be good for you.
³ Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house. Your children will be like olive saplings around your table.
⁴ Behold, thus will the man be blessed who fears *ADONAI*.
⁵ May *ADONAI* bless you out of Zion, and may you see Jerusalem in prosperity all the days of your life,
⁶ and may you live to see your children’s children. *Shalom* be upon Israel!

Haters Won’t Prevail

129 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) “How many times they have been hostile to me,
 even from my youth”—let Israel now say—
² “How greatly they have been hostile to me, even from my youth. Yet they have not prevailed against me.
³ Plowmen plowed on my back—they made their furrows long!”
⁴ *ADONAI* is righteous—He has cut the ropes of the wicked.
⁵ May all who hate Zion be driven back in disgrace.
⁶ Let them be like grass on the roofs, which withers before it springs up—
⁷ with it a reaper cannot fill his hand, nor can a binder of sheaves fill his lap.
⁸ So the passersby may never say: “The blessing of *ADONAI* be upon you—we bless you in the Name of *ADONAI*.”

Forgiveness and Full Redemption

130 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) Out of the depths I cry to You, *ADONAI*!
² Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to the sound of my supplications.
³ If You, *ADONAI*, kept a record of iniquities—my Lord, who could stand?
⁴ For with You there is forgiveness, so You may be revered.
⁵ I wait for *ADONAI*, my soul waits, and in His word I hope.
⁶ My soul waits for my Lord, more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, wait for *ADONAI*.
 For with *ADONAI* there is lovingkindness,
 and with Him is full redemption,
⁸ and He will redeem Israel
 from all its iniquities.

Be Still My Soul

131 (0) A Song of Ascents. Of David.
 (1) *ADONAI*, my heart is not proud,
 nor my eyes lofty,
 nor do I go after things too great
 or too difficult for me.
² But I have calmed and quieted my soul—
 like a weaned child with his mother,
 like a weaned child is my soul within me.
³ O Israel, put your hope in *ADONAI*
 from this time forth and forever.

Promise of Ben-David

132 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) *ADONAI*, remember David,
 all his afflictions,
² and how he swore to *ADONAI*,
 vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:
³ "I will not enter the tent of my house
 nor lie on my bed,
⁴ nor will I give sleep to my eyes,
 nor slumber to my eyelids,
⁵ till I find a place for *ADONAI*,
 a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob."
⁶ Behold, we heard of it in Ephratha,
 we found it in the fields of Joar.
⁷ Let us go into His dwelling place,
 let us bow at His footstool.
⁸ Arise, *ADONAI*, to Your resting place—
 You, and the Ark of Your might.
⁹ Let Your *kohanim* wear righteousness,
 and let Your godly ones sing for joy.
¹⁰ For Your servant David's sake
 do not turn away the face of Your anointed. †
¹¹ *ADONAI* has sworn to David
 a true promise He will not revoke:
 "From the fruit of your body
 I will set one upon your throne— ††
¹² if your children keep My covenant
 and My law that I will teach them,
 then their sons will sit on your throne forever."
¹³ For *ADONAI* has chosen Zion,
 He has desired it for His dwelling:
¹⁴ "This is My resting place forever.
 Here I dwell, for I have desired it.
¹⁵ I will abundantly bless her food.
 I will satisfy her needy ones with bread.
¹⁶ I will clothe her *kohanim* with salvation,
 and her godly ones will sing aloud for joy.
¹⁷ There will I make a horn spring up for David, ‡

I have set up a lamp for My anointed.
¹⁸ His enemies I will clothe with shame,
 but upon himself his crown will shine."

Blessing of Unity

133 (0) A Song of Ascents. Of David.
 (1) Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
 for brothers to dwell together in unity!
² It is like the precious oil upon the head,
 coming down upon the beard—Aaron's beard—
 coming down on the collar of his robes.
³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
 coming down upon the mountains of Zion.
 For there *ADONAI* commanded the blessing
 —life forevermore!

Call to Evening Worship

134 (0) A Song of Ascents.
 (1) Behold, bless *ADONAI*, all servants of *ADONAI*,
 who stand by night in the House of *ADONAI*.
² Lift up your hands to the Sanctuary
 and bless *ADONAI*.
³ May *ADONAI* bless you out of Zion—
 Maker of heaven and earth.

Jacob as His Treasure

135 *Halleluyah* ! Praise the Name of *ADONAI*.
 Give praise, O servants of *ADONAI* —
² standing in the House of *ADONAI*,
 in the courts of the House of our God.
³ Praise *ADONAI*, for *ADONAI* is good.
 Sing praises to His Name, for it is delightful.
⁴ For *ADONAI* has chosen Jacob for Himself,
 Israel as His treasured possession. ††
⁵ For I have known that *ADONAI* is great,
 and that our Lord is above all gods.
⁶ Whatever *ADONAI* pleases, He does,
 in heaven and in earth,
 in the seas and in all deeps.
⁷ He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth.
 He makes lightning for the rain.
 He brings wind out of His storehouses.
⁸ He struck down the firstborn of Egypt,
 both man and beast.
⁹ He sent signs and wonders among you,
 O Egypt, on Pharaoh and all his servants.
¹⁰ He struck down many nations
 and slew mighty kings:
¹¹ Sihon, king of the Amorites,
 and Og, king of Bashan,
 and all the kingdoms of Canaan,
¹² and gave their land as an inheritance,
 an inheritance to His people Israel.
¹³ *ADONAI*, Your Name endures forever,

† Or *Messiah* †† cf. Acts 2:29-35. ‡ cf. Luke 1:69.

†† cf. 1 Pet. 2:9.

Your renown, *ADONAI*, from generation to generation.

¹⁴ For *ADONAI* will vindicate His people, and have compassion on His servants.

¹⁵ The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands.

¹⁶ They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see;

¹⁷ they have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there any breath in their mouths.

¹⁸ Those who make them will be like them—so will all who keep trusting in them.

¹⁹ O house of Israel, bless *ADONAI*!

O house of Aaron, bless *ADONAI*!

²⁰ O house of Levi, bless *ADONAI*!

You who revere *ADONAI*, bless *ADONAI*!

²¹ Blessed be *ADONAI* out of Zion,

who dwells in Jerusalem. *Halleluyah*!

His *Chesed* Endures Forever!

136 Praise *ADONAI*, for He is good, for His lovingkindness endures forever.

² Praise the God of gods, for His lovingkindness endures forever.

³ Praise the Lord of lords, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

⁴ who alone did great wonders, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

⁵ who made the heavens by wisdom, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

⁶ who spread the earth on the waters, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

⁷ who made great lights, for His lovingkindness endures forever—

⁸ the sun to rule by day, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

⁹ the moon and stars to rule by night, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁰ who struck Egypt in their firstborn, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹¹ and led out Israel from among them, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹² with a strong hand and outstretched arm, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹³ who cut the Sea of Reeds into parts, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁴ and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁵ but hurled Pharaoh and his army into the Sea of Reeds,

for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁶ who led His people through the desert, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁷ who struck down great kings, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁸ and slew mighty kings, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

¹⁹ Sihon, king of the Amorites,

for His lovingkindness endures forever, ²⁰ and Og, king of Bashan,

for His lovingkindness endures forever, ²¹ and gave their land for an inheritance,

for His lovingkindness endures forever, ²² an inheritance for Israel His servant,

for His lovingkindness endures forever. ²³ He remembered us in our lowly estate,

for His lovingkindness endures forever, ²⁴ and separated between us

and He delivered us from our adversaries, for His lovingkindness endures forever,

²⁵ who gives food to all flesh, for His lovingkindness endures forever.

²⁶ Praise the God of heaven,

for His lovingkindness endures forever!

By the Rivers of Babylon

137 By the rivers of Babylon, we sat down and wept,

when we remembered Zion.

² On the willows there we hung up our harps.

³ For there our captors demanded songs and our tormentors asked for joy:

“Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”

⁴ How can we sing a song of *ADONAI* in a foreign land?

⁵ If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither.

⁶ May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I cease to remember you,

if I do not set Jerusalem above my chief joy.

⁷ Remember, *ADONAI*, the children of Edom, what they said on the day Jerusalem fell:

“Strip her, strip her to her very foundation!”

⁸ O daughter of Babylon, the devastated one, happy is the one who repays you

as you have paid us.

⁹ Happy is the one who seizes your little ones and dashes them upon the rock.

Your Right Hand Delivers Me

138 (0) Of David.

(1) I praise You with all my heart.

In the presence of the mighty I will sing praises to You.

² I bow down toward Your holy Temple and praise Your Name for Your love and Your faithfulness.

For You—magnified above all Your Name and Your word.

³ On the day I called, You answered me.

You made me bold with strength in my soul.

⁴ All the kings of the earth will praise You, *ADONAI*, when they hear Your mouth's speech.

⁵ So they will sing of the ways of *ADONAI*, for great is the glory of *ADONAI*.

6 For though *ADONAI* is exalted,
yet He looks upon the lowly,
but the haughty He knows from afar.
7 Though I walk amid trouble,
You revive me.
You stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my
enemies,
and Your right hand delivers me.
8 *ADONAI* will fulfill His purpose for me.
Your lovingkindness, *ADONAI*, endures forever.
Do not abandon the work of Your hands.

How Precious Your Thoughts!

139 (0) For the music director: a psalm of David.
(1) *ADONAI*, You searched me and know me.
2 Whenever I sit down or stand up, You know it.
You discern my thinking from afar.
3 You observe my journeying and my resting
and You are familiar with all my ways.
4 Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, *ADONAI*, You know all about it.
5 You hemmed me in behind and before,
and laid Your hand upon me.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.
7 Where can I go from Your *Ruach*?
Where can I flee from Your presence?
8 If I go up to heaven, You are there,
and if I make my bed in *Sheol*,
look, You are there too.
9 If I take the wings of the dawn
and settle on the other side of the sea,
10 even there Your hand will lead me,
and Your right hand will lay hold of me.
11 If I say: "Surely darkness covers me,
night keeps light at a distance from me,"
12 even darkness is not dark for You,
and night is as bright as day—
darkness and light are alike.
13 For You have created my conscience.
You knit me together in my mother's womb.
14 I praise You, for I am awesomely, wonderfully
made!
Wonderful are Your works—
and my soul knows that very well.
15 My frame was not hidden from You
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the
earth.
16 Your eyes saw me when I was unformed,
and in Your book were written the days that were
formed—
when not one of them had come to be.
17 How precious are Your thoughts, O God!
How great is the sum of them!
18 Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand!
When I awake, I am still with You.

19 If only You would slay the wicked, O God!
Away from me, you bloody men!
20 For they speak about You with wicked intent.
Your enemies reproach You in vain.
21 Do I not hate those who hate You, *ADONAI*?
Do I not loathe those who rise against You?
22 I hate them with total hatred—
I consider them my enemies.
23 Search me, O God, and know my heart.
Examine me, and know my anxious thoughts,
24 and see if there be any offensive way within me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Protection from the Wicked

140 (0) For the music director: a psalm of David.
2 (1) Rescue me, *ADONAI*, from the evil man.
Protect me from the violent men—
3 (2) who devise evil in their heart—
every day they stir up wars.
4 (3) They sharpen their tongue like a serpent's
—viper's venom is under their lips. †
Selah
5 (4) Keep me safe, *ADONAI*, from the clutches of the
wicked.
Protect me from the man of violence who planned to
push me off my feet.
6 (5) The proud have hidden a trap and cords for me.
They spread out a net by the path.
They set snares for me. *Selah*
7 (6) I said to *ADONAI*: "You are my God!"
Hear, *ADONAI*, the sound of my supplications.
8 (7) God my Lord, the strength of my deliverance,
You shield my head in the day of battle.
9 (8) Grant not, *ADONAI*, the desires of the wicked.
Do not let their evil plan succeed,
or they will exalt themselves. *Selah*
10 (9) As for the head of those surrounding me,
may the mischief of their lips overwhelm them.
11 (10) Let burning coals fall upon them.
May they be cast into the fire, into deep pits,
never to rise again. ††
12 (11) May a slanderer not endure in the land.
May calamity hunt down a violent man.
13 (12) I know *ADONAI* will vindicate the poor,
and secure justice for the needy.
14 (13) Surely, the righteous ones will praise Your
name.
The upright will dwell in Your presence.

Evening Petition for Protection

141 (0) A psalm of David.
(1) *ADONAI*, I call to You—come quickly to me!
Hear my voice when I call to You.
2 May my prayer be set before You like incense.
May the lifting up of my hands be like the evening
sacrifice.

† cf. Rom. 3:13. †† cf. John 15:6; Rev. 20:15.

³ Set a guard, *ADONAI*, over my mouth.
 Keep watch over the door of my lips.
⁴ Let not my heart turn to any evil thing,
 to practice deeds of wickedness
 with men that work iniquity,
 nor let me eat of their delicacies.
⁵ Let the righteous strike me—it is kindness.
 Let him correct me—it is oil on my head
 —my head will not refuse it.
 Yet still my prayer is against their wickedness.
⁶ Their judges are thrown down from a cliff.
 Then they will hear my words, since they are sweet.
⁷ As when one plows and breaks open the earth,
 so our bones are scattered at the mouth of *Sheol*.
⁸ For my eyes are toward You, God my Lord.
 In You I have taken refuge—do not expose my soul.
⁹ Keep me from the jaws of the trap they have laid for
 me,
 and from the snares of the evildoers.
¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
 while I pass by safely.

A Refuge from Trouble

142 (0) A contemplative poem of David, when he
 was in the cave, a prayer.
² (1) I cry aloud with my voice to *ADONAI*.
 With my voice I seek favor from *ADONAI*.
³ (2) I pour out my complaint before Him,
 before Him I tell my trouble.
⁴ (3) When my spirit grows faint within me,
 You know my path.
 In the way where I walk they have hidden a trap for
 me.
⁵ (4) Look at my right hand and see,
 for no one cares about me.
 I have no refuge—
 no one cares for my soul.
⁶ (5) I have cried out to You, *ADONAI*.
 I said: "You are my refuge,
 my portion in the land of the living."
⁷ (6) Listen to my cry,
 for I am brought very low.
 Rescue me from my persecutors,
 for they are too strong for me.
⁸ (7) Bring my soul out of prison,
 so I may praise Your Name.
 The righteous will triumph through me,
 for You will reward me.

Hide Not Your Face from Me

143 (0) A psalm of David.
 (1) Hear my prayer, *ADONAI*,
 give ear to my petitions.
 In Your faithfulness and Your righteousness,
 answer me!
² Do not bring Your servant into judgment,
 for in Your eyes no one living is righteous.

³ For an enemy pursues my soul.
 He crushes my life down to the ground.
 He makes me dwell in darkness, like those long dead.
⁴ So my spirit grows faint within me.
 My heart is shocked within me.
⁵ I remember the days of old.
 I meditate on all You have done.
 I ponder the work of Your hands.
⁶ I spread forth my hands to You.
 My soul longs for You as a parched land. *Selah*
⁷ Answer me speedily, *ADONAI*—my spirit fails.
 Hide not Your face from me,
 lest I become like those who go down into the Pit.
⁸ Make me hear Your lovingkindness in the morning,
 for in You I trust.
 Show me the way I should go,
 for to You I lift up my soul.
⁹ Deliver me from my enemies, *ADONAI*.
 I hide myself in You.
¹⁰ Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God.
 Let Your good *Ruach* lead me on level ground.
¹¹ For Your Name's sake, *ADONAI*, revive me.
 In Your justice bring my soul out of trouble.
¹² In Your mercy cut off my enemies
 and destroy all who harass my soul,
 for I am Your servant.

Rescue from Battle

144 (0) Of David.
 (1) Blessed be *ADONAI* my Rock—
 who trains my hands for war,
 my fingers for battle.
² He is my lovingkindness, my fortress,
 my strong tower, and my deliverer,
 my shield, in whom I take refuge,
 who subdues my people under me.
³ *ADONAI*, what is man, that You take note of him?
 Or the son of man, that You consider him? †
⁴ Man is like a breath—
 his days are like a passing shadow.
⁵ *ADONAI*, part Your heavens and come down.
 Touch the mountains, so they smoke.
⁶ Flash forth lightning and scatter them.
 Send out Your arrows and confuse them.
⁷ Stretch forth Your hands from on high.
 Snatch me, deliver me out of deep waters,
 out of the hand of foreigners,
⁸ whose mouth speaks falsehood,
 whose right hand is a right hand of deceit.
⁹ God, I sing a new song to You, on a ten-string harp.
 I sing praises to You—
¹⁰ who gives salvation to kings,
 who rescues Your servant David from the evil sword.
¹¹ Snatch me, deliver me
 out of the hand of foreigners,
 whose mouth speaks falsehood,
 whose right hand is a right hand of deceit.

† cf. Heb. 2:6.

¹² Then our sons will be like plants nurtured in their youth,
our daughters like corner pillars carved for the construction of a palace.

¹³ Our storehouses are full,
supplying every kind of produce.
Our flocks increase by thousands
and ten thousands in our fields.

¹⁴ Our oxen bear a heavy load.
There is no breach,
no going into captivity,
no outcry in our streets.

¹⁵ Happy are such a people!
Blessed are the people whose God is *ADONAI*!

Glory of the Kingdom

145 *(0)* A psalm of praise. Of David.
(1) I will exalt You, my God, the King,
and I will bless Your Name forever and ever.
² Every day I will bless You,
and praise Your Name forever and ever!
³ Great is *ADONAI*, and greatly to be praised
—His greatness is unsearchable.
⁴ One generation will praise Your works
to another and declare Your mighty acts.
⁵ I will meditate on the glorious splendor
of Your majesty and Your wonders.
⁶ They will speak of the might of Your awesome
deeds,
and I will proclaim Your greatness.
⁷ They will pour out the renown of Your great good-
ness,
and sing joyfully of Your righteousness.
⁸ *ADONAI* is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.
⁹ *ADONAI* is good to all.
He has compassion on all His creatures.
¹⁰ All Your works praise You, *ADONAI*,
and Your *kedoshim* bless You.
¹¹ They declare the glory of Your kingdom
and speak of Your might,
¹² to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts
and the glory of the majesty of His kingdom.
¹³ Your kingdom is a kingdom for all ages,
and Your dominion endures from generation to gen-
eration.
¹⁴ *ADONAI* upholds all who fall
and raises up all who are bowed down.
¹⁵ The eyes of all look to You
and You give them their food on time.
¹⁶ You open Your hand
and satisfy every living thing with favor.
¹⁷ *ADONAI* is righteous in all His ways
and kind in all His deeds.
¹⁸ *ADONAI* is near to all who call on Him,
to all who call on Him in truth.
¹⁹ He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him.
He will hear their cry and save them.

²⁰ *ADONAI* watches over all who love Him,
but all the wicked He will destroy.

²¹ My mouth declares the praise of *ADONAI*.
Let all flesh bless His holy Name forever and ever!

Justice of the Kingdom

146 *Halleluyah!* Praise *ADONAI*, O my soul!
² I will praise *ADONAI* all my life.
I will praise my God yet again.
³ Do not put your trust in princes—
in man, in whom there is no salvation.
⁴ His breath departs,
he returns to his dust.
In that very day his plans perish.
⁵ Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in *ADONAI* his God,
⁶ who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is
in them,
who keeps truth forever,
⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives bread to the hungry.
ADONAI sets the prisoners free.
⁸ *ADONAI* opens the eyes of the blind. †
ADONAI raises up those who are bowed down.
ADONAI loves the righteous.
⁹ *ADONAI* protects outsiders,
upholds the fatherless and the widow,
but thwarts the way of the wicked.
¹⁰ *ADONAI* will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, from generation to generation.
Halleluyah!

He Builds up Jerusalem

147 *Halleluyah!*
How good it is to sing praises to our God.
How pleasant and fitting is praise.
² *ADONAI* builds up Jerusalem.
He gathers together the exiles of Israel.
³ He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.
⁴ He determines the number of the stars.
He gives them all their names.
⁵ Great is our Lord and mighty in power—
His understanding is infinite!
⁶ *ADONAI* upholds the humble.
He brings the wicked to the ground.
⁷ Sing to *ADONAI* with thanksgiving.
Sing praises to our God on the harp.
⁸ He covers the sky with clouds.
He provides rain for the earth.
He makes grass sprout on the hills.
⁹ He gives food to the cattle
and to the young ravens which cry.
¹⁰ He delights not in the horse's strength,
nor takes pleasure in a man's legs.
¹¹ *ADONAI* delights in those who revere Him,

† cf. Matt. 9:27-30.

in those who trust in His lovingkindness.
¹² Exalt *ADONAI*, O Jerusalem!
 Praise your God, O Zion!
¹³ For He strengthens the bars of your gates.
 He blesses your children within you.
¹⁴ He puts *shalom* within your borders.
 He satisfies you with the finest wheat.
¹⁵ He sends earth His command—
 His word runs swiftly.
¹⁶ He gives snow like wool.
 He scatters frost like ashes.
¹⁷ He hurls down His hail like pebbles—
 who can stand before His cold?
¹⁸ He sends forth His word and melts them.
 He makes His wind blow and waters flow.
¹⁹ He declares His word to Jacob,
 His decrees and His rulings to Israel.
²⁰ He has not done so with any other nation.
 They have not known His judgments.
Halleluyah!

Praise Him, All Creation!

148 *Halleluyah!*
 Praise *ADONAI* from the heavens!
 Praise Him in the highest!
² Praise Him all His angels!
 Praise Him all His armies.
³ Praise Him, sun and moon!
 Praise Him, all stars of light.
⁴ Praise Him, highest heavens,
 and waters above the heavens.
⁵ Let them praise the Name of *ADONAI*,
 for He commanded and they were created.
⁶ He set them in place forever and ever.
 He made a decree that will never pass away.
⁷ Praise *ADONAI* from the earth,
 sea monsters and all depths,
⁸ fire and hail, snow and vapor,
 storm wind doing His bidding,
⁹ mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars,
¹⁰ beasts and all cattle,
 crawling things and winged birds,
¹¹ kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of earth,
¹² both young men and maidens,
 old men and children.

¹³ Let them praise the Name of *ADONAI*,
 for His Name alone is exalted.
 His glory is above earth and heaven.
¹⁴ He has raised up a horn for His people,
 a praise for all His *kedoshim*,[†]
 for the children of Israel—
 a people near to Him.
Halleluyah!

Praise with Singing and Dancing

149 *Halleluyah!* Sing to *ADONAI* a new song,
 His praise in the assembly of the *kedoshim*.
² Let Israel rejoice in its Maker.
 Let the children of Zion be glad in their King.
³ Let them praise His Name with dancing.
 Let them sing praises to Him with tambourine and
 harp.
⁴ For *ADONAI* takes pleasure in His people.
 He crowns the humble with salvation.
⁵ Let the *kedoshim* exult in glory.
 Let them sing for joy on their beds.
⁶ Let God's high praises be in their mouth
 and a two-edged sword in their hand—
⁷ to execute vengeance upon the nations
 and rebukes on the people,
⁸ to bind their kings with chains
 and their nobles with fetters of iron,
⁹ to carry out the sentence decreed—
 this is the glory of all His *kedoshim*.
Halleluyah!

Praise with *Shofar* and Cymbals

150 *Halleluyah!* Praise God in His Sanctuary!
 Praise Him in His mighty expanse.
² Praise Him for His acts of power.
 Praise Him for His enormous greatness.
³ Praise Him with the blast of the *shofar*.
 Praise Him with harp and lyre.
⁴ Praise Him with tambourine and dance.
 Praise Him with string instruments and flute.
⁵ Praise Him with clash of cymbals.
 Praise Him with resounding cymbals.
⁶ Let every thing that has breath
 praise *ADONAI*. *Halleluyah!*

[†] Hebrew *kedoshim*; righteous holy ones

Proverbs

Proverbs Introduction

The book of Proverbs is known as wisdom literature. It is one of its three selections, also which include the book of Job and the book of Ecclesiastes. Wisdom literature in the Old Testament is vast and addresses many of life experiences. Proverbs takes the esoteric and translates it into the practical, the ethereal into the realistic. The word for Proverbs is Hebrew is, ילשם . A proverb is a saying, a story, or a parable that is proven true over time through experience. Proverbs are not promises or commands, but instructions and words of guidance, timeless in their essence. Proverbs are general principles that, if followed, should bring clarity to life situations. Within the content of Proverbs, one will find deductive and inductive logic, critical thought and an emphasis upon the imperative to gain knowledge. There are many collections of moral sayings within Judaism, especially the Sayings of the Fathers, , תובא יקרפ , however, the book of Proverbs addresses the broad general nature of how life really works.

Although a few different authors penned this book, it is widely believed that the key author of most content was , also known as King Solomon. Even though Agur and Lemuel are noted as authors of a few proverbs, the majority have been written by King Solomon. 1 Kings 5:12 reveals that Solomon is known to have spoken over three thousand proverbs. Perhaps much of this wisdom came from his own writings and songs. One of the most widely used words within the book of Proverbs is , המכח , the Hebrew word for “wisdom.” Throughout the book of Proverbs, one will note the contrast between two ways of living: one way is the way of wisdom and the other way is the way of a fool. The reader is introduced to this aspect in the first chapter 1, 7 verse: “The fear of is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” One who follows God’s rules and instructions will find knowledge and wisdom. True wisdom is demonstrated by loving obedience to God. In contrast, the foolish person despises God’s rules, instruction, and wisdom. Worldly wisdom is following one’s own path and pursuing the way of folly, which leads to destruction.

More important than just practical advice, Proverbs truly does give the reader guidance in living an obedient life to God. God desires that we be “naked, face-to-face and unashamed before Him.” Transparency, honesty, and openness should be qualities of those who are in an intimate fellowship with . As there are thirty one chapters of Proverbs, one would be wise to practice reading a chapter a day. If one desires to gain wisdom, such should follow the directives of Proverbs 9:10: “The fear of is the beginning of wisdom. The knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

Proverbs Headings

- The Value of Wise Sayings
- The Wisdom of Parents
- Avoid a Bloodthirsty Gang
- Wisdom Calls, But Who Listens?
- Seek Treasures of Wisdom
- In All Your Ways Acknowledge Him
- Discipline as the Father’s Love
- Precious Pearls, A Tree of Life
- A Father’s Lesson: Get Wisdom!
- Ways of Wisdom and Wickedness
- Beware of Seduction
- Economic Entanglements
- Laziness and Perversity
- A Father’s Warning against Adultery
- Treasure’s Teaching
- Wisdom Appeals at the Gates
- Wisdom before Creation

Wisdom and Folly Invite
Diligence and Laziness
Sayings of the Mouth Matter
Dread or Hope
Integrity of Scales and Soul
Righteousness Builds up a City
Rewards for Righteous or Ruthless
The Righteous and the Wicked
Caring for Animals and Land
Fruit of the Mouth
Diligence or Sloth
Guard the Way of Integrity
The Wise and the Foolish
Wisdom Builds Up, Folly Tears Down
Poverty and Riches
Tongue of the Wise
Pursue Righteousness and Reproof
Heart Attitude Matters
Commit Your Heart to
The Delights of a Just King
Slow to Anger
Beware of Bribes and Rebellion
A Fool's Big Mouth
Overcoming Opposition and Offenses
Better to Be Poor with Integrity
Watch Your Temper
Listen to Wise Counsel
Sluggards, Scoffers, and Disgraceful Sons
Loyalty, Integrity, Justice
Lamp Searches
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Violence and Ruin of the Wicked
Advice about Appetites
Wisdom's Path to the Future
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Strength through Wise Counsel
Counsel on Friendship
Lesson of the Lazy
The Glory of Searching a Matter
A Fitting Reproof is Precious
Proverbs for Daily Life
Folly of Fools
Folly of Slackers
Folly of
Do Not Boast
Iron Sharpens Iron
Confidence, Discernment, Integrity
Wisdom about Finances
What Is the Name of His Son?
A Filthy, Haughty Generation
Lessons from Creatures
A Mother's Warning
A Woman of Valor

The Value of Wise Sayings

1 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:
 2 to acquire wisdom and discipline,
 to understand the words of insight,
 3 to receive instruction in wise behavior,
 righteousness, justice, and fairness,
 4 to give discernment to the naïve,
 knowledge, and discretion to the youth
 5 (let the wise listen and increase learning
 and the discerning obtain wise counsel)
 6 to understand a proverb and a puzzle,
 the sayings of the wise and their riddles.

The Wisdom of Parents

7 The fear of *ADONAI* is the beginning of knowledge,
 but fools despise wisdom and discipline.
 8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction
 and forsake not your mother's teaching.
 9 For they are a garland of grace for your head
 and a chain to adorn your neck.

Avoid a Bloodthirsty Gang

10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in.
 11 Suppose they say: "Come with us!
 Let's lie in wait for blood!
 Let's ambush the innocent—for no reason!
 12 Let's swallow them alive like *Sheol*—
 still healthy, as they go down to the Pit!
 13 We'll find all sorts of valuable things,
 we'll fill our homes with loot!
 14 Throw your lot in with us—
 we'll all have one wallet."
 15 My son, do not go along with them,
 keep your foot from their path—
 16 for their feet run to evil
 and they are swift to shed blood.
 17 Surely it is useless to spread a net
 in the eyes of all winged creatures!
 18 But they lie in wait for their own blood.
 They ambush their own lives.
 19 Such is the fate of all gaining by violence.
 It takes the life of its possessor.

Wisdom Calls, But Who Listens?

20 Wisdom calls aloud in the streets,
 she raises her voice in public squares.
 21 She cries out above the commotion.
 At the entrances of the city gates, she utters her
 speech:
 22 "How long will you naïve ones love simplicity,
 you scoffers delight in scoffing,
 and you fools hate knowledge?
 23 You are repulsed at my rebuke.
 Behold, I pour out my heart to you.
 I will make my words known to you.

24 Because you refused when I called,
 and did not pay attention when I stretched out my
 hand,
 25 since you ignore all my advice
 and would not accept my rebuke,
 26 I in turn will laugh at your calamity.
 I will mock when dread comes on you,
 27 when your terror comes like a storm
 and your calamity sweeps over you like a whirlwind,
 when trouble and distress overwhelm you!
 28 Then they will cry out to me, but I will not answer!
 They will earnestly seek me, but will not find me.
 29 Because they hated knowledge
 and did not choose the fear of *ADONAI*,
 30 they would not accept my counsel,
 they spurned all my reproof,
 31 so they will eat the fruit of their own way
 and be filled with their own schemes.
 32 For the backsliding of the naïve will kill them
 and the complacency of fools will destroy them.
 33 But whoever pays attention to me will live securely,
 and be free from the fear of evil."

Seek Treasures of Wisdom

2 My son, if you accept my words
 and treasure my *mitzvot* within you,
 2 making your ear attentive to wisdom,
 inclining your heart to discernment,
 3 yes, if you call out for insight,
 lifting up your voice for discernment,
 4 if you seek her as silver
 and search for her as for hidden treasures,
 5 then you will know the fear of *ADONAI*
 and discover the knowledge of God.
 6 For *ADONAI* gives wisdom. †
 Out of His mouth comes knowledge and understand-
 ing.
 7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright.
 He is a shield to those who walk in integrity.
 8 He guards the paths of justice,
 and protects the way of His *kedoshim*.
 9 Then you will discern what is right
 and just and fair—every good path.
 10 For wisdom will enter your heart
 and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
 11 Discretion will watch over you
 —discernment will guard you—
 12 to deliver you from the way of evil,
 from those speaking perverse things,
 13 who leave the straight paths
 to walk in ways of darkness,
 14 who rejoice in doing wrong
 and delight in the perversity of evil,
 15 whose paths are crooked
 and are devious in their ways—
 16 to deliver you from a seducing woman—
 a wayward wife with seductive words,

† cf. *Jacob 1:5*.

17 who forsakes the partner of her youth
and forgets the covenant of her God.
18 For her house sinks down to death
and her tracks to the dead.
19 None who go to her return
nor reach the paths of life.
20 So you will walk in the way of good men
and keep to the paths of the righteous.
21 For the upright will dwell in the land
and the blameless will remain in it.
22 But the wicked will be cut off from the land
and the treacherous uprooted from it.

In All Your Ways Acknowledge Him

3 My son, do not forget my teaching, †
but let your heart keep my *mitzvot*.
2 For length of days and years of life,
and *shalom* they will add to you.
3 Let kindness and truth never leave you—
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Then you will gain favor and a good name
in the eyes of God and man.
5 Trust in *ADONAI* with all your heart,
lean not on your own understanding.
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
and He will make your paths straight.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear *ADONAI* and turn away from evil.
8 It will be healing to your body
and refreshment to your bones.
9 Honor *ADONAI* with your wealth
and with the first of your entire harvest.
10 Then your barns will be filled with plenty,
your vats will overflow with new wine.

Discipline as the Father's Love

11 My son, never despise *ADONAI*'s discipline
or dread His correction.
12 For *ADONAI* loves those He reproveth,
even as a father, the son in whom he delights. ††

Precious Pearls, A Tree of Life

13 Happy is the man who finds wisdom
and the man who gains understanding.
14 For her trade-value is better than silver,
and her yield better than fine gold.
15 She is more precious than jewels
and nothing you desire compares to her.
16 Length of days is in her right hand.
In her left hand are riches and honor.
17 Her ways are pleasant ways,
and all of her paths are *shalom*.
18 She is a tree of life to those who embrace her,
and blessed will be all who hold firmly to her.
19 By wisdom *ADONAI* founded the earth.

By understanding He established the heavens.
20 By His knowledge the deeps were divided,
and the clouds drip dew.
21 My son, hold on to sound wisdom and discernment,
do not let them out of your sight.
22 They will be life to your soul,
and an ornament to grace your neck.
23 Then you will walk on your way in safety,
and your foot will not stumble.
24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.
25 Have no fear of sudden terror,
or of the devastation of the wicked when it comes.
26 For *ADONAI* will be your confidence
and will keep your foot from a snare.
27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is
due,
when it is in your power to act.
28 Do not say to your neighbor,
"Come back later—I'll give it tomorrow,"
when you have it with you.
29 Do not plot evil against your neighbor
while he lives trustfully beside you.
30 Do not quarrel with a man 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 the devious are detestable to *ADONAI*,
but He takes the upright into His confidence.
33 *ADONAI*'s curse is on a wicked house,
but He blesses a righteous home.
34 Though He scoffs at the scoffers,
He gives grace to the humble. ‡
35 The wise inherit honor,
but fools are held up in disgrace.

A Father's Lesson: Get Wisdom!

4 Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction.
Pay attention, to gain understanding.
2 For I give you sound learning—
do not forsake my instruction.
3 When I was a son to my father,
tender and special to my mother,
4 he taught me and said to me:
"Lay hold of my words in your heart,
keep my commands and you will live!
5 Get wisdom! Get understanding!
Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my
mouth.
6 Do not forsake her, and she will guard you.
Love her, and she will watch over you.
7 Wisdom is supreme—acquire wisdom!
With all your acquisitions, get understanding.
8 Prize her, and she will exalt you.
She will honor you when you embrace her.
9 She will set a garland of grace on your head.

† Or Torah †† cf. Heb. 12:5-7.

‡ cf. Jacob 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5.

She will give you a crown of glory.”

Ways of Wisdom and Wickedness

¹⁰ Listen, my son, and accept my words,
so the years of your life will be many.
¹¹ I instructed you in the way of wisdom.
I have guided you along straight paths.
¹² When you walk, your step will not be hindered,
and when you run, you will not stumble.
¹³ Hold on tightly to instruction, do not let it go—
guard it, for it is your life.
¹⁴ Do not enter the path of the wicked
or walk in the way of evil people.
¹⁵ Avoid it—do not travel on it—
turn away from it and pass by.
¹⁶ For they cannot sleep until they do evil.
They are robbed of sleep until they make someone
fall.
¹⁷ For they eat the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.
¹⁸ The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,
shining brighter and brighter until the full day.
¹⁹ The way of the wicked is like darkness.
They do not know what makes them stumble.
²⁰ My son, pay attention to my words—
incline your ear to my sayings.
²¹ Do not let them out of your sight,
keep them within your heart.
²² For they are life to those who find them
and health to their whole body.
²³ Guard your heart diligently,
for from it flow the springs of life.
²⁴ Put away perversity from your mouth,
and keep devious lips far from you.
²⁵ Let your eyes look directly ahead,
and fix your gaze straight in front of you.
²⁶ Clear a level path for your feet,
so all your ways will be firm.
²⁷ Do not turn to the right or to the left.
Divert your foot from evil.

Beware of Seduction

5 My son, pay attention to my wisdom.
Incline your ear to my insight,
² that you may maintain discretion
and your lips may preserve knowledge.
³ For a seducing woman’s lips drip honey
and her mouth is smoother than oil.
⁴ But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a double-edged sword.
⁵ Her feet go down to death,
her steps lead straight to *Sheol*.
⁶ She does not keep straight to the path of life,
her paths are crooked
—but she does not know it.
⁷ So now, my sons, listen to me
and do not turn aside from the words of my mouth.

⁸ Keep your path far from her
and do not go near the door of her house—
⁹ lest you give your strength to others
and your years to one who is cruel;
¹⁰ lest strangers feast on your strength,
your labors go to a foreigner’s house.
¹¹ At the end of your life, you will groan,
when your flesh and body are spent—
¹² and you will say, “How I hated discipline!
How my heart spurned reproof!
¹³ I would not listen to my teacher’s voice
or incline my ear to my instructors.
¹⁴ I was almost in utter ruin amid
the community and congregation.”
¹⁵ Drink water from your own cistern
and running water from your own well.
¹⁶ Should your springs flow in the streets,
your streams of water in public squares?
¹⁷ Let them be yours alone
and not shared with strangers.
¹⁸ May your fountain be blessed
and may you delight in the wife of your youth.
¹⁹ A lovely hind, a graceful doe—
may her breasts satisfy you always,
may you always be captivated by her love.
²⁰ Why, my son, be captivated by a seducing woman?
Why embrace a foreigner’s bosom?
²¹ For a man’s ways are before the eyes of *ADONAI*,
and He observes all his paths.
²² The iniquities of a wicked man will ensnare him.
The cords of his sin will hold him down.
²³ He will die for lack of discipline,
led astray by his own great folly.

Economic Entanglements

6 My son, if you have become a cosigner for your
neighbor,
if you have shaken hands in pledge with a stranger,
² if you are trapped by your own words,
ensnared by the words of your mouth,
³ then do this, my son, and free yourself,
since you fell into your neighbor’s hand:
Go, humble yourself, plead with your neighbor!
⁴ Allow no sleep to your eyes,
nor slumber to your eyelids.
⁵ Escape like a gazelle from the hunter’s hand,
like a bird from the snare of the fowler.

Laziness and Perversity

⁶ Go to the ant, you slacker—
consider its ways and be wise!
⁷ It has no commander,
no overseer or ruler.
⁸ Yet it prepares its provisions in summer
and gathers its food at harvest.
⁹ How long will you lie there, slacker?
When will you get up from your sleep?

¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber,
 a little folding of the hands to sleep—
¹¹ and your poverty comes like a bandit
 and your need like an armed man.
¹² A scoundrel, a wicked man,
 is one who goes around with a perverse mouth,
¹³ winking his eyes, shuffling his feet, pointing his fin-
 gers,
¹⁴ who continually plots evil
 with deceit in his heart stirring up strife.
¹⁵ Therefore his disaster will come suddenly
 —in an instant he will be broken, with no remedy.
¹⁶ Six things *ADONAI* hates,
 yes, seven are abominations to Him:
¹⁷ haughty eyes,
 a lying tongue,
 hands that shed innocent blood,
¹⁸ a heart that plots wicked schemes,
 feet that run to evil,
¹⁹ a false witness who spouts lies,
 and one who stirs up strife among brothers.

A Father's Warning against Adultery

²⁰ My son, keep your father's *mitzvah* ,
 and forsake not your mother's teaching.
²¹ Bind them on your heart continually—
 tie them around your neck.
²² When you walk, they will guide you.
 When you lie down, they will watch over you,
 and when you wake up, they will speak to you.
²³ For the *mitzvah* is a lamp, *Torah* a light,
 and corrective discipline the way of life,
²⁴ keeping you from the immoral woman,
 from a wayward wife's smooth tongue.
²⁵ Do not lust in your heart after her beauty
 or let her captivate you with her eyelids.
²⁶ For on account of a prostitute one is reduced to a
 loaf of bread;
 a man's wife preys on your precious life.
²⁷ Can a man scoop fire into his lap
 without burning his clothes?
²⁸ Or can a man walk upon hot coals
 without scorching his feet?
²⁹ So is he who goes to another man's wife.
 No one who touches her will go unpunished.
³⁰ Men do not despise a thief if he steals
 to satisfy himself when he is starving.
³¹ Yet if he is caught, he must repay sevenfold,
 giving up all the wealth of his house.
³² He who commits adultery with a woman lacks
 sense.
 Whoever does so destroys himself.
³³ He will find disease and disgrace.
 His shame will never be wiped away.
³⁴ For jealousy enrages a man
 and he will show no mercy in the day of revenge.
³⁵ He will not accept any compensation,
 he will not consent,

even if your bribe is great.

Treasure *Torah*'s Teaching

⁷ My son, keep my words
 and treasure my *mitzvot* within you.
² Keep my *mitzvot* and live,
 my teaching as the apple of your eye.
³ Bind them on your fingers,
 write them on the tablet of your heart.
⁴ Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
 and call understanding your relative.
⁵ They will keep you from a seducing woman,
 from the foreign woman with her seductive speech.
⁶ For at the window of my house
 I looked out through my lattice.
⁷ I saw among the naïve,
 I noticed among the youth,
 a young man lacking understanding,
⁸ crossing the street near her corner,
 walking in the direction of her house,
⁹ in the twilight of the evening,
 in the darkest hours of the night.
¹⁰ All of a sudden, a woman meets him,
 dressed as a prostitute and with a cunning heart.
¹¹ She is loud and defiant.
 Her feet never stay at home—
¹² now in the streets, now in the squares,
 at every corner she lurks.
¹³ So she grabs him and kisses him
 and with a brazen face says to him:
¹⁴ "I had to sacrifice fellowship offerings;
 today I paid my vow.
¹⁵ So I've come out to meet you,
 to seek your presence eagerly—and I found you!
¹⁶ I have spread my couch with tapestry
 of dyed Egyptian linens.
¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed
 with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
¹⁸ Come, let's drink our fill of love till morning!
 Let's delight ourselves with love.
¹⁹ For my husband is not at home—
 he's gone on a long journey.
²⁰ He took a bag of money with him—
 he won't come home until full moon."
²¹ With her persistent pleading she entices him,
 with smooth talk she seduces him.
²² Suddenly he follows her
 like an ox going to the slaughter,
 like a stag bounding toward a trap,
²³ till an arrow pierces its liver.
 Like a bird darting into a snare,
 he never considered his own soul!
²⁴ Now then, sons, listen to me,
 pay attention to the words of my mouth.
²⁵ Do not let your heart turn to her ways
 or stray onto her paths.
²⁶ For many are the victims she has brought down,
 and numerous are all her slain.

²⁷ Her house is a highway to *Sheol*,
leading down to the chambers of death.

Wisdom Appeals at the Gates

8 Does not wisdom cry out,
and understanding lift her voice?
² On the topmost heights along the way,
at the crossroads, she takes her stand.
³ Beside the gates leading into the city,
at the entrances, she cries aloud:
⁴ "To you, O men, I call out!
My cry is to all mankind!
⁵ O naïve ones, learn prudence!
Fools, gain understanding!
⁶ Listen, for I speak excellent things,
and my lips utter right things.
⁷ For my mouth speaks truth,
and my lips detest wickedness.
⁸ All the words of my mouth are righteous,
Nothing in them is perverse or crooked.
⁹ All of them are straightforward to the discerning,
and right to those who find knowledge.
¹⁰ Receive my instruction instead of silver
and knowledge rather than choice gold.
¹¹ For wisdom is better than jewels,
nothing you desire compares with her.
¹² "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
and acquire knowledge with discretion.
¹³ To fear *ADONAI* is to hate evil.
I hate pride and arrogance,
evil behavior and a perverse mouth.
¹⁴ Counsel and sound wisdom are mine.
I have understanding and power.
¹⁵ By me kings reign
and princes decree justice.
¹⁶ By me princes govern,
and all nobles who judge righteously.
¹⁷ I love those who love me.
Those who earnestly seek me find me. †
¹⁸ With me are wealth and honor,
enduring riches and righteousness.
¹⁹ My fruit is better than refined gold,
my harvest better than choice silver.
²⁰ I walk in the way of righteousness,
along paths of justice.
²¹ I endow substance to those who love me
and fill their treasuries."

Wisdom before Creation

²² " *ADONAI* brought me forth,
the first of His way,
before His works of old.
²³ From eternity I was appointed
from the beginning, before the world began.
²⁴ When there were no depths, I was brought forth,
when there were no fountains abounding with water.

²⁵ Before the mountains were shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth.
²⁶ He had not yet made the land,
the fields, or the first dust of the earth.
²⁷ When He set the heavens in place, I was there.
When He inscribed the horizon on the face of the
ocean,
²⁸ when He established the skies above,
when He securely fixed the fountains of the deep,
²⁹ when He set the boundaries for the sea,
so that the waters never transgress His command,
when He laid out earth's foundations—
³⁰ then I was the craftsman beside Him,
I was His daily delight, always rejoicing before Him,
³¹ rejoicing in His whole world,
and delighting in mankind.
³² "So now, children, listen to me!
Blessed are those who keep my ways.
³³ Heed discipline and be wise,
and do not neglect it.
³⁴ Blessed is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting at my doorposts.
³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favor from *ADONAI*.
³⁶ But whoever fails to find me harms his life—
all who hate me love death."

Wisdom and Folly Invite

9 Wisdom has built her house.
She has carved out her seven pillars.
² She has slaughtered her meat,
she has mixed her wine;
she has also set her table.
³ She has sent out her servant girls.
She calls from the city's heights:
⁴ "Whoever is naïve, turn in here!"
To those who lack understanding, she says:
⁵ "Come, eat my bread
and drink the wine I have mixed.
⁶ Abandon your foolish ways and live!
Walk in the way of understanding."
⁷ Whoever corrects a scoffer is asking for insult.
Whoever reproves a wicked man gets abuse.
⁸ Do not correct a scoffer or he will hate you.
Rebuke a wise man and he will love you.
⁹ Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still.
Teach a righteous man and he will increase in learn-
ing.
¹⁰ The fear of *ADONAI* is the beginning of wisdom
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
¹¹ For through me your days will be many
and years will be added to your life.
¹² If you are wise, you are wise to your own advan-
tage,
but if you scoff, you bear it alone.
¹³ The foolish woman is rowdy.
She is naïve and knows nothing.

† cf. Matt. 7:8.

14 So she sits at the door of her house,
 on a seat in the heights of the city,
 15 calling to those who pass by,
 who go straight on their way:
 16 "Whoever is naïve, let him turn in here."
 To those who lack understanding, she says:
 17 "Stolen water is sweet
 and bread eaten in secret is delicious!"
 18 But he does not know that the dead are there—
 her guests are in the depths of *Sheol*.

Diligence and Laziness

10 The proverbs of Solomon.
 A wise son gives joy to his father,
 but a foolish son grief to his mother.
 2 Ill-gotten treasures profit nothing,
 but righteousness delivers from death.
 3 *ADONAI* will not let a righteous soul go hungry,
 but thwarts the cravings of the wicked.
 4 Lazy hands make a man poor,
 but diligent hands bring wealth.
 5 He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son,
 but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.

Sayings of the Mouth Matter

6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous,
 but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
 7 The memory of the righteous is a blessing,
 but the name of the wicked will rot.
 8 The wise in heart accept commands,
 but a babbling fool comes to ruin.
 9 One who walks in integrity, walks securely,
 but one who takes crooked paths will be discovered.
 10 One who winks an eye maliciously causes grief,
 while a babbling fool comes to ruin.
 11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
 but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
 12 Hatred stirs up strife
 but love covers up all transgressions.
 13 Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning,
 but a rod is for the back of one lacking sense.
 14 Wise men store up knowledge,
 but the mouth of a fool is near ruin.
 15 The wealth of a rich man is a strong city.
 Poverty is the ruin of the poor.
 16 The wages of the righteous are life.
 The income of the wicked is sin. †
 17 One who heeds discipline is on the path of life,
 but whoever ignores correction goes astray.
 18 One who conceals hatred has lying lips,
 and whoever spreads slander is a fool.
 19 When words abound, transgression is unavoidable,
 but whoever restrains his lips is wise.
 20 The tongue of the righteous is choice silver.
 The heart of the wicked is of little value.
 21 The lips of the righteous feed many,

but fools die for lack of understanding.

Dread or Hope

22 The blessing of *ADONAI* brings wealth
 and He adds no trouble with it.
 23 As doing wickedness is delight to a fool,
 so is wisdom to a man of discernment.
 24 What the wicked dread will fall on them.
 The desire of the righteous will be given.
 25 When the whirlwind passes, the wicked are no
 more,
 but the foundation of the righteous is everlasting.
 26 Like vinegar to the teeth or smoke to the eyes,
 so is a slacker to those who send him.
 27 The fear of *ADONAI* prolongs life,
 but the years of the wicked are cut short.
 28 The prospect of the righteous is joy,
 but the hope of the wicked perishes.
 29 The way of *ADONAI* is a stronghold to the upright,
 but it is a ruin to those who do evil.
 30 The righteous will never be uprooted,
 but the wicked will not dwell in the land.
 31 The mouth of the righteous bears the fruit of wis-
 dom,
 but a perverse tongue will be cut out.
 32 The lips of the righteous know what is pleasing,
 but the mouth of the wicked is perverse.

Integrity of Scales and Soul

11 Dishonest scales are an abomination to *ADONAI*,
 but an accurate weight is His delight.
 2 When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
 but with the humble is wisdom.
 3 The integrity of the upright guides them,
 but the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy
 them.
 4 Riches make no profit in the day of wrath,
 but righteousness delivers from death.
 5 The righteousness of the blameless man makes his
 way straight,
 but the wicked man is brought down by his wicked-
 ness.
 6 The righteousness of the upright delivers them,
 but the treacherous are trapped by their desire.

Righteousness Builds up a City

7 When the wicked dies, his hope perishes,
 and the hope of the strong vanishes.
 8 The righteous is rescued from trouble.
 Instead it comes on the wicked.
 9 With his mouth the ungodly destroys his neighbor,
 but through knowledge the righteous will be deliv-
 ered.
 10 When the righteous do well, a city rejoices.
 When the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy.
 11 Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalt-
 ed,

† cf. Rom. 6:23.

but by the mouth of the wicked it is destroyed.
 12 One who despises his neighbor lacks sense,
 but one with discernment remains silent.
 13 A gossip reveals secrets,
 but one who is trustworthy conceals a matter.
 14 Without guidance people fall,
 with many counselors there is deliverance.
 15 Whoever puts up security for a stranger will have
 trouble,
 but whoever avoids shaking hands on such a deal is
 secure.

Rewards for Righteous or Ruthless

16 A gracious woman gains honor,
 but ruthless men seize riches.
 17 A kind man does his own soul good,
 but a cruel man harms his own flesh.
 18 The wicked earn deceptive wages,
 but a sower of righteousness reaps a true reward.
 19 Steadfast righteousness leads to life,
 but pursuing evil ends in death.
 20 Perverse hearts are an abomination to *ADONAI*.
 His favor is on those blameless in their ways.
 21 Be sure, † the evil will not go unpunished,
 but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered.
 22 Like a gold ring in a pig's snout
 is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion.
 23 The desire of the righteous is only good,
 but the hope of the wicked only wrath.
 24 One gives freely, yet gains even more.
 Another withholds unjustly, and comes to poverty.
 25 A soul who blesses will prosper,
 and one who gives water will himself be satisfied.
 26 People curse anyone withholding grain,
 but blessing is on the head of one who dispenses it.
 27 A person who diligently seeks good finds favor,
 but to one who searches for evil, evil comes to him!
 28 Whoever trusts in his riches will fall,
 but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.
 29 Whoever troubles his own household will inherit
 wind,
 and the fool will be a servant to the wise-hearted.
 30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
 and whoever wins souls is wise.
 31 If the righteous is rewarded on earth,
 how much more the wicked and the sinner! ††

The Righteous and the Wicked

12 Whoever loves knowledge loves correction,
 but whoever hates reproof is stupid.
 2 A good man obtains favor from *ADONAI*,
 but He condemns a person with evil schemes.
 3 No one is made secure by wickedness,
 but a righteous root will not be moved.
 4 A virtuous wife is her husband's crown,

† Lit. Hand to hand
 Pet. 4:18.

†† cf. 1

but a dishonoring one is like rottenness in his bones.
 5 The plans of the righteous are just,
 but the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
 6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood,
 but the mouth of the upright delivers them.
 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more,
 but the household of the righteous will stand.
 8 A man is praised according to his insight,
 but one with a twisted mind is despised.
 9 Better to have little honor and a servant
 than to have glory and no bread.

Caring for Animals and Land

10 A righteous person cares for the life of his animal,
 yet even the compassion of the wicked is cruel.
 11 The one who works his land will have plenty of
 food,
 but whoever chases daydreams lacks sense.
 12 The wicked covets the loot of evil men,
 but the root of the righteous flourishes.

Fruit of the Mouth

13 An evil one is ensnared by the sin of lips,
 but the righteous one escapes trouble.
 14 By the fruit of his mouth a man will be satisfied
 with good.
 The work of a man's hands will reward him.
 15 A fool's way is right in his own eyes,
 but the wise listen to advice.
 16 A fool shows his irritation immediately,
 but a prudent person overlooks an insult.
 17 A trustworthy witness tells what is right,
 but a false witness, deceit.
 18 Reckless speech is like the thrusts of a sword,
 but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
 19 Truthful lips endure forever,
 but a lying tongue for only a moment.
 20 Deceit is in the heart of those who plot evil,
 but those promoting *shalom* have joy.
 21 No harm befalls the righteous,
 but the wicked are full of misery.
 22 Lying lips are detestable to *ADONAI*,
 but those who act faithfully are His delight.
 23 A clever person conceals his knowledge,
 but the heart of a fool blurts out folly.

Diligence or Sloth

24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
 but the lazy will become forced labor.
 25 An anxious heart weighs one down,
 but a good word cheers him up.
 26 The righteous gives his friend guidance,
 but the way of the wicked leads astray.
 27 A lazy person does not roast his game,
 but a diligent person prizes his possessions.
 28 In the path of righteousness is life—
 it is a path to immortality.

Guard the Way of Integrity

13 A wise son heeds his father's discipline,
but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
² From the fruit of a man's mouth he enjoys good things,
but the treacherous crave violence.
³ He who watches his mouth protects his life,
but whoever opens wide his lips comes to ruin.
⁴ The slacker's soul craves, yet has nothing,
but the diligent soul will be satisfied.
⁵ A righteous person hates lying,
but the wicked acts in shameful disgrace.
⁶ Righteousness guards one who walks in integrity,
but wickedness overthrows the sinner.
⁷ One pretends to be rich, yet has nothing;
another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth. †
⁸ A man's riches may ransom his life,
but a poor person hears no threat.
⁹ The light of the righteous shines brightly.
The lamp of the wicked is snuffed out.
¹⁰ Arrogance yields nothing but strife.
Wisdom belongs to those who take advice.
¹¹ Wealth gained by fraud dwindles,
but he who gathers by labor increases it.
¹² Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but longing fulfilled is a tree of life.
¹³ Whoever despises instruction will pay a penalty,
but whoever respects a *mitzvah* will be rewarded.
¹⁴ Wise instruction is a fountain of life,
turning one away from snares of death.
¹⁵ Good understanding wins favor,
but the way of the unfaithful is hard.
¹⁶ Everyone shrewd acts with knowledge,
but a fool flaunts folly.

The Wise and the Foolish

¹⁷ A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
but a faithful envoy brings healing.
¹⁸ He who spurns discipline comes to poverty and shame,
but whoever accepts correction will be honored.
¹⁹ A desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul,
but fools detest turning away from evil.
²⁰ He who walks with wise men is wise,
but a companion of fools suffers harm.
²¹ Misfortune pursues sinners,
but prosperity rewards the righteous.
²² A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children,
but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.
²³ The fallow field of the poor yields much food,
but it is swept away by injustice.
²⁴ He who spares the rod hates his son,
but he who loves him is diligent with discipline. ††
²⁵ The righteous eats to his heart's content,

but the belly of the wicked goes hungry.

Wisdom Builds Up, Folly Tears Down

14 A wise woman builds her house,
but a foolish one tears it down with her own hands.
² The one who walks uprightly fears *ADONAI*,
but one devious in his ways despises Him.
³ In the mouth of a fool is a rod for his back,
but the lips of the wise protect them.
⁴ Where there are no oxen, the stalls are clean,
but from the strength of the ox comes an abundant harvest.
⁵ A trustworthy witness does not lie,
but a false witness breathes out lies.
⁶ A scoffer seeks wisdom yet finds none,
but knowledge is easy to the discerning.
⁷ Walk away from a fool—
for you will find no knowledge on his lips.
⁸ The wisdom of the prudent is to consider his way,
but the folly of fools is deception.
⁹ Fools mock guilt of sin,
but among the upright is goodwill.
¹⁰ The heart knows its own bitterness,
and no one else can share its joy.
¹¹ The house of the wicked will be demolished,
but the tent of the upright 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 ache,
and the end of joy may be grief.
¹⁴ A backsliding heart partakes of its ways,
and a good man is rewarded for his.
¹⁵ The naïve believes every word,
but the shrewd discerns his steps.
¹⁶ The wise fears and turns away from evil,
but the fool is hotheaded and reckless.
¹⁷ One with a short temper acts foolishly,
and one with crafty schemes is hated.
¹⁸ The naïve inherit folly,
but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.
¹⁹ Evil men will bow in the presence of the good,
and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

Poverty and Riches

²⁰ The poor is hated even by his neighbor,
but many are those who love the rich.
²¹ Whoever despises his neighbor sins,
but whoever is gracious to the needy is blessed.
²² Indeed, those who plot evil go astray,
but grace and truth come to those who plan good.
²³ In all hard work there is profit,
but mere talk leads only to poverty.
²⁴ The crown of the wise is their riches,
but the folly of fools is foolishness.
²⁵ A truthful witness saves lives,
but one who utters lies is treacherous.

† cf. 2 Cor. 6:10. †† cf. Heb. 12:7.

26 In the fear of *ADONAI* one has strong confidence.
It will be a refuge for His children.
27 The fear of *ADONAI* is a fountain of life,
turning one from the snares of death.
28 A large population is a king's glory,
but lack of subjects is a prince's ruin.
29 One who is slow to anger shows great understand-
ing,
but a quick-tempered one exalts folly.
30 A tranquil heart is life to the body,
but envy is rottenness to the bones.
31 The one who oppresses the poor shows contempt
for his Maker,
but whoever is kind to the needy honors Him.
32 The wicked is brought down in his calamity,
yet the righteous has a refuge even in death.
33 Wisdom rests in the heart of the discerning,
and even among fools she is known.
34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
but sin is a disgrace to any people.
35 The king shows favor toward a servant who acts
wisely,
but his wrath is on one who is disgraceful.

Tongue of the Wise

15 A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.
2 The tongue of the wise treats knowledge correctly,
but the mouth of fools spouts folly.
3 The eyes of *ADONAI* are everywhere,
observing the wicked and the good.
4 A healing tongue is a tree of life,
but a deceitful one crushes the spirit.
5 A fool despises his father's discipline,
but one who accepts reproof is smart.
6 The house of the righteous has great wealth,
but the income of the wicked brings trouble.
7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge,
but not so the heart of fools.
8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to
ADONAI ,
but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

Pursue Righteousness and Reproof

9 *ADONAI* detests the way of the wicked,
but loves those who pursue righteousness.
10 Stern correction awaits one who forsakes the way.
One who hates reproof will die.
11 *Sheol* and Abaddon † are before *ADONAI* —
how much more the hearts of people!
12 A mocker dislikes one who corrects him;
he will not go to the wise.

Heart Attitude Matters

13 A joyful heart makes the face cheerful,
but heartache crushes the spirit.

14 A discerning heart seeks knowledge,
but the mouth of fools feeds on folly.
15 All the days of the afflicted are bad,
but a cheerful heart has a continual feast.
16 Better is little with the fear of *ADONAI*
than great wealth with turmoil.
17 Better a meal of vegetables where there is love,
than a fattened ox where there is hatred.
18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife,
but one who is slow to anger calms a quarrel.
19 The way of the slacker is a hedge of thorns,
but the path of the upright is a highway.
20 A wise child brings joy to his father,
but a foolish person despises his mother.
21 Folly is joy to one who lacks sense,
but one with discernment walks straight.
22 Plans fail when there is no counsel,
but with many advisers they succeed.
23 A person has joy in an appropriate answer—
how good is a timely word.
24 The path of life leads upward for the wise
to keep him from going down to *Sheol* .
25 *ADONAI* tears down a proud man's house,
but He maintains the widow's boundary.
26 Evil thoughts are an abomination to *ADONAI* ,
but pleasant words are pure.
27 One greedy for gain troubles his household,
but whoever hates bribes will live.
28 A righteous heart thinks before answering,
but a wicked mouth blurts out evil things.
29 *ADONAI* is far from the wicked,
but hears the prayer of the righteous. ††
30 Bright eyes bring joy to the heart.
Good news gives health to the bones.
31 One whose ear heeds
a life-giving reproof dwells among the wise.
32 Whoever avoids correction despises himself,
but whoever heeds reproof acquires understanding.
33 The fear of *ADONAI* is the discipline of wisdom,
and humility comes before honor.

Commit Your Heart to *ADONAI*

16 The plans of the heart belong to man,
but the tongue's answer is from *ADONAI* .
2 All a man's ways are pure in his own eyes,
but *ADONAI* weighs the motives.
3 Commit whatever you do to *ADONAI* ,
and your plans will succeed.
4 *ADONAI* works everything out for his own purpose—
even the wicked for a day of disaster.
5 *ADONAI* abhors all the proud in heart.
Be assured, they will not go unpunished.
6 By mercy and truth is iniquity atoned,
and by the fear of *ADONAI* one avoids evil.
7 When one's ways are pleasing to *ADONAI* ,
he makes even his enemies be at peace with him.
8 Better a little with righteousness

† Or "Death and Destruction"

†† cf. John 9:31.

than much income without justice.

⁹ The heart of man plans his course,
but *ADONAI* directs his steps.

The Delights of a Just King

¹⁰ An oracle is on the lips of the king—
let his mouth never be treacherous in judgment.

¹¹ Honest balances and scales are *ADONAI*'s.
All the weights in a bag are His handiwork.

¹² Wrongdoing is an abomination to kings,
for a throne is established by righteousness.

¹³ Righteous lips are the delight of kings.
He loves those who speak honestly.

¹⁴ A king's fury is like messengers of death,
but a wise man will appease it.

¹⁵ In the light of a king's face there is life,
and his favor like a cloud of spring rain.

¹⁶ How much better to get wisdom than gold,
to choose understanding rather than silver.

¹⁷ The highway of the upright avoids evil.
He who guards his way protects his life.

¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction
and a haughty spirit before a fall.

¹⁹ Better to be lowly in spirit with the afflicted
than to share the spoil with the proud.

²⁰ One prudent in a matter will find good.
Blessed is the one who trusts in *ADONAI*.

²¹ The wise in heart is called discerning,
and sweetness of lips increases persuasiveness.

²² Insight is a fountain of life to one who has it,
but folly leads to the discipline of fools.

²³ A wise man's heart teaches his mouth
and adds persuasiveness to his lips.

²⁴ Pleasant words are honeycomb—sweet to the soul
and healing to the bones.

²⁵ There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death.

²⁶ A laborer's appetite works on his behalf,
for his hunger drives him on.

Slow to Anger

²⁷ A wicked scoundrel digs up evil,
and on his lips is a scorching fire. †

²⁸ A perverse person sows strife,
and a gossip separates close friends.

²⁹ A violent person lures his neighbor,
leading him down a path that is no good.

³⁰ One who winks his eyes schemes deceit,
one who purses his lips is bent on evil.

³¹ Gray hair is a crown of glory,
found on the path of righteousness.

³² Better to be slow to anger than a mighty warrior.
One who controls his temper is better than one who
conquers a city.

³³ The lot is cast into the lap,
but their very decision is from *ADONAI*.

Beware of Bribes and Rebellion

17 Better is dry crust with peace and quiet
than a house full of feasting with strife.

² A wise servant will rule over a disgraceful son
and will share the inheritance with the brothers.

³ A crucible is for silver
and a furnace is for gold,
but *ADONAI* tests the heart.

⁴ An evildoer listens to wicked lips;
a liar listens to a malicious tongue.

⁵ Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker.
Whoever rejoices at calamity will not go unpunished.

⁶ Grandchildren are the crown of the elderly,
and the glory of children is their parents.

⁷ Arrogant lips are not fitting for a fool,
much less lying lips for a ruler.

⁸ A bribe is a charm in the eyes of its owner.
Wherever he turns, he succeeds.

⁹ Whoever covers up an offense seeks love. ††
Whoever repeats a matter separates close friends.

¹⁰ A rebuke makes a greater impression on a discerning
person
than a hundred lashes on a fool.

¹¹ An evil man seeks only rebellion,
and so a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

¹² Better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs
than to deal with a fool in his folly.

¹³ Whoever rewards evil for good—
evil will never leave his house.

¹⁴ The beginning of strife is like letting out water—
so stop a quarrel before it breaks out.

¹⁵ Acquitting the wicked and condemning the right-
eous:
both are an abomination to *ADONAI*.

¹⁶ Of what use is money in the hand of a fool
since he has no intention of acquiring wisdom?

¹⁷ A friend loves at all times,
and a brother is born for adversity.

¹⁸ A man lacking judgment shakes hands on a deal
and puts up financial security for his neighbor.

¹⁹ He who loves sin loves strife.

One who builds a high gate invites destruction.

²⁰ A perverse heart finds nothing good,
a devious tongue falls into trouble.

²¹ Whoever fathers a fool gets grief.

There is no joy for the father of a disgraceful son.

²² A cheerful heart is good medicine,
but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

²³ The wicked one receives a bribe in secret
to pervert the ways of justice.

²⁴ Wisdom is before the person of understanding,
but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

²⁵ A foolish son is grief to his father
and bitterness to her that bore him.

²⁶ Also, to punish a righteous person is not good,
nor to beat up an honorable one for his integrity.

† cf. *Jacob 3:6*.

†† cf. *Jacob 5:20; 1 Pet. 4:8*.

²⁷ One with knowledge restrains his words,
and a discerning person stays calm.

²⁸ Even a fool, who keeps quiet, is considered wise,
discerning, if he seals his lips.

A Fool's Big Mouth

18 One who isolates oneself seeks his own desire;
he defies all sound judgment.

² A fool finds no delight in understanding,
but only in expressing his opinion.

³ When wickedness comes, so does contempt,
and with dishonor comes disgrace.

⁴ The words of one's mouth are deep waters,
a fountain of wisdom, a flowing brook.

⁵ Showing partiality to the wicked is not good,
nor is depriving the innocent of justice.

⁶ The lips of a fool enter into an argument
and his mouth invites a beating.

⁷ A fool's mouth is his ruin,
and his lips are a snare to his soul.

⁸ The words of a gossip are tasty morsels,
going down into one's innermost being.

⁹ One who is slack in his work
is brother to one who destroys.

¹⁰ The Name of *ADONAI* is a strong tower.
The righteous one runs into it and is set safely up
high.

¹¹ A rich person's wealth is a strong city
or like a high wall—in his imagination.

¹² Before ruin a person's heart is proud,
but humility comes before honor.

¹³ One who answers before listening—
that is his folly and his shame.

¹⁴ One's spirit sustains him through illness,
but who can bear a crushed spirit?

¹⁵ A discerning heart gains knowledge,
the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Overcoming Opposition and Offenses

¹⁶ A man's gift makes room for him,
and leads him before great men.

¹⁷ The first to state his case seems just, until another
comes
and cross-examines him.

¹⁸ Casting lots ends quarrels
and decides between mighty opponents.

¹⁹ An offended brother is more formidable than a for-
tified city,
and quarrels are like the bars of a fortress.

²⁰ From the fruit of his mouth a man's stomach is
filled—
with the harvest of his lips he is satisfied.

²¹ Death and life are in the control of the tongue.
Those who indulge in it will eat its fruit.

²² Whoever finds a wife finds good,
and receives favor from *ADONAI*.

²³ The poor request favor,

but the rich answer harshly.

²⁴ A man with many friends may be harmed by them,
but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Better to Be Poor with Integrity

19 Better to be poor, walking with integrity,
than be a fool whose lips are corrupt.

² Zeal without knowledge is not good, †
or to act hastily and miss the way.

³ A man's folly undermines his way,
and his heart rages against *ADONAI*.

⁴ Wealth adds many friends,
yet a poor man is deserted by his friend.

⁵ A false witness will not go unpunished,
one who breathes lies will not escape.

⁶ Many seek the favor of the generous.
Everyone is a friend to a giver of gifts.

⁷ All a poor man's relatives despise him—
how much more his friends avoid him.
He pursues them with words, but they are not there.

⁸ One who gets wisdom loves his own soul.
One who treasures understanding prospers.

⁹ A false witness will not go unpunished,
and one who breathes lies will perish.

¹⁰ Luxury is not fitting for a fool—
how much less for a servant to rule over princes!

Watch Your Temper

¹¹ Prudence makes one slow to anger
and his glory is to overlook an offense.

¹² A king's wrath is like a roaring lion,
but his favor is like dew on the grass.

¹³ A foolish son is trouble for his father,
and a quarrelsome wife is constant dripping.

¹⁴ House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers,
but a prudent wife is from *ADONAI*.

¹⁵ Laziness brings on deep sleep,
and an idle soul will starve.

¹⁶ One who keeps a *mitzvah* guards his soul,
but one who neglects His ways will die.

¹⁷ One who is kind to the poor lends to *ADONAI*,
and *ADONAI* will reward him for his good deed.

¹⁸ Discipline your son while there is hope.
Do not set your heart on his death.

¹⁹ One with great rage will pay a penalty.
For if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.

Listen to Wise Counsel

²⁰ Listen to advice and accept instruction,
so that in the end you may be wise.

²¹ Many are the plans in a man's heart,
but the counsel of *ADONAI* will stand.

²² What is desired in a man is loyalty,
and a poor person is better than a liar.

²³ The fear of *ADONAI* leads to life,
and he who has it rests satisfied, untouched by harm.

† cf. Rom. 10:2.

Sluggards, Scoffers, and Disgraceful Sons

24 The slacker buries his hand in a bowl
and will not even bring it back to his mouth!
25 Strike a scoffer and the naïve will learn caution.
rebuke a discerning person and he will gain knowl-
edge.
26 He who robs his father and drives away his mother
is a son who brings shame and disgrace!
27 My son, if you stop heeding instruction,
you will stray from words of knowledge.
28 A crooked witness scorns justice,
and a wicked mouth devours iniquity.
29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers,
and floggings for the back of fools.
20 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler.
Whoever is led astray by them is unwise.
2 The terror of a king is like a lion's growl.
Whoever provokes him endangers his life.
3 It is honor for one to resolve a dispute,
yet every fool quarrels.
4 A slacker will not plow in season,
so at harvest he looks but finds nothing.
5 The intent of a man's heart is deep water,
but a man of insight draws it out.

Loyalty, Integrity, Justice

6 Many a man proclaims his loyalty,
but a faithful man who can find? †
7 A righteous person walks in integrity.
Blessed are his children after him.
8 A king sitting on the throne to judge
separates out all evil with his eyes.
9 Who can say: "I have kept my heart pure;
I am cleansed from my sin"? ††
10 Unequal weights and measures— ‡
both are an abomination to *ADONAI*.
11 Even a child is known by his actions,
whether his conduct is pure and upright.
12 Ears that hear and eyes that see—
ADONAI has made them both.
13 Do not love sleep, lest you become poor.
Open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with food.

ADONAI's Lamp Searches

14 "It's bad, bad!" says the buyer,
but then he goes away and boasts.
15 There is gold and abundance of rubies,
but lips that speak knowledge are precious.
16 Take a man's garment, who puts up security for a
stranger,
and hold it in pledge, as security for a foreign
woman.
17 Bread gained by fraud is sweet to a man,
but later his mouth is filled with gravel.

† cf. Luke 18:8. †† cf. John 1:8. ‡ Lit. A stone and a stone, an ephah and an ephah

18 Plans are made by counsel,
so wage war with guidance.
19 A talebearer goes about, revealing secrets,
so do not associate with a babbler.
20 Whoever curses his father or his mother, ††
his lamp will be snuffed out in utter darkness.
21 An estate acquired quickly in the beginning
will not be blessed in the end.
22 Do not say, "I will pay back evil!"
Wait for *ADONAI*, so He may deliver You.
23 Unbalanced weights are detestable to *ADONAI*,
and dishonest scales are wicked.
24 A man's steps are directed by *ADONAI*.
How then can anyone understand his own way?
25 It is a trap for one to say rashly, "It is holy!"
and only afterward to consider his vows.
26 A wise king winnows out the wicked.
He turns a threshing wheel over them.
27 The spirit of man is the lamp of *ADONAI*,
searching all his inmost being.
28 Lovingkindness and truth preserve the king,
but his throne is upheld by lovingkindness.
29 The glory of young men is their strength,
and the splendor of old men is gray hair.
30 Blows that wound scour away evil,
and beatings purge the innermost being.

ADONAI Weighs the Heart

21 A king's heart is like a stream of water in the
hand of *ADONAI*;
he directs it wherever He wants. ††
2 All a man's ways seem right in his own eyes,
but *ADONAI* weighs the heart.
3 To do righteousness and justice
is more acceptable to *ADONAI* than sacrifice.
4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart—
the lamp of the wicked is sin.
5 Plans of the diligent surely lead to gain,
but all who are hasty come only to loss.
6 Getting treasures by a lying tongue
is like a fleeting vapor for those who seek death.

Violence and Ruin of the Wicked

7 The violence of the wicked sweeps them away,
because they refuse to act justly.
8 The way of the guilty is crooked,
but the conduct of the pure is upright.
9 It is better to live on a corner of a roof
than in a house shared
with a quarrelsome wife.
10 A wicked soul craves evil—
his neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.
11 When a mocker is punished, the naïve become
wise.
When a wise person is instructed, he gains knowl-
edge.

†† cf. Matt. 15:4. †† cf. Luke 16:15.

¹² The righteous one considers the house of the wicked,
 throwing the wicked down to their ruin.
¹³ Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor,
 will also cry out but not be answered.
¹⁴ A gift in secret soothes anger,
 and a bribe given secretly, fierce rage.
¹⁵ Doing justice brings joy to the righteous,
 and terror to those who do evil.
¹⁶ Whoever strays from the path of wisdom
 ends up in the congregation of the dead.
¹⁷ Whoever loves pleasure becomes poor.
 Whoever loves wine and oil will not be rich.
¹⁸ The wicked is a ransom for the righteous
 and the faithless for the upright.
¹⁹ It is better to live in a desert land
 than with a quarrelsome, worrisome wife.
²⁰ Precious treasure and oil are in a wise person's
 dwelling,
 but a foolish person devours all he has.
²¹ Whoever pursues righteousness and mercy
 finds life, prosperity, and honor.
²² A wise person scales the city of warriors
 and brings down the stronghold in which they trust.
²³ Whoever guards his mouth and tongue
 keeps his soul out of troubles.
²⁴ A proud and haughty man
 —Mocker is his name—
 acts with overbearing pride.
²⁵ A slacker's craving will kill him,
 because his hands refuse to work.
²⁶ All day long he craves greedily,
 yet the righteous one gives and does not hold back.
²⁷ The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination—
 how much more when he brings it with evil intent?
²⁸ A false witness will perish,
 but a man who hears will speak forever.
²⁹ A wicked man puts on a bold face,
 but the upright man considers his ways.
³⁰ There is no wisdom,
 there is no understanding,
 there is no counsel—
 against *ADONAI*.
³¹ A horse is prepared for the day of battle,
 but victory comes from *ADONAI*.
22 A good name is to be chosen rather than great
 wealth,
 and grace rather than silver or gold.
² Rich and poor have this in common—
ADONAI is the Maker of them all.
³ A crafty person sees danger and hides,
 but the naïve keep going and suffer for it.
⁴ The reward of humility and fear of *ADONAI*
 is riches, honor, and life.
⁵ Thorns and snares are in the path of the perverse,
 but one who guards his soul stays far from them.
⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go,
 when he is old he will not turn from it.

⁷ The rich rule over the poor,
 the borrower is a slave to the lender.
⁸ One who sows injustice will reap trouble,
 and the rod of his fury will perish.
⁹ One with a bountiful eye will be blessed,
 for he shares his bread with the poor.
¹⁰ Throw out a scoffer and strife will go out,
 quarreling and disgrace will cease.
¹¹ One who loves purity of heart and whose speech is
 gracious,
 will have the king as his friend.
¹² The eyes of *ADONAI* guard knowledge, but He un-
 dermines
 the words of the faithless.
¹³ The slacker says, "There's a lion outside!
 I'll be killed in the streets."
¹⁴ The mouth of a seducing woman is a deep pit—
 into it will fall one with whom *ADONAI* is angry.
¹⁵ Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child,
 but a rod of discipline will drive it far from him.
¹⁶ The one who oppresses the poor to increase his
 own gain,
 and the one who gives to the rich—both end in
 poverty.
¹⁷ Incline your ear and listen to the words of the wise,
 and apply your heart to my knowledge.
¹⁸ For it is delightful if you keep them
 within you, ready on your lips.
¹⁹ So that your trust may be in *ADONAI*,
 I made them known to you this day, even you.
²⁰ Have I not written to you 30 sayings
 of admonition and knowledge,
²¹ to show you true and reliable words,
 that you may give a true answer to those who sent
 you?
²² Do not rob a poor person because he is poor,
 nor crush the needy at the gate,
²³ for *ADONAI* will plead their case,
 and rob life from those who plunder them.
²⁴ Do not be friends with one given to anger
 or associate with a hot-tempered person,
²⁵ lest you learn his ways,
 and entangle your soul in a snare.
²⁶ Do not be one who shakes hands
 or puts up security for debts.
²⁷ If you do not have enough to pay,
 why should your bed be taken from under you?
²⁸ Do not move an ancient boundary stone
 which your fathers set up.
²⁹ Do you see a man skilled in his work?
 He will stand before kings.
 He will not stand before obscure people.

Advice about Appetites

23 When you sit down to dine with a ruler,
 consider carefully what is set before you,
² and put a knife to your throat
 if you possess a large appetite.

³ Do not crave his delicacies,
for that food is deceptive.
⁴ Do not wear yourself out to get rich.
Be wise enough to restrain yourself.
⁵ When you cast your eyes on riches, it is gone;
for it surely sprouts wings and flies off into the sky
like an eagle.
⁶ Do not eat the food of a stingy person,
or desire his delicacies.
⁷ For as he thinks within himself, so is he.
“Eat and drink”, he says to you,
but his heart is not with you.
⁸ You will vomit up the morsel you ate,
and will waste your pleasant words.
⁹ Do not speak in the ears of a fool,
for he will disdain the wisdom of your words.
¹⁰ Do not move an ancient boundary stone,
or encroach on fields of the fatherless,
¹¹ for their redeemer is strong.
He will plead their case against you.
¹² Apply your heart to discipline
and your ears to words of knowledge.
¹³ Do not withhold correction from a child.
If you strike him with a rod, he will not die.
¹⁴ Punish him with a rod,
and deliver his soul from *Sheol*.

Wisdom's Path to the Future

¹⁵ My son, if your heart is wise,
then my heart also will be glad.
¹⁶ Yes, my inmost being will rejoice
when your lips speak what is right.
¹⁷ Do not let your heart envy sinners,
but always be in the fear of *ADONAI*.
¹⁸ For surely there is a future,
and your hope will never be cut off.
¹⁹ Listen, my son, and be wise,
and guide your heart in the right way.
²⁰ Do not join those drinking too much wine
or gorging on meat,
²¹ for both drunkards and gluttons will be impover-
ished—
grogginess will clothe them with rags.
²² Listen to your father who begot you
and do not despise your mother when she is old.
²³ Acquire truth and do not sell it,
acquire wisdom, instruction, and understanding.
²⁴ The father of a righteous one rejoices greatly.
Whoever fathers a wise child delights in him.
²⁵ Let your father and your mother be glad,
let she who bore you rejoice!
²⁶ My son, give your heart to me,
and let your eyes observe my ways.
²⁷ For a prostitute is a deep pit,
an adulterous woman is a narrow pit.
²⁸ Indeed, she lies in wait like a robber,
and increases the unfaithful among men.

Lingering Long over Wine

²⁹ Who has woe? Who has sorrow?
Who has fights? Who has complaining?
Who has bruises for no reason?
Who has red eyes?
³⁰ Those who linger long over wine,
who go looking for mixed wine.
³¹ Do not gaze at wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup,
when it glides down smoothly.
³² In the end it bites like a serpent
and stings like a viper.
³³ Your eyes will see strange things.
Your heart will utter perverse things.
³⁴ Then you will be like one lying down in the heart of
the sea,
or sprawled on the top of a mast.
³⁵ “They hit me! But I was not hurt.
They beat me up! But I did not feel it.
When will I wake up?
I will look for another drink.”
24 Do not envy evil people,
or desire to be with them,
² for their hearts contemplate violence,
and their lips speak mischief.

Strength through Wise Counsel

³ By wisdom a house is built,
by understanding it is prepared,
⁴ and by knowledge its rooms are filled
with every rare and pleasing treasure.
⁵ A wise man is strong,
and a man of knowledge
becomes even stronger.
⁶ For with wise advice you wage war
and in many counselors there is victory.
⁷ Wisdom is unattainable for a fool—
he does not open his mouth at the gate.
⁸ One who plots evil will be called a schemer.
⁹ A foolish scheme is sin,
and people detest a mocker.

Counsel on Friendship

¹⁰ If you falter in a day of adversity,
your strength is small.
¹¹ Rescue those being dragged off to death,
hold back those stumbling to slaughter.
¹² If you say, “Look, we didn’t know this.”
Won’t He who weighs hearts perceive it?
Won’t He who guards your soul know it?
Won’t He repay each one according to his deeds? †
¹³ Eat honey, my son, for it is good,
and honeycomb is sweet to your taste.
¹⁴ Likewise know that wisdom is sweet to your soul.

† cf. Rom. 2:6.

If you find it, there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

¹⁵ Do not lurk like the wicked near the dwelling of the righteous.

Do not assault his home.

¹⁶ For though the righteous one may fall seven times, he gets up again, but the wicked stumble in adversity.

¹⁷ Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, or let your heart be glad when he stumbles,

¹⁸ or *ADONAI* may see it as evil in His eyes, and turn His wrath away from him.

¹⁹ Do not be upset because of evil people, or be envious of the wicked,

²⁰ for the evil person has no future, and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out.

²¹ My son, fear *ADONAI* and the king, [†] and do not associate with rebels.

²² For their destruction will arise suddenly, and who knows the ruin both *ADONAI* and the king can bring?

²³ These sayings are also from the wise: Partiality in judgment is not good.

²⁴ Whoever tells the guilty, "You are innocent," people curse him and nations revile him.

²⁵ But for those who convict the guilty there will be delight— good blessing will come upon them.

²⁶ An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.

²⁷ Finish your outdoor work and get your fields ready.

After that, build your house.

²⁸ Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause,

and do not deceive with your lips.

²⁹ Do not say, "I will do to him what he has done to me;

I will pay him back for his deed!" ^{††}

Lesson of the Lazy

³⁰ I passed by the field of the slacker, by the vineyard of one lacking judgment.

³¹ Surprisingly, it was all overgrown with thorns, the ground was covered with weeds, and its stone wall was broken down.

³² Then I took to heart what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw:

³³ "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep,"

³⁴ then your poverty comes tramping in, and your need like an armed soldier.

The Glory of Searching a Matter

²⁵ These also are proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied:

² It is the glory of God to conceal a matter and the glory of kings to search it out.

³ As high as heaven and deep as earth, so the hearts of kings are unsearchable.

⁴ Remove impurities from silver and out comes material for the refiner.

⁵ Remove the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

⁶ Do not honor yourself in the king's presence, and do not stand in the place of great men.

⁷ Better for him to say to you, "Come up here," than for you to be humiliated before a nobleman.

What your eyes have seen,

⁸ do not bring hastily to court, or what will you do afterward,

when your neighbor puts you to shame?

⁹ Argue your case with your associate, without betraying another's confidence,

¹⁰ or the one who hears it will shame you, and you will never lose your bad reputation.

A Fitting Reproof is Precious

¹¹ Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word aptly spoken.

¹² Like a gold earring or a gold ornament is a wise reproof to a receptive ear.

¹³ Like the coolness of snow at harvest time is a faithful messenger to those who send him for he refreshes his master's soul.

¹⁴ Like clouds and wind without rain is one who boasts about a gift not given.

¹⁵ Through patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue can break a bone.

Proverbs for Daily Life

¹⁶ When you find honey, eat just enough, lest you are stuffed and vomit it.

¹⁷ Seldom set foot in your neighbor's house, lest he become weary of you and loathe you.

¹⁸ Like a club, a sword, or a sharp arrow is one who bears false witness against his neighbor.

¹⁹ Like a broken tooth or a lame foot is confidence in the unfaithful in time of trouble.

²⁰ Like taking off a garment on a cold day or like vinegar poured on soda,

is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,

²² for you will heap coals of fire on his head [‡] and *ADONAI* will reward you.

²³ A north wind brings rain, and a backbiting tongue angries faces.

[†] cf. Rom. 13:1-5. ^{††} cf. Matt. 5:39; Rom. 12:17, 19.

[‡] cf. Rom. 12:20.

24 Better to dwell in a corner of a roof
than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.
25 Like cold water to a weary soul
is good news from a distant land.
26 Like a muddied spring or a polluted well
is a righteous person who yields before the wicked.
27 It is not good to eat too much honey,
or honorable to seek one's own honor.
28 Like a city whose walls are broken down
is one with no control over his temper.

Folly of Fools

26 Like snow in summer or rain at harvest,
so honor is not fitting for a fool.
2 Like a fluttering sparrow or a flying swallow,
so an undeserved curse does not land.
3 A whip for a horse, a bridle for a donkey,
and a rod for the back of fools.
4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly,
else you also will be like him.
5 Answer a fool according to his folly,
else he will be wise in his own eyes.
6 Like cutting off one's feet or drinking violence
is sending a message by a fool's hand.
7 Like a lame man's legs that hang limp,
so is a proverb in a fool's mouth.
8 Like tying a stone into a sling,
so is giving honor to a fool.
9 Like a thorn bush in a drunkard's hand
is a proverb in a fool's mouth.
10 Like an archer who wounds at random
is one who hires a fool or any passer-by.
11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit,
so a fool repeats his folly. †
12 Do you see one wise in his own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than him.

Folly of Slackers

13 A slacker says,
"There's a lion on the road!
A lion is in the streets!"
14 As a door turns on its hinges
so a slacker turns on his bed.
15 The slacker plunges his hand in the dish—
he is too tired to bring it back to his mouth.
16 A slacker is wiser in his own eyes
than seven people who answer sensibly.

Folly of *Lashon Ha-Ra*

17 Like one who takes a dog by the ears
is a passer-by who meddles in a quarrel not his own.
18 Like a madman shooting firebrands and deadly arrows
so is one who deceives his friend, and says, "I was
only joking."
19 Without wood a fire goes out;

without gossip quarrels cease.
21 As coals are to embers and wood to fire,
so is a contentious person to kindling strife.
22 A gossip's words are like tasty morsels—
they slide down into the innermost parts of the body.
23 Like silver glaze overlaying earthenware
are fervent †† lips with an evil heart.
24 One who hates, disguises it with his lips,
but he stores up deceit within him.
25 When he speaks favorably, do not believe him,
for there are seven abominations in his heart.
26 Though his hatred may be concealed
by deceit, his evil will be exposed before the assembly.
27 Whoever digs a pit will fall in it,
and whoever rolls a stone—it will come back upon
him.
28 A lying tongue hates those crushed by it,
and a flattering mouth causes ruin.

Do Not Boast

27 Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring. ‡
2 Let another praise you and not your own mouth,
a stranger and not your own lips.
3 A stone is heavy and sand a burden,
but provocation by a fool is heavier than both.
4 Wrath is cruel and anger is overwhelming,
but who can stand before jealousy?
5 Better is open rebuke than hidden love.
6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend,
but excessive the kisses of an enemy.
7 One who is full loathes honeycomb,
but to one who is hungry every bitter thing is sweet.
8 Like a bird that strays from its nest
is a man that wanders from his home.

Iron Sharpens Iron

9 As ointment and perfume gladden the heart,
so the sweetness of one's friend comes from his sincere counsel.
10 Do not forsake your friend, or your father's friend,
nor go to your brother's house in the day of your disaster—
better a neighbor nearby than a brother far off.
11 Be wise, my son, make my heart glad,
so I may answer anyone who taunts me.
12 The prudent see danger and hide,
but the naïve keep going and pay the penalty.
13 Take a man's garment, who puts up security for a
stranger,
and hold it in pledge, as security for a seductive
woman.
14 If someone blesses his friend with a loud voice early
in the morning,
it will be taken as a curse.

† cf. 2 Pet. 2:22.

†† Lit. burning ‡ cf. Jacob 4:13-16.

15 Continual dripping on a day of steady rain
and a contentious wife are alike—
16 hiding her is like hiding the wind or grasping oil
with the right hand.
17 As iron sharpens iron,
so a person sharpens the countenance of his friend.
18 Whoever tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,
whoever takes care of his master will be honored.
19 As water reflects the face,
so a person's heart reflects the person.
20 *Sheol* and Abaddon are never satisfied,
and neither are the eyes of man.
21 A crucible is for silver and a furnace is for gold,
but a person is proved by the praise he receives.
22 Even if you pound the fool along with the grain in a
mortar with a pestle,
his foolishness would never leave him.
23 Know well the condition of your flocks,
pay attention to your herds,
24 for riches are not forever,
nor a crown from generation to generation.
25 When hay is removed and grass appears,
and grain from the hills is gathered in,
26 lambs will provide you with clothing,
and goats with the price of a field.
27 There will be enough goats' milk for food
and food for your household,
and sustenance for your maidservants.

Confidence, Discernment, Integrity

28 The wicked flee when no one is pursuing,
but the righteous are as bold as a lion.
2 When a country is in rebellion, it has many rulers,
but a man of discernment and knowledge maintains
order.
3 A poor man who oppresses the weak
is like pounding rain without food.
4 Those who forsake *Torah* praise the wicked,
but those who keep *Torah* stir them up.
5 Evil men do not understand justice,
but those who seek *ADONAI* understand it fully.
6 Better the poor who walks in his integrity
than the rich whose ways are crooked.
7 He who keeps *Torah* is a discerning son,
but a companion of gluttons disgraces his father.
8 Whoever increases his wealth by exorbitant interest,
gathers it for one kinder to the poor.
9 One who turns his ear from hearing *Torah*
—even his prayer is an abomination.
10 One who leads the upright astray along an evil path
will fall into his own pit,
but the blameless will inherit good.
11 A rich person is wise in his own eyes,
but a discerning poor person sees through him.
12 When the righteous triumph there is great glory,
but when the wicked rise to power, people hide.
13 One who covers up his transgressions will not prosper,

but whoever confesses and forsakes them finds mercy.

14 Blessed is one who is always cautious,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into trouble.
15 Like a roaring lion or a prowling bear
is a wicked ruler over helpless people.
16 An oppressive leader lacks judgment.
One who hates unjust gain will prolong his life.
17 A man tormented by the guilt of murder
flees to the Pit—let no one support him.
18 Whoever walks blamelessly will be safe,
but whoever is perverse in his ways will fall suddenly.

Wisdom about Finances

19 Whoever works his land will be satisfied with food,
but whoever chases fantasies will have his fill of
poverty.
20 A faithful man will have many blessings,
but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.
21 To show partiality is not good—
yet for a piece of bread a man may do wrong.
22 A stingy man † chases after riches,
but does not know that poverty will overtake him.
23 One who rebukes a man will in the end find more
favor
than one with a flattering tongue.
24 Whoever robs his father or his mother, and says,
“It's not a crime,”
is a partner to him who destroys.
25 A greedy soul stirs up strife,
but one who trusts in *ADONAI* prospers.
26 Whoever trusts in his own heart is a fool,
but he who walks in wisdom will escape.
27 One who gives to the poor will not lack,
but one who shuts his eyes will have many curses.
28 When the wicked rise to power, people hide,
but when they perish, the righteous increase.
29 One who remains stiff-necked after many re-
bukes
will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.
2 When the righteous thrive, people rejoice.
When the wicked rule, people groan.
3 Whoever loves wisdom brings joy to his father,
but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth.
4 By justice a king brings stability to a land,
but one who takes bribes brings it ruin.
5 A man who flatters his neighbor
spreads a net for his feet.
6 In an evil man's wrongdoing is a trap,
but the righteous sings and rejoices.
7 A righteous person considers justice for the poor.
The wicked one has no such concern.
8 Mockers incite a city,
but wise men turn away anger.
9 If a wise man argues with a foolish man,
he rants or laughs, with no resolution.
10 Bloodthirsty people hate a man of integrity

† Lit. a man with an evil eye

and seek the soul of the upright.
¹¹ A fool gives full vent to his temper,
 but a wise man holds it back.
¹² If a ruler listens to lies,
 all his servants will be wicked.
¹³ The poor man and the oppressor have this in com-
 mon:
ADONAI gives light to the eyes of both.
¹⁴ If a king judges the poor with truth,
 his throne will always be secure.
¹⁵ A rod and reproof give wisdom,
 but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.
¹⁶ When the wicked thrive, wrongdoing increases,
 but the righteous will see their downfall.
¹⁷ Correct your son and he will give you rest.
 He will bring delight to your soul.
¹⁸ Where there is no divine vision people cast off re-
 straint,
 but blessed is the one who keeps *Torah*.
¹⁹ A servant cannot be corrected by words,
 for though he understands, he will not respond.
²⁰ Do you see someone hasty in his words?
 There is more hope for a fool than him.
²¹ If someone pampers his slave from childhood,
 in the end he will be ungrateful.
²² An angry man stirs up dissention,
 and a hotheaded one commits many transgressions.
²³ A man's pride will bring him low,
 but a humble spirit will gain honor.
²⁴ An accomplice of a thief is his own enemy.
 He hears the oath but says nothing.
²⁵ Fear of man will prove to be a snare,
 but one who trusts in *ADONAI* will be kept safe.
²⁶ Many seek an audience with a ruler,
 but from *ADONAI* one receives justice.
²⁷ The righteous detest the unjust,
 and the wicked detest the upright.

What Is the Name of His Son?

30 The words of Agur son of Jakeh—
 an oracle this man declared to Ithiel, to Ithiel
 and to Ucal:
² "Surely I am more stupid than any man
 and do not have a man's understanding.
³ I have not learned wisdom,
 nor have I knowledge of the Holy One.
⁴ Who has gone up into heaven, and come down? †
 Who has gathered the wind in the palm of His hand?
 Who has wrapped the waters in a cloak?
 Who has established all the ends of the earth?
 What is his name and what is the name of His son—if
 you know?" ††
⁵ Every word of God is purified.
 He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.
⁶ Do not add to His words,
 or else He will rebuke You and prove you a liar.
⁷ Two things I ask of You—

do not refuse me before I die:
⁸ Keep falsehood and lies far from me.
 Give me neither poverty nor riches,
 but feed me with my allotted bread, ‡
⁹ lest I become satisfied and deny You
 and say, "Who is *ADONAI*?"
 Or lest I become poor, and steal
 and profane the Name of my God.

A Filthy, Haughty Generation

¹⁰ Do not slander a servant to his master,
 or he will curse you, and you pay for it.
¹¹ There is a generation that curses its father
 and does not bless its mother.
¹² There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes,
 and yet is not cleansed from its filth.
¹³ There is a generation whose eyes are so haughty,
 whose eyelids are lifted up disdainfully.
¹⁴ There is a generation whose teeth are swords
 and whose molars are knives,
 to devour the poor from the earth
 and the needy from among humanity.
¹⁵ The leech has two daughters: "Give! Give!"
 Three things are never satisfied, four never say,
 "Enough!"—
¹⁶ *Sheol*, a barren womb,
 land that is not satisfied with water,
 and fire that never says, "Enough!"
¹⁷ The eye that mocks a father and scorns obeying a
 mother—
 will be pecked out by ravens of the valley
 and eaten by young vultures!
¹⁸ Three things are too amazing for me,
 four I do not understand:
¹⁹ the way of an eagle in the sky,
 the way of a serpent upon a rock,
 the way of a ship in the heart of the sea,
 and the way of a man with a maiden.
²⁰ Such is the way of an adulteress:
 she eats, wipes her mouth and says,
 "I have done nothing wrong."
²¹ Under three things the earth trembles,
 and under four it cannot bear up:
²² under a slave when he becomes a king,
 a fool when he is stuffed with food,
²³ an unloved woman when she is married,
 and a handmaid when she displaces her mistress.

Lessons from Creatures

²⁴ Four things on earth are small,
 yet they are exceedingly wise:
²⁵ ants are creatures with little strength,
 yet they store up their food in summer;
²⁶ coney are creatures with little power,
 yet they make their homes in the cliffs;
²⁷ locusts have no king,

† cf. *John* 3:13; *Eph.* 4:8. †† cf. *Rev.* 19:12.

‡ cf. *Matt.* 6:11.

yet they advance together in ranks;
²⁸ a lizard you can catch with the hand,
 yet it is found in kings' palaces.
²⁹ Three things are stately in their stride,
 four that move with stately bearing:
³⁰ a lion, mighty among beasts,
 who never backs down from anything;
³¹ a strutting rooster, a male-goat,
 and a king with his army around him.
³² If you have acted foolishly, exalting yourself,
 or if you have planned evil,
 put your hand over your mouth.
³³ For as churning milk produces butter,
 and twisting the nose produces blood,
 so stirring up anger produces strife.

A Mother's Warning

31 The words of King Lemuel, an oracle that his
 mother taught him:
² O my son, O son of my womb,
 O son of my vows,
³ do not give your vigor to women,
 or your ways to what ruins kings.
⁴ It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
 it is not for kings to drink wine,
 or for rulers to crave strong drink,
⁵ lest they drink, forget what is decreed,
 and pervert justice for all the oppressed.
⁶ Give strong drink to one who is dying,
 and wine to those who are bitterly distressed—
⁷ let him drink, forget his poverty,
 and remember his misery no more.
⁸ Open your mouth on behalf of those unable to
 speak,
 for the justice of all who are destitute.
⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously,
 plead the cause of the poor and needy.

A Woman of Valor

¹⁰ An accomplished woman who can find?
 Her value is far beyond rubies.
¹¹ Her husband's heart trusts in her,

and he lacks nothing valuable.
¹² She brings him good and not harm
 all the days of her life.
¹³ She selects wool and flax
 and her hands work willingly.
¹⁴ She is like merchant ships,
 bringing her sustenance from afar.
¹⁵ She rises while it is still night
 and provides food for her household
 and portions for her servant girls.
¹⁶ She considers a field and buys it.
 From the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.
¹⁷ She girds herself with strength
 and invigorates her arms.
¹⁸ She discerns that her business is good.
 Her lamp never goes out at night.
¹⁹ She extends her hands to the spindle
 and her palm grasps the spinning wheel.
²⁰ She spreads out her palms to the poor,
 and extends her hands to the needy.
²¹ She is not afraid of snow for her house,
 for her whole household is clothed in scarlet wool.
²² She makes her own luxurious coverings.
 Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
²³ Her husband is respected at the city gates,
 when he sits among the elders of the land.
²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them
 and supplies sashes to the merchants.
²⁵ Strength and dignity are her clothing,
 and she laughs at the days to come.
²⁶ She opens her mouth with wisdom—
 a lesson of kindness is on her tongue.
²⁷ She watches over the affairs of her household,
 and does not eat the bread of idleness.
²⁸ Her children arise and bless her,
 her husband also praises her:
²⁹ "Many daughters have excelled,
 but you surpass them all."
³⁰ Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
 but a woman who fears *ADONAI* will be praised.
³¹ Give her the fruit of her hands.
 Let her deeds be her praise at the gates.

Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes Introduction

The title for the misunderstood book of Ecclesiastes is a feminine participle from the verb, *assembled*, which means “assemble,” and probably refers to the one who speaks in the congregation, thus, “preacher” or “teacher.” Used with a definite article, as in Ecclesiastes 12:8, it functions as a title, and not a proper name. The title may best be rendered “The Teacher.”

Although the author’s personal name is not mentioned in the text, he is “the son of David, king in Jerusalem” (Eccles. 1:1). References to the author’s wisdom (Eccles. 1:16), wealth (Eccles. 2:7), indulgence (Eccles. 2:3), extensive building activities (Eccles. 2:4–6), and proverbs (Eccles. 12:9) are consistent with the traditional identification of Solomon as the author. This attribution may be found in the Septuagint, and the Talmud (cf. Er. 21b; Shab. 30a); however, the Talmud also ascribes authorship to King Hezekiah and his colleagues (cf. B. Bat. 14b–15a). While dogmatism is unwarranted, preference is to be given to Solomonic authorship, perhaps with evidence of later editorial touches.

If Solomon is accepted as the author, the book was probably written around 930–935 BC in Jerusalem.

Linguistic evidence is cited in support of a date in either the Persian period or the post-exilic period, but such evidence is inconclusive. Ancient fragments of found at Qumran among the Dead Sea Scrolls, dating to approximately 150 BC, and its influence on the apocryphal book, Ecclesiasticus, render any date much after 300 BC most unlikely. The message was directed to the rising generation of the faithful in Israel. Its canonicity was at first disputed, according to the (Yad. 3:5; ‘Eduy. 5:3); however, Hillel’s earlier acceptance of the book prevailed. Likewise, Akiba accepted its canonicity in the second century. It is instructive to note that rabbinic discussion generally revolves around the reason for its inclusion in the canon, not the fact of its inclusion.

The occasion, of course, depends upon authorship and date, but the book purports to have been written late in the king’s life, for it recounts what he has learned and admonishes the reader to be wise and seek that which will be of eternal significance and value, in contrast to that which is vain and transitory (on this, cf. . . 1:1–10). Everything in this life is marred by the curse which lies upon all creation (Eccles. 1:2), but God is sovereign. Ultimately, the reader is to “fear God and keep His commandments” (Eccles. 12:13). This life only has significance when man remembers his Creator (Eccles. 12).

Though the book contains no explicit Messianic predictions or typologies, there may be some vague references. Some have found in 7:28 a reference to the Messiah, the “one man.” Others note that the message is called “words of truth,” (Eccles. 12:10) given by “one Shepherd” (Eccles. 12:11). called Himself “the truth,” “the good shepherd” (John 10:14), and “a greater than Solomon” (Luke 11:31), coming to show the true meaning of life.

Ecclesiastes Headings

the Preacher

Search for Meaning in Life

Futility of Human Pleasures

Futility of Human Wisdom

A Time for Everything

Yet Eternity in Their Heart

Humans Same as Beasts?

Futility of Human Labor

Two Are Better than One

Watch Your Words before God

Bureaucratic Oppression

Futility of Wealth

Futility of Living without God

Lessons from Mourning

Wisdom Better than Folly
 Avoid Extremes
 Wisdom's Light and Limits
 One Destiny for All
 Wisdom and Folly
 Wisdom of the Long View
 Ode for the Aging
 Conclusion: Fear God

Kohelet: the Preacher

1 The words of *Kohelet* † son of David, king in Jerusalem.
² Futile! Futile! says *Kohelet*.
 Completely meaningless!
 Everything is futile! ††
³ What does a person gain in all his labor
 that he toils under the sun?
⁴ A generation comes, and a generation goes,
 but the earth remains forever.
⁵ The sun rises and the sun sets,
 and hurries back to the place it rises.
⁶ The wind goes toward the south,
 and circles around to the north.
 Round and round it swirls about,
 ever returning to its circuits.
⁷ All the rivers flow into the sea,
 yet the sea is never full.
 To the place where the rivers flow,
 there they go again.
⁸ All things are wearisome.
 No one can express them.
 The eye is never satisfied with seeing,
 nor the ear filled with hearing.
⁹ What has been is what will be,
 and what has been done will be done again.
 There is nothing new under the sun.
¹⁰ Is there anything about which is said,
 "Look! This is new!"?
 It was already here long ago,
 in the ages long before us.
¹¹ There is no remembrance for former things,
 and things yet to come will not be remembered by
 those who follow.

Search for Meaning in Life

¹² I, *Kohelet*, am king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³ I applied my heart to seek and examine by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a burdensome task God has given the sons of men to keep them occupied. ¹⁴ I have seen all the deeds done under the sun; and behold, all is meaningless and chasing after the wind.
¹⁵ What is crooked cannot be made straight.

† Hebrew *Kohelet* preacher; collector of sentences
 †† cf. Rom. 8:20.

What is missing cannot be counted.

¹⁶ I spoke with my heart saying: "I have grown rich and increased in wisdom more than any who were before me over Jerusalem. Indeed, my heart has experienced much wisdom and knowledge." ¹⁷ So I applied my heart to know wisdom as well as to know madness and folly. I learned that this too was pursuit of the wind.

¹⁸ For with much wisdom comes much grief,
 and whoever keeps increasing knowledge, increases heartache.

Futility of Human Pleasures

2 I said within myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure to see what is good." Yet behold, this too was meaningless. ² I said of laughter, "It is madness!" and of pleasure, "What does it accomplish?"
³ I thought deeply about how to cheer my flesh with wine—letting my heart guide me with wisdom—and how to grasp folly, so that I could see what was worthwhile for the sons of men to do under heaven during the few days of their lives.

⁴ I increased my possessions. I built myself houses and I planted myself vineyards. ⁵ I made royal gardens and parks for myself, and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. ⁶ I constructed for myself pools of water to irrigate a forest of flourishing trees. ⁷ I purchased male and female servants and had other servants who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than all my predecessors in Jerusalem. ⁸ I also amassed silver and gold for myself, as well as the treasure of kings and the provinces. I acquired male and female singers for myself, as well as the luxuries of humankind—vaults and vaults of them. ⁹ So I became far wealthier than all before me in Jerusalem, yet my wisdom stayed with me.

¹⁰ I denied myself nothing that my eyes desired;

I withheld from my heart no enjoyment.

My heart took delight from all my toil—

this was my reward for all my labor.

¹¹ Yet when I considered all that my hands had done

and the toil I had expended to accomplish it,

behold, it all was futile and chasing after the wind.

There was nothing to be gained under the sun.

‡ The word *shiddah*

Futility of Human Wisdom

¹² Then I turned to consider wisdom, madness, and folly. For what more can the one who succeeds the king do than what he has already done? ¹³ I realized that:

Wisdom is more beneficial than folly
as light is better than darkness.

¹⁴ A wise man has his eyes in his head,
while the fool walks in the darkness.

Yet, I also came to realize
that the same destiny befalls them both.

¹⁵ Then said I in my heart:

"I, even I, will have the same destiny as a fool.

So why have I become so wise?"

I said in my heart, "This too is meaningless."

¹⁶ For the wise man, together with the fool,
is not remembered forever.

For in the days to come both will be forgotten.

Alas, the wise, just like the fool, must die!

¹⁷ And so I hated life, because the work done under the sun was grievous to me. All is but vapor and chasing after the wind. ¹⁸ I also hated all the fruit of my toil for which I had labored under the sun, because I must leave it to the one who comes after me. ¹⁹ Who knows if he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master over all the fruit of my toil for which I had wisely labored under the sun. This too is futile. ²⁰ So I turned my heart over to despair over all the things for which I had toiled under the sun. ²¹ For sometimes a man, who has labored with wisdom, knowledge, and skill, must hand over as an inheritance to someone who did not work for it. This also is futile and a great misfortune. ²² For what does a man get for all his toil and longing of his heart for which he labors under the sun? ²³ For all his days, his work is pain and grief. Even at night his mind does not rest. This also is futility.

²⁴ There is nothing better for people than to eat and drink, and to find enjoyment in their labor. This too, I perceived, is from the hand of God. ²⁵ For who can eat and who can have joy, apart from Him? ²⁶ For to the one who pleases Him, He gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy, but to the sinner He gives the task of gathering and accumulating wealth to give it to one who pleases God. This also is only vapor and striving after the wind.

A Time for Everything

3 For everything there is a season
and a time for every activity under heaven:

² a time to give birth and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted;

³ a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build up;

⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance;

⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones,

a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶ a time to seek and a time to lose,
a time to keep and a time to discard;

⁷ a time to tear apart and a time to mend,
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.

⁹ What gain, then, does the laborer get with his toil?

¹⁰ I have seen the task that God has given to the children of men to keep them occupied.

Yet Eternity in Their Heart

¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. Moreover, He has set eternity in their heart—yet without the possibility that humankind can ever discover the work that God has done from the beginning to the end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and enjoy themselves in their lifetime. ¹³ Also when anyone eats and drinks, and finds satisfaction in all of his labor, it is the gift of God. ¹⁴ I know that everything that God does will endure forever. There is no adding to it or taking from it. God has made it so, that they will revere Him.

¹⁵ Whatever exists, has already been
and whatever will be, has already been,
but God recalls what has passed.

¹⁶ I have also seen under the sun:
In the place of justice there was wickedness,
and in the place of righteousness there was wickedness.

¹⁷ I said in my heart:

"The righteous and the wicked,
God will judge.

For there is a time for every activity
and for every deed."

Humans Same as Beasts?

¹⁸ I also said in my heart, "As for the sons of man, God tests them so that they may see that they are but animals." ¹⁹ For the destiny of humankind and the destiny of animals are one and the same. As one dies, so dies the other. Both have the same breath—a human has no advantage over an animal—both are fleeting. ²⁰ Both go to one place. Both were taken from the dust, and both return to the dust. ²¹ Who knows that the spirit of the sons of man ascends upward and the animal's spirit descends into the earth?

²² So I perceived that nothing is better than for man to enjoy his works, because that is his portion. For who can bring him back to see what will be in the future?

Futility of Human Labor

4 Again I looked and saw all the oppressions that
are done under the sun, and behold,
I saw the tears of the oppressed,

but they have no comforter.
 Power is in the hand of their oppressors,
 but they had no comforter.
² So I considered the dead,
 who are already dead,
 more fortunate than the living,
 who are still alive.
³ Yet better than both
 is one who has not yet been,
 who has never seen the evil work
 that is done under the sun.
⁴ Then I saw that all toil and all skill that is done
 come from man's envy of his neighbor; this too is
 fleeting and striving after the wind.
⁵ The fool folds his hands together
 and eats his own flesh.
⁶ Better is a handful with tranquility
 than two handfuls of toil
 and striving after the wind.
⁷ Again I saw something futile under the sun:
⁸ There is one who has no one else,
 neither son nor brother,
 yet there is no end to all his toil.
 His eyes are not content with riches.
 "So, for whom am I toiling,
 and depriving myself of prosperity?"
 This too is meaningless—
 a grievous task!

Two Are Better than One

⁹ Two are better than one,
 because they get a good return for their effort.
¹⁰ For if they fall,
 the one will lift up his companion.
 But *oy* to the one who falls
 and has no one to lift him up!
¹¹ Furthermore, if two lie together,
 then they will be warm.
 But how can one keep warm alone?
¹² Though a man might overpower one,
 two can stand against him.
 Moreover a threefold cord cannot be quickly broken.
¹³ Better is a poor but wise youth than an old and
 foolish king who no longer knows how to take warn-
 ing. ¹⁴ For he came out of prison to become
 king—though he was born poor in his kingdom. ¹⁵ I
 considered all the living that walk under the sun as
 well as the next youth who stands in his place. ¹⁶ There
 is no end to all the people—to all who were before
 him. Also those who will come later will not rejoice
 in him. Surely this too is meaningless and striving after
 the wind.

Watch Your Words before God

¹⁷ (5:1) Watch your feet when you go to the House of
 God. Draw near to listen, rather than to offer the sacri-

fice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing
 wrong.

⁵ (2) Do not be quick with your mouth
 nor hasty in your heart
 to utter a word in God's presence.
 For God is in heaven,
 and you are on the earth—
 therefore, let your words be few.
² (3) As a dream comes with excessive burdens
 so a fool's voice with too many words.
³ (4) When you swear a vow to God,
 don't delay in fulfilling it.
 For He takes no delight in fools.
 Pay what you vow!
⁴ (5) It is better for you not to vow
 than to vow and not pay.
⁵ (6) Don't let your mouth lead your flesh to sin,
 and don't say before the messenger,
 "It was a mistake!"
 Why should God be angry at your voice
 and destroy the work of your hands?
⁶ (7) Many dreams and many words are meaningless.
 Therefore, fear God!

Bureaucratic Oppression

⁷ (8) If you see the oppression of the poor or pervers-
 ion of justice and righteousness in the province, do
 not be shocked at the matter. For one authority watch-
 es over another authority, and higher ones are over
 them. ⁸ (9) Though the profit of the land is taken by
 all, a king is served by the fields.

Futility of Wealth

⁹ (10) A lover of money never has enough money,
 and a lover of wealth is never satisfied with his in-
 come.
 This too is futile.
¹⁰ (11) When goods increase,
 so do those who consume them.
 So what advantage are they to the owner
 except he sees it with his eyes?
¹¹ (12) The sleep of the laborer is sweet,
 whether he eats little or much—
 but the excess of the rich permits him no sleep.
¹² (13) There is a grievous wrong that I have seen un-
 der the sun: wealth hoarded by its owner to his own
 hurt, ¹³ (14) or wealth lost in a bad investment, and
 when he fathers a son, there is nothing in his hand.
¹⁴ (15) As he came from his mother's womb,
 naked he will return as he came.
 He takes nothing from his labor
 that he can carry in his hand.
¹⁵ (16) This too is a grievous wrong.
 Just as he came, so will he go,
 so what does he gain,
 from his toiling for the wind?
¹⁶ (17) So, all his days he eats in darkness,

and he has much grief, sickness, and humiliation.

¹⁷ (18) Behold, this is what I myself have seen. It is beneficial and good for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy all of his toil that he labors under the sun during the few days of his life that God has given him—for this is his reward. ¹⁸ (19) Additionally, everyone to whom God has given riches and wealth, and empowers him to eat from it, to receive his share, and to rejoice in his labor—this is a gift of God. ¹⁹ (20) For he will not often consider the days of his life, since God keeps him occupied with the joy of his heart.

Futility of Living without God

6 There is a misery that I have seen under the sun, and it is heavy upon humanity. ² God gives a man riches, wealth, and honor, so that he lacks nothing that his heart desires, yet God does not enable him to eat from it—instead a foreigner will eat it. This is fruitless—an agonizing illness.

³ Even if a man should father a hundred children and live many years, however many the days of his years may be, yet his soul is never satisfied with his prosperity and he does not have a proper burial, then I say that it is better for the stillborn than him. ⁴ Even though it comes in futility and departs into darkness, though its name is shrouded in darkness, ⁵ though it has never seen or experienced the sun, it has more rest than the other. ⁶ Even if the other man were to live a thousand years twice and never enjoy good things—do not all go to the same place?

⁷ All a man's labor is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied. ⁸ So what advantage has the wise over the fool? What does the pauper gain by knowing how to walk before the living? ⁹ Better is what the eyes see than the pursuit of the soul's desires. This too is fleeting and striving after wind.

¹⁰ Whatever exists has already been named, and it has been made known what humanity is. But man cannot contend with the One who is mightier than he. ¹¹ When there are many words, futility increases! How does that benefit anyone?

¹² For who knows what is good for one during his life—during the few days of his fleeting life—that pass like a shadow? For who can tell a person what happens after him under the sun?

Lessons from Mourning

7 Better is a good reputation than precious oil and the day of death than the day of birth.

² Better to go to a house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, since that is the end of all mankind—and the living should take it to heart.

³ Grief is better than laughter, for though the face is sad, the heart may be glad.

⁴ The heart of the wise is in a house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in a house of pleasure.

Wisdom Better than Folly

⁵ Better to hear a rebuke from the wise than to listen to the song of fools.

⁶ For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool.

This too is vapor.

⁷ For extortion drives a wise man crazy, and a bribe corrupts the heart.

⁸ Better the end of a matter than its beginning. Better a patient spirit than a proud one.

⁹ Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, † for anger settles in the bosom of fools.

¹⁰ Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?"

For it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.

¹¹ Wisdom is as good as an inheritance, and even better for those who see the sun.

¹² For wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: wisdom preserves the life of the one who possesses it.

¹³ Consider the work of God, for who can straighten what He has bent?

¹⁴ In a time of prosperity, prosper!

But in a time of adversity, consider: God has made one as well as the other.

Therefore man cannot discover anything about his future.

Avoid Extremes

¹⁵ During my fleeting days I have seen both of these things: sometimes a righteous one perishes in his righteousness and sometimes a wicked one lives long in his wickedness.

¹⁶ Do not be overly righteous nor overly wise—why confound yourself?

¹⁷ Do not be overly wicked and do not be a fool—why die before your time?

¹⁸ It is good to grasp the one and not withdraw your hand from the other. For the one who fears God will escape both extremes.

¹⁹ Wisdom makes a wise man stronger than ten rulers in a city.

²⁰ Surely there is not a righteous person on earth who does what is good and doesn't sin. ††

²¹ Also, do not pay attention to every word people say, otherwise you might hear your servant mocking you—

²² for your heart knows that many times

† cf. Matt. 5:22. †† cf. Rom. 3:23.

you too have mocked others.

²³ All this I have tested with wisdom and I said, "I determined to be wise"—but it was far from me. ²⁴ Whatever it may be, it is far off and very profound—who can fathom it? ²⁵ So I turned my heart to understand, to search and seek out wisdom and an explanation of things and to know the stupidity of wickedness and madness of folly.

²⁶ I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare,
whose heart is a trap, and whose hands are chains.
He who pleases God will escape her,
but a sinner will be captured by her.

²⁷ "Look," said *Kohelet*, "I have discovered this while adding one thing to another to find the scheme of things—²⁸ which my soul is still seeking, but not finding—I found one upright man among a thousand, but one upright woman among them all I have not found. ²⁹ Only this have I discovered: God made mankind upright, but they went seeking after many schemes."

Wisdom's Light and Limits

8 Who is like the wise person?

Who knows the meaning of a matter?
A person's wisdom makes his face shine,
transforming the harshness of his face.

² I say: "Obey the king's command, and especially in regard to the oath of God. ³ Do not be hasty to rush out of his presence. Do not stand up for an evil cause, because he will do whatever he desires. ⁴ Since the word of a king has authority, who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'"

⁵ Whoever obeys his command will not experience harm, and a wise person's heart discerns the proper time and procedure. ⁶ For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter, though a person's trouble is heavy upon him.

⁷ Since no one knows what will be,
who can tell when it will happen?

⁸ No one has authority over the wind to restrain it,
nor authority over the day of death.

As no one is discharged during a battle,
so wickedness cannot rescue its master.

⁹ I have seen all this while applying my mind to everything done under the sun: sometimes one person dominates another person to his own harm.

¹⁰ Then I saw the wicked buried—they used to come and go from the holy place, but will soon be forgotten in the very city where they did this. This too is meaningless.

¹¹ When the sentence against a crime is not swiftly carried out, the human heart is encouraged to do evil.

¹² Even though a sinner might commit a hundred crimes and prolong his days, yet I know that it will be well for those who fear God, for those who revere Him. ¹³ But it will not go well with the wicked, and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear God.

¹⁴ There is another enigma that occurs upon the earth: there are righteous people who are requited according to the work of the wicked, and there are wicked people who are requited according to the work of the righteous. I said, "This also is meaningless."

¹⁵ So I recommend enjoyment, because there is nothing better for humanity under the sun except to eat, drink, and enjoy it. So this joy will accompany him in his labor all the days of his life that God gives him under the sun.

¹⁶ When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to observe the activity that is done upon the earth (his eyes not seeing sleep either day or night), ¹⁷ then I saw all the work of God. No one can comprehend the work that is done under the sun. Despite all human efforts to seek it out, no one comprehends. Even if a wise person claims to know, he cannot really comprehend.

One Destiny for All

9 For all this I laid on my heart and to ascertain all this: that the righteous and the wise, as well as their works are in the hand of God. Whether love or hatred, no one knows—everything awaits them.

² Everyone shares the same destiny: for the righteous and the wicked; for the good, the ritually clean, and the defiled; for one who sacrifices and one who does not sacrifice; as the good person so the sinner; as the one who swears like the one who fears an oath.

³ This is a misery in everything done under the sun: that the same destiny awaits everyone. Moreover, the hearts of all humans are full of evil, and folly is in their hearts during their lives—after that they die. ⁴ Everyone who is among the living has hope—even a living dog is better off than a dead lion.

⁵ For the living know that they will die,
but the dead know nothing.
They have no further reward,
even the memory of them is forgotten.

⁶ Their love, their hatred, and their zeal
have already perished;
never again will they have a share
in anything that is done under the sun.

⁷ Go! Eat your bread with gladness and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already accepted your deeds. ⁸ Let your clothes always be white, and do not spare oil on your head. ⁹ Live joyously with the wife whom you love all the days of your fleeting life that He has given you under the sun during all your fleeting days—for this is your portion in life and in your toil that you labor under the sun.

¹⁰ Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your all strength, for there is no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom in *Sheol*, where you are going.

¹¹ I further observed under the sun:
The race is not to the swift
nor the battle to the mighty,
nor does bread come to the wise,
or wealth to the discerning,

or favor to the skillful;
 for time and chance befall them all.
¹² Moreover, no man knows his time:
 like fish caught in a fatal net
 or birds caught in a snare,
 so people are trapped in a time of calamity,
 that falls upon them suddenly.
¹³ I also observed this as wisdom under the sun, and
 it greatly impressed me. ¹⁴ There was a little city with a
 few people in it and a mighty king came against it, sur-
 rounded it, and built great siege works against it.
¹⁵ Now a poor, wise man was found in it, and he deliv-
 ered the city by his shrewdness. Yet nobody remem-
 bered that poor man! ¹⁶ So I said: "Wisdom is better
 than strength." But the poor man's wisdom is despised
 and his words are not heeded.
¹⁷ The words of the wise heard in quiet
 are better than a ruler's shout among fools.
¹⁸ Wisdom is better than weapons of war,
 but one sinner destroys much good.

Wisdom and Folly

10 Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink,
 so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.
² The heart of the wise is to his right,
 and the heart of the fool is to his left.
³ Even as the fool walks along the way,
 his heart lacks sense
 and tells everyone what a fool he is.
⁴ If a ruler's spirit rises up against you,
 do not leave your post,
 for composure allays great offences.
⁵ There is a wrong I have seen under the sun
 like an error proceeding from a ruler.
⁶ Fools are placed in many high positions,
 while the rich sit in low ones.
⁷ I have seen slaves on horses,
 and princes walking on the ground like slaves.
⁸ Whoever digs a pit may fall into it,
 and whoever breaks through a fence may be bitten
 by a snake.
⁹ Whoever quarries stones may be hurt by them,
 and whoever splits logs may be endangered by them.
¹⁰ If the iron axe is blunt
 and one doesn't sharpen the edge,
 then he must exert more force.
 So wisdom has the advantage of giving success.
¹¹ If the snake bites before it is charmed,
 there is no profit for the charmer.
¹² Words from the mouth of the wise are gracious,
 but the lips of a fool destroy him.
¹³ The words from his mouth begin as folly
 and end as grievous madness—
¹⁴ and the fool multiplies words.
 No one knows what will happen,
 and who can tell him what will happen after him?
¹⁵ The mischief of fools wearies them
 for he doesn't know how to go to town.

¹⁶ Oy to you, O land, when your king is a youth †
 and your princes feast in the morning.
¹⁷ Happy are you, O land, when your king is a son of
 nobles,
 and your princes eat at the proper time—
 in self-control and not in drunkenness!
¹⁸ By laziness the rafters sag,
 and by idle hands the house leaks.
¹⁹ A feast is made for laughter,
 and wine makes life glad—
 but money is the answer for everything.
²⁰ Do not ridicule the king—even in your thoughts,
 nor curse the rich in your bedroom.
 For a bird of the air may carry your voice,
 and a winged creature may report your words.

Wisdom of the Long View

11 Cast your bread upon the waters,
 for after many days you will find it.
² Give portions to seven, or even to eight,
 for you do not know what disaster may happen upon
 the earth.
³ If the clouds are full,
 they empty out rain upon the earth.
 Whether a tree falls to south or north,
 the tree lies wherever it falls.
⁴ Whoever keeps watching the wind will not sow
 and whoever gazes at the clouds will not reap.
⁵ Just as you do not know how the spirit passes into
 the bones in the womb of a pregnant woman,
 so you do not know the work of God who makes all
 things.
⁶ In the morning sow your seed,
 and in the evening do not let your hand be idle,
 for you do not know if this or that will succeed,
 or if both will prosper together.
⁷ Light is sweet,
 and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.
⁸ For if a man lives many years,
 let him rejoice in them all.
 But let him remember the days of darkness—
 for there will be many.
 Everything to come is obscure.
⁹ Rejoice, young man, in your childhood,
 and let your heart cheer you in the days of your
 youth.
 Walk in the ways of your heart
 and in the sight of your eyes,
 but know that for all these things
 God will bring you to judgment.
¹⁰ So banish anxiety from your heart
 and cast off distress from your body,
 for youth and prime of life are fleeting.

Ode for the Aging

1 So remember your Creator

† Or servant

¹2 in the days of your youth:
 before the days of misery come,
 and years draw near when you will say:
 "I have no pleasure in them"—
²before the sun and light and moon
 and the stars grow dark,
 and the clouds dissipate after the rain,
³in the day the keepers of the house tremble,
 and the strong men stoop,
 when grinders stop because they are few,
 and those peering out windows grow dim,
⁴when doors are shut in the street
 and the sound of the mill fades,
 when one arises at the chirp of a bird
 and all their songs grow faint,
⁵when they also are afraid of heights
 and of dangers on the road,
 when the almond tree blossoms,
 the grasshopper drags itself along,
 and the caper berry fails to excite—
 for a man is going to his eternal home,
 and mourners go about in the street—
⁶before the silver cord is snapped,
 or the golden bowl is crushed,
 or the jug at the cistern is shattered,

or the wheel at the well is broken.

⁷Then the dust returns to the ground it came from,
 and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

⁸"Evanescient vapors," says *Kohelet*.
 All is futility.

Conclusion: Fear God

⁹Furthermore, *Kohelet* was not only wise but he also taught the people knowledge. He pondered, sought out, and set in order many proverbs. ¹⁰ *Kohelet* searched to find delightful words and truthful, accurate sayings. ¹¹ The words of the wise are like goads, their collective sayings are like firmly affixed nails. They have been given by one Shepherd. ¹² Be warned my son of anything in addition to them: There is no end to the making of many books, and excessive study wearies the flesh.

¹³ A final word, when all has been heard:

Fear God and keep His *mitzvot*!

For this applies to all mankind.

¹⁴ God will bring every deed into judgment,
 including everything that is hidden,
 whether it is good or evil.

Song of Songs

Song of Songs

Introduction Song of Songs is a true chart topper, the Song of ALL Songs. In contrast to Kohelet's "vanity of vanities, all is vanity" as noted in Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs is a beautiful biblical anthology on the love between a man and a woman. Song of Songs is known as, *סִירְיֹשָׁה רִישׁ*, in Hebrew. It is a wonderful manual for marriage.

This short book is a portrayal of love, replete with many metaphorical expressions of beauty such as, "My love is to me a spray of henna blooms in the vineyard of En-gedi." (Song of Songs 1:14) or "How lovely you are, my darling, how lovely! Your eyes are doves behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of ewe goats descending down from Mount Gilead." (Song of Songs 4:1). There are many references to the land of Israel and her beauty in this book.

Although many have tried to spiritualize this book and draw parallels to one's intimate walk with God, for the most part, this book must be taken as it is—a love story between Solomon and the Bride, also known as the Shulamite. There is, of course, the potential of covenant love expressed between the two.

One of the most beautiful expressions in this book of love is "My beloved is mine, and I am his!" (Song of Sg. 2:16), *Dodi Lee, V'ani Lo, לֹדִי דָוִד וְאֲנִי לֵי לֹדִי*. In the 21st century, sexual love is often confused for lust. However, in the Song of Songs, marital sexual love is biblically celebrated—naked, face-to-face, and unashamed.

Song of Songs Headings

A Bride Sings of Her Lover
 Chorus: Daughters of Zion
 The Bride
 The Lover and Bride Express Affection
 The Bride's Revelry
 The King on His Wedding Day
 The King Delights in His Bride
 Awake and Waiting
 Acclaiming the Bride's Beauty
 The Bride's Appeal
 Protecting Love

1 The song of songs † of Solomon.

A Bride Sings of Her Lover

² Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!
 For your love is better than wine.

³ Your ointments have a pleasing fragrance.
 Your name is poured out like perfume.
 No wonder maidens love you!

⁴ Draw me after you, let us run!
 The king has brought me into his chambers.

Chorus: Daughters of Zion

Let us rejoice and be glad in you;
 let us extol your love more than wine.
 Rightly do they love you!

† Or the best song

The Bride

⁵ I am black, but beautiful,
 O daughters of Jerusalem,
 like the tents of Kedar,
 like the curtains of Solomon.

⁶ Do not gaze at me because I am dark,
 because the sun has looked on me.
 My mother's sons were angry with me
 and made me keeper of the vineyards;
 my very own vineyard I have not kept.

⁷ Tell me, the one my soul loves,
 where you graze your flock,
 where you make it lie down at noon?
 Why should I be as one veiled
 beside the flocks of your companions?

The Lover and Bride Express Affection

8 If you yourself do not know,
 O most beautiful among women,
 go out yourself in the footsteps of the flock
 and graze your kids by the shepherds' tents.
 9 I compare you, my darling,
 to my mare among Pharaoh's chariots.
 10 Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
 your neck with strings of beads.
 11 Ornaments of gold we will make for you
 with spangles of silver.
 12 While the king is on his couch,
 my nard spreads its fragrance. †
 13 My lover is my pouch of myrrh,
 passing the night between my breasts.
 14 My love is to me a spray of henna blooms
 in the vineyards of En-gedi.
 15 How lovely you are, my darling, how lovely!
 Your eyes are doves.
 16 How handsome you are, my lover!
 Oh, so delightful!
 Yes, our couch is luxuriant.
 17 The beams of our houses are cedar trees,
 our panels are cypress trees.
2 I am a rose of Sharon,
 a lily of the valleys.
 2 Like a lily among thorns,
 so is my darling among the daughters.
 3 Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,
 so is my lover among the sons.
 In his shadow I delighted to sit,
 and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
 4 He has brought me to the banquet house
 and his banner over me is love.
 5 Sustain me with raisin cakes,
 refresh me with apples—
 for I am weak with love.
 6 His left hand is under my head
 and his right hand embraces me.
 7 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you,
 by the gazelles and does of the field:
 Do not arouse or awaken love until it delights.
 8 The voice of my lover!
 Behold, he is coming—
 leaping over the mountains,
 springing over the hills!
 9 My lover is like a gazelle
 or a young buck among the stags.
 Look! He is standing behind our wall—
 gazing through the windows,
 peering through the lattice.
 10 In response my lover said to me:
 "Get yourself up, my darling,
 my pretty one, and come, come! ††
 11 For behold, the winter has past,
 the rain is over, it has gone.

12 Blossoms appear in the land,
 the time of singing has come,
 and the voice of the turtle-dove
 is heard in our land.
 13 The fig tree ripens its early figs.
 The blossoming vines give off their fragrance.
 Arise, come, my darling,
 my pretty one, and come, come!
 14 My dove, in the clefts of the rock,
 in a secret place along the steep path,
 let me see your form,
 let me hear your voice.
 For your voice is sweet
 and your form is lovely."
 15 Catch the foxes for us—
 the little foxes that ruin the vineyards,
 for our vineyards are in blossom.

The Bride's Revelry

16 My lover is mine, and I am his!
 He grazes his flocks among the lilies.
 17 Until the day cools
 and the shadows flee away,
 turn about, my lover,
 like a gazelle or like a stag
 upon the mountains of spices.
3 On my bed in the night
 I longed for the one my soul loves.
 I looked for him but did not find him.
 2 I will get up and go about the city,
 into the streets and into the squares.
 I must seek the one my soul loves.
 I looked for him but did not find him.
 3 The guards patrolling the city found me.
 "Have you seen the one my soul loves?"
 4 Hardly had I passed beyond them
 when I found the one my soul loves.
 I held him, and I would not let him go,
 until I brought him to my mother's house,
 to the chamber of her who conceived me.
 5 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you,
 by the gazelles and does of the field:
 Do not arouse or awaken love
 until it delights.

The King on His Wedding Day

6 Who is this—she who is coming up from the wilder-
 ness
 like columns of smoke,
 perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
 with every powder of the merchant?
 7 Behold, it is Solomon's traveling couch—
 around it are 60 warriors
 from the warriors of Israel.
 8 All of them wield a sword,
 experts in war.
 Each man with his sword on his thigh

† cf. Mark 14:3; John 12:3. †† cf. Acts 7:3.

against terrors of the night.
 9 King Solomon has made for himself
 a carriage from the trees of Lebanon.
 10 He made its posts of silver, its back of gold,
 its seat of purple cloth,
 its interior fitted out with love
 by the daughters of Jerusalem.
 11 Go out, daughters of Zion,
 and gaze upon King Solomon,
 with a wreath his mother placed on him
 on the day of his marriage—
 on the day of his heart's joy.

The King Delights in His Bride

4 How lovely you are, my darling, how lovely!
 Your eyes are doves behind your veil.
 Your hair is like a flock of ewe goats
 descending down from Mount Gilead.
 2 Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes
 coming up from washing.
 Each of them has a twin,
 and none among them is missing.
 3 Your lips are like a scarlet thread
 and your speech is lovely.
 Your temple is like a slice of pomegranate
 behind your veil.
 4 Like the tower of David is your neck,
 built for weapons.
 A thousand shields are hung on it
 —all shields of warriors.
 5 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
 like twin gazelles
 grazing among the lilies.
 6 Until the day cools
 and the shadows flee away,
 I will go to the mountain of myrrh
 and to the hill of frankincense.
 7 You are altogether lovely, my darling,
 and no blemish is in you. †
 8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
 come with me from Lebanon.
 Watch from the top of Amana,
 from the top of Senir, even Hermon,
 from lions' dens,
 from mountains of leopards.
 9 You have captivated my heart,
 my sister, my bride—
 you captivated me
 with one of your eyes,
 with one jewel from your necklace.
 10 How delightful is your love,
 my sister, my bride!
 How much better is your love than wine,
 and the fragrance of your oils
 better than all spices!
 11 Your lips, my bride,
 drip honey from the honeycomb.

Honey and milk
 are under your tongue.
 The scent of your garments
 is like the aroma of Lebanon.
 12 A locked garden is my sister, my bride,
 an enclosed spring, a sealed fountain.
 13 Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates
 with choice fruit,
 henna with nard
 14 —nard and saffron,
 calamus and cinnamon—
 with all the trees of frankincense,
 myrrh and aloes,
 along with all the finest spices—
 15 a garden spring,
 a well of living water ††
 and flowing streams from Lebanon.
 16 Awake, north wind,
 and come, south wind!
 Blow on my garden,
 Let its fragrance spread out.
 Let my lover come into his garden
 and eat its choicest fruit.

Awake and Waiting

5 I have come into my garden,
 my sister, my bride.
 I have gathered my myrrh with my spice.
 I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey.
 I have drunk my wine with my milk.
 Eat, O friends,
 Drink, yes, drink your fill, O lovers!
 2 I sleep, but my heart is awake.
 A voice! My lover is knocking!
 "Open to me, my sister, my darling,
 my dove, my perfect one!
 For my head is drenched with dew,
 my locks with dewdrops of night."
 3 I have stripped off my coat.
 How can I put it on again?
 I have washed my feet.
 How can I soil them?
 4 My lover extended his hand through the opening
 —my heart yearned for him.
 5 I rose to open for my lover.
 My hands dripped with myrrh,
 yes, my fingers with flowing myrrh,
 on the handles of the lock.
 6 I opened to my lover—
 but my lover had departed,
 he was gone!
 My soul went out to him when he spoke.
 I searched for him, but did not find him.
 I called him, but he did not answer me.
 7 The guards making rounds in the city found me.
 They beat me, bruised me.
 The guards on the walls took my veil from me.

† *Lit. there is no flaw in you*

†† *cf. John 4:10.*

8 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you,
if you should find my lover,
what will you tell him?
That I am sick from love!

9 How is your lover different from other lovers,
O most beautiful among women?
How is your lover different from other lovers
that you charge us so?

10 My lover is dazzling and ruddy,
standing out among ten thousand.

11 His head is purest gold,
his hair is wavy,
black as a raven.

12 His eyes are like doves
beside streams of water,
washed with milk,
mounted in their settings.

13 His cheeks are like a bed of spice,
towers of sweet-scented perfume.
His lips are lilies,
dripping with liquid myrrh.

14 His hands are rods of gold set with jasper.
His abdomen is carved ivory
inlaid with sapphires.

15 His legs are pillars of alabaster
set on bases of pure gold.
His appearance is like Lebanon—
excellent like the cedars.

16 His mouth is sweetness.
Yes, he is totally desirable.
This is my lover! Yes, this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

6 Where has your lover gone,
most beautiful among women?
Where has your lover turned,
so we may seek him with you?

2 My lover went down to his garden,
to the beds of balsam
to graze his flocks in the gardens
and to gather lilies.

3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine.
He browses among the lilies.

Acclaiming the Bride's Beauty

4 You are beautiful, my darling,
like Tirzah,
lovely as Jerusalem,
awesome as an army with banners.

5 Turn your eyes away from me,
for they overwhelm me!
Your hair is like a flock of ewe goats
descending down from Gilead.

6 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
that have come up from the washing.
Each of them has a twin,
and none among them is missing.

7 Your temple is like a slice of pomegranate
behind your veil.

8 There are 60 queens, 80 concubines,
and young women beyond number.

9 Yet my dove, my perfect one is unique.
She is her mother's only one—
a virtuous child of the one who bore her.
Maidens saw her and called her blessed.
Queens and concubines praised her.

10 Who is this that appears like dawn?
As beautiful as the moon,
bright as the sun,
awesome as an army with banners.

11 I went down into the garden of nut trees
to look at the fruit of the valley,
to see if the vine had budded,
or the pomegranates had bloomed.

12 Before I was aware, my soul set me
among the chariots of my princely people.

7 (6:13) Come back, come back, O Shulammitte!
Come back, come back,
that we may look upon you.
Why do you gaze at the Shulammitte
like the dance of Mahanaim?

2 (1) How lovely are your sandaled feet,
O nobleman's daughter!
The curves of your thighs are like jewels,
the work of a craftsman's hand.

3 (2) Your navel is a round goblet,
may it not lack mixed wine.
Your belly is a heap of wheat
enclosed with lilies.

4 (3) Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle.

5 (4) Your neck is like an ivory tower.
Your eyes are pools in Heshbon
near the gate of Bath-Rabbim.
Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon
overlooking Damascus.

6 (5) Your head crowns you like Carmel,
and the hair of your head like purple.
The king is captivated in its tresses!

7 (6) How beautiful and how pleasing you are,
O Love, with your delights!

8 (7) Your stature is like a date palm
and your breasts like its clusters.

9 (8) I said, "I will climb the date palm
and take hold of its fruit."
May your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
the fragrance of your breath like apple.

The Bride's Appeal

10 (9) May your mouth be like the best wine,
going down smoothly for my beloved,
causing the lips of sleepers to speak.

11 (10) I am my lover's,
and his desire is for me.

12 (11) Come, my beloved,
let us go out into the field.
Let us spend the night in the villages.

¹³ (12) Let us go out early to the vineyards,
—let us see if the vine has budded,
if their blossoms have opened,
and if the pomegranates have bloomed—
there I will give you my love.
¹⁴ (13) The mandrakes have given off fragrance,
and over our door is every choice fruit,
both new and old,
that I have stored up for you, my lover.
8 O, that you were like a brother to me,
who nursed at my mother's breasts.
If I found you outside, I would kiss you,
and no one would despise me.
² I would lead you
and bring you into my mother's house—
she who has taught me.
I would give you spiced wine to drink
from the nectar of my pomegranate.
³ O that his left hand were under my head,
and his right hand embraced me.
⁴ I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem,
Do not arouse or awaken love
until it so delights.

Protecting Love

⁵ Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning
on her lover?
Under the apple tree I roused you.
There your mother travailed with you.
There she who was in labor gave you birth.
⁶ Set me like a seal over your heart,
like a seal on your arm.
For love is as strong as death,

jealousy as cruel as *Sheol*.
Its flames are bolts of fire,
the flame of *ADONAI*.
⁷ Many waters cannot quench love,
nor rivers wash it away.
If one gave all the wealth of his house for love,
it would be utterly despised.
⁸ We have a little sister,
still without breasts.
What shall we do for our sister
on the day when she is spoken for?
⁹ If she is a wall,
we will build on her a turret of silver.
If she is a door,
we will fence her in with cedar plank.
¹⁰ I am a wall,
and my breasts like towers.
Thus I have become in his eyes
as one bringing *shalom*.
¹¹ Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon.
He entrusted the vineyard to caretakers.
Each was to bring for his fruit
a thousand pieces of silver.
¹² My very own vineyard is before me.
The thousand are for you, Solomon,
and two hundred for those
who tend the fruit.
¹³ You who abide in the gardens,
friends are listening for your voice.
Let me hear it!
¹⁴ Come quickly, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the moun-
tains of spices!

Isaiah

Isaiah Introduction

The Hebrew name of Isaiah's book is simply the prophet's name, , meaning " is salvation." Isaiah prophesied to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Though he lived in the eighth century BCE, his book covers approximately 740–500 BCE. In this period, the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires rose and fell, and the Persian Empire began to flourish. This was a momentous time in Jewish history: the Northern Kingdom of Israel went into captivity to Assyria in 722 BCE, the Southern Kingdom of Judah was sent into exile in 586 BCE by Babylon, and the Judean exiles returned seventy years later under King Cyrus of Persia.

But Isaiah is not simply a book of history much as it is a book about God. In Isaiah, we discover that Israel's God is unique among the so-called gods of the world. Unlike idols, for example, God can speak forth the future. Neither good times nor hard times are random—not for individuals, and not for entire nations. Our lives and all of history are in God's hands.

Isaiah has a favorite name for God: the "Holy One of Israel." Because He is holy, He judges His people for their sin, which in Isaiah is often faithlessness—trusting someone or something else rather than God. The people and their leaders, the kings, were given the choice of trusting God even in the face of overwhelming adversity (the power of Assyria and Babylon). When they failed to do so, they experienced the judgment of God.

Yet even when He judges, God also holds out hope—something very important in Isaiah. One word of hope is the prophecy of the return from Babylonian exile. But there is an even more magnificent word of hope: the promise of the coming Messiah. He will be a special child who will grow to rule the nations (Isa. 7–11), and he will be the Servant of (chapters 52:13–53:12) whose death will atone for the sins of his people. This is fulfilled in the coming of , and made explicit in the .

In the end, Isaiah tells us that salvation will not be found in human leaders (who in Isaiah are the kings) nor in hanging out with the right crowd (in Isaiah, making political alliances with other nations). It will be found only in God who can save His people from the cause of their problems—human sin. Only He can make us holy and transform us into the kind of people who can be a light to others and show them a way to God.

Isaiah Headings

- A Nation Sick with Sin
- Worthless Offerings
- Scarlet Sins as Snow
- Restore the Faithful City
from Jerusalem
- Lofty Ones Brought Low
- Downfall of Jerusalem and Judah
- The Judge Arises
- Zion's End-Time Glory
- Song of the Vineyard
- Judgment for Injustice
- Judah's Encounter with
Reassurance Regarding a Threat
- The Sign of Immanuel
- Assyria Will Rise to Judah's Neck
- A Great Light in Galilee
- Prince of Peace
- Warning about Defiance
to Unjust Legislators
- Assyria, the Rod
- A Remnant Will Return

Assyria Advancing
The Branch from David
Messianic Age of
Second Return from Diaspora
Wells of Salvation
End of Babylon and the World
God's People Restored
Taunt against Babylon's King
Shining One Fallen from Heaven
Doom of Philistia
Jacob's Glory Fades
Ode of Ethiopia
Egypt Will Know
Sign of Nakedness
Watchman, Pay Attention!
Vision of Jerusalem's Catastrophe
Shaking Tyre and Sidon
Curse of Empty Land
Last Days' Judgments
Last Days' Deliverance
Trust the Rock of Ages
Your Dead Will Live!
Leviathan the Dragon
Second Song of the Vineyard
Israel Will Blossom Again
A Cornerstone of Zion
Night Vision of Ariel
No Help in Egypt
Witness against False Prophets
Longing to Be Gracious
Punishing Rod
Egypt's Horses Will Stumble
A Lion Protects Zion
Reign in Righteousness
Ambassadors of Peace Weep Bitterly
Our Eternal Judge Arises
End-Time Vision
Seek the Scroll and Read
Highway in the Wilderness
Sennacherib Dares Jerusalem
Hezekiah Tears His Clothes
Answered Prayer and Sennacherib's Demise
"Put Your House in Order"
Hezekiah Shows Off
Comfort, Proclaim Good News
Who Is like Him?
Coming Conqueror
My Servant, My Friend
Challenge to Idolaters
First Servant Song: Justice
Love for Israel
You Are My Witnesses
No Profit in Casting Idols
First and Last
Folly of Idols
Cyrus the Anointed
Mystery of Creation

No Other God and Savior
 Idols a Weary Burden
 Purpose for Cyrus
 Catastrophe of Babylon
 Who Foretold These Things?
 Second Servant Song: Light of the Nations
 Compassion on Zion's Children
 Third Servant Song: Face like Flint
 Comfort Zion with Justice
 : The Song of Salvation
 Fourth Servant Song: The Lamb
 Isaiah 53
 Your Husband is Your Maker
 No Weapon Formed against You
 Trees of the Field Will Clap Their Hands
 Foreigners Keeping
 Remove Every Stumbling Block
 Fasting and
 Separation from God
 Arise, Shine, O Zion
 for the Brokenhearted
 Watchmen for Jerusalem
 Winepress of Vengeance
 Remembering His
 As Unclean Rags
 Outstretched Hands
 New Heavens and New Earth
 Tremble at His Word
 A Nation Born in a Day

1 The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah:

A Nation Sick with Sin

² Listen! Heavens, and hear, earth,
 for *ADONAI* has spoken:
 "Sons I have raised and brought up,
 but they have rebelled against Me.
³ The ox knows its owner,
 and the donkey its manger,
 but Israel does not know,
 My people do not understand."
⁴ *Oy*, a sinful nation,
 a people weighed down with iniquity,
 offspring of evildoers,
 sons dealing corruptly!
 They have abandoned *ADONAI*.
 They have despised Israel's Holy One.
 They have turned backwards.
⁵ Where will you be struck again,
 as you stray away more and more?
 The whole head is sick,
 the whole heart faint.
⁶ From the foot to the head
 there is no soundness.

Wounds, bruises and raw sores:
 not pressed, nor bandaged,
 nor softened with oil.
⁷ Your land is desolate;
 your cities are burned with fire;
 your fields,
 strangers devour it in your presence—
 a desolation,
 overthrown by strangers.
⁸ So the Daughter of Zion is left
 as a *sukkah* in a vineyard,
 as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,
 as a besieged city.
⁹ Unless *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*
 had left us a small remnant, †
 we would have been as Sodom,
 we would have been as Gomorrah.
¹⁰ Hear the word of *ADONAI*,
 you rulers of Sodom!
 Give ear to the *Torah* of our God,
 you people of Gomorrah!

Worthless Offerings

¹¹ "For what is it to Me—the multitude of your sacrifices?"

† *cf. Rom. 9:29.*

says *ADONAI*.

"I am full of burnt offerings of rams
and fat of fed animals.
I have no delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs or he-goats.

¹² When you come to appear before Me,
who has required this at your hand—
trampling My courts?

¹³ Bring no more worthless offerings!
Incense is an abomination to Me.
New Moon and *Shabbat*, the calling of convocations
—I cannot endure it—
iniquity with solemn assembly.

¹⁴ Your New Moons and your Festivals
My soul hates!
They are a burden to Me.

I am weary to bear them.
¹⁵ When you spread out your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you.
When you multiply prayers,
I will not hear.
Your hands are full of blood!"

Scarlet Sins as Snow

¹⁶ "Wash and make yourselves clean.
Put away the evil of your deeds
from before My eyes.
Cease to do evil.

¹⁷ Learn to do good,
seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.

¹⁸ "Come now, let us reason together,"
says *ADONAI*.

"Though your sins be like scarlet,
they will be as white as snow.
Though they be red like crimson,
they will become like wool.

¹⁹ If you are willing and obey,
you will eat the good of the land.

²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel,
you will be devoured with the sword."
For the mouth of *ADONAI* has spoken.

Restore the Faithful City

²¹ How the Faithful City became a harlot!
She once was full of justice,
righteousness lodged in her—
but now murderers!

²² Your silver has become dross,
your wine diluted by water.

²³ Your princes are rebellious
and friends with thieves.
Everyone loves a bribe
and chases after rewards.
They do not defend the orphan,
nor does a widow's case come to them.

²⁴ Therefore says the Lord *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*,
the Mighty One of Israel:

"Oy! I will get relief from My foes
and avenge Myself on My enemies.

²⁵ Then I will turn My hand on you,
purge away your dross,
and remove all your alloy.

²⁶ I will restore your judges as at first,
your counselors as at the start.
Afterward you will be called

City of Righteousness, Faithful City.
²⁷ Zion will be redeemed with justice,
her repentant with righteousness."

²⁸ But there will be a crushing of transgressors and
sinners together.

Forsaking *ADONAI*, they will be consumed.
²⁹ For they will be ashamed of the sacred oaks
that you desired,
and embarrassed because of the gardens
that you have chosen.

³⁰ For you will be like an oak of withering leaf,
like a garden that has no water.

³¹ So the strong will become tinder
and his work like a spark—
both will burn together,
and no one will quench them.

2 The word which Isaiah, son of Amoz saw
concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

Torah from Jerusalem

² It will come to pass in the last days
that the mountain of *ADONAI*'s House
will stand firm as head of the mountains
and will be exalted above the hills.
So all nations will flow to it.

³ Then many peoples will go and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of *ADONAI*,
to the House of the God of Jacob!
Then He will teach us His ways,
and we will walk in His paths."

For *Torah* will go forth from Zion †
and the word of *ADONAI* from Jerusalem.

⁴ He will judge between the nations
and decide for many peoples.
They will beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning knives.

Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
nor will they learn war any more.

⁵ Come house of Jacob,
let us walk in the light of *ADONAI*.

⁶ For You have forsaken Your people,
the house of Jacob.

For they are filled with soothsayers from the east,
and they have clapped hands with the children of
foreigners.

⁷ Their land also is full of silver and gold,
nor is there any limit to their treasures.

† cf. Luke 24:47.

Their land also is full of horses,
 nor is there any limit to their chariots.
 8 Their land also is full of idols.
 They worship the work of their hands,
 what their own fingers have made.
 9 So humanity bows down
 as each one lowers himself.
 Pardon them not!
 10 Enter into the rock
 and hide in the dust,
 for fear of *ADONAI* ,
 and the glory of His majesty.

Lofty Ones Brought Low

11 The man of haughty eyes is humbled,
 the lofty ones brought low,
 for *ADONAI* alone will be exalted in that day.
 12 For the day of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* will be
 against anyone proud and haughty,
 against anyone lifted up—he will be humbled,
 13 against all the cedars of Lebanon
 that are lofty and lifted up,
 against all the oaks of Bashan,
 14 against all the high mountains,
 against all the exalted hills,
 15 against every high tower,
 against every fortified wall,
 16 against all the Tarshish ships,
 and against all the luxury boats.
 17 The pride of man will be humbled,
 the arrogance of men abased,
 for *ADONAI* alone will be exalted in that day.
 18 The idols will completely pass away.
 19 People will go into the caves of the rocks
 and into the holes of the earth, †
 because of the fear of *ADONAI*
 and the splendor of His majesty,
 when He arises to shake the earth.
 20 In that day a man will cast away
 his idols of silver and his idols of gold,
 which they made to worship,
 to the moles and to the bats!
 21 They go into the clefts of the rocks
 and the crevices of the crags,
 because of fear of *ADONAI*
 and the splendor of His majesty,
 when He arises to shake the earth.
 22 Stop trusting in mankind
 —whose breath is in his nose—
 for what is he really worth?

Downfall of Jerusalem and Judah

3 For behold! The Lord, *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* ,
 takes from Jerusalem and from Judah
 supply and support,
 every supply of bread

and every supply of water,
 2 mighty man and man of war,
 judge, and prophet,
 fortune-teller and elder,
 3 captain of 50 and man of rank,
 counselor, crafty magician and cunning charmer.
 4 I will set children as their rulers.
 Capricious ones will govern them.
 5 The people will oppress one another—
 each one by his fellow,
 each one by his neighbor.
 The child will be insolent to the aged,
 and dishonorable to the honorable.
 6 When a man takes hold of his brother
 in the house of his father, saying:
 “You have a cloak, you be our ruler!
 This ruin is under your charge.”
 7 In that day he will protest, saying:
 “I’m no healer!
 In my house is no bread or cloak.
 Don’t make me a ruler of people!”
 8 For Jerusalem has stumbled,
 and Judah is fallen.
 For their tongue and their actions
 are against *ADONAI* ,
 defying the eyes of His glory.
 9 The expression of their faces
 bears witness against them.
 They display their sin like Sodom—
 they do not hide it.
 Oy , their souls!
 For they brought evil on themselves.

The Judge Arises

10 Say to the righteous, he will be well,
 eating the fruit of their deeds.
 11 Oy , the wicked! It will be bad for him,
 for the dealing of his hands will be done to him.
 12 My people! Children are their oppressors
 and women rule over them.
 My people! Your guides mislead you
 and destroy the way of your paths.
 13 *ADONAI* arises to contend a case,
 and stands to judge the people.
 14 *ADONAI* will enter into judgment
 with the elders of His people and with the princes:
 “You have devoured the vineyard.
 The plunder of the poor is in your houses.
 15 What do you mean by crushing My people
 and grinding the face of the poor?”
 says *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot* .
 16 Moreover *ADONAI* says:
 “Since the Daughters of Zion are proud,
 and walk with outstretched necks and seductive
 eyes,
 walking and mincing as they go,
 making a jingling with their feet,

† cf. Luke 23:30; Rev. 6:15-16.

¹⁷ therefore *ADONAI* will smite with a scab the forehead of the Daughters of Zion.

ADONAI will expose their secret parts.”

¹⁸ In that day *ADONAI* will strip the finery of anklets, headbands, crescents, ¹⁹ pendants and bracelets, veils, ²⁰ headdresses, armlets, sashes, perfume vials, amulets, ²¹ rings and nose-jewels, ²² festal robes, capes, cloaks, purses, ²³ lace scarves, fine linen, turbans, and veils.

²⁴ Now it will come to pass:

Instead of sweet spices there will be rotteness;
instead of a sash, rags;
instead of curled hair, baldness;
instead of fine clothing, sackcloth;
and branding instead of beauty.

²⁵ Your men will fall by the sword,
and your warriors in battle.

²⁶ Her gates will lament and mourn.
Desolate, she will sit on the ground.

4 Seven women will grab hold of one man in that day, saying:

“We will eat our own bread,
and wear our own apparel.
Only let us be called by your name—
take away our reproach!”

Zion's End-Time Glory

² In that day the Branch of *ADONAI* will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land excellent and appealing for Israel's survivors. ³ So it will come to pass that whoever is left in Zion and whoever remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.

⁴ After *ADONAI* has washed away the filth of the Daughters of Zion and has purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, ⁵ then *ADONAI* will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her convocations, a cloud by day, and smoke and shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all, glory will be a canopy †. ⁶ Then there will be a *sukkah* for shade by day from the heat, and for refuge and for shelter from storm and from rain.

Song of the Vineyard

5 Let me sing of my beloved,
a song of my beloved, about His vineyard.
My beloved had a vineyard
in a very fertile hill. ††

² He dug it out and cleared its stones,
planted it with a choice vine,
built a tower in the midst of it,
and even cut out a winepress.
He expected it to yield good grapes,
but it yielded worthless grapes.

† Hebrew *chuppah*
of fatness

†† Lit. a horn, the son

³ So now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah,

please judge
between me and my vineyard.

⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done?

Why then, when I expected it to yield good grapes,
did it yield worthless grapes?

⁵ So now, I will make known to you
what I will do to my vineyard:

I will take away the hedge,
and it will be eaten up.

I will break down the fence,
and it will be trodden down.

⁶ I will lay it waste:

it will not be pruned or hoed,
but briars and thorns will come up.

I will also command the clouds not to rain on it.

⁷ For the vineyard of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
the planting of His delight.

He looked for justice,
but behold, bloodshed,
for righteousness,
but behold, a cry!

Judgment for Injustice

⁸ Woe to those who join house to house
and merge field to field,
until there is no room,
and you will live alone
in the midst of the land!

⁹ In my ears, *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* has said:
“Surely many houses will be desolate—
even grand and fine ones—
with no occupants.”

¹⁰ Ten acres of vineyard
will yield six gallons,
and an omer of seed
will yield one ephah. ‡

¹¹ Woe to those who rise up early in the morning—
so they may pursue liquor,
who stay up late at night,
until wine inflames them!

¹² Harp and lyre, tambourine and flute,
and wine are at their banquets.
They do not notice *ADONAI*'s activity
nor see the works of His hands.

¹³ “Therefore My people are in captivity
for lack of knowledge.

Their honorable men are famished
and their multitudes parched with thirst.

¹⁴ Therefore *Sheol* has enlarged its gullet
and opened its measureless mouth—
down goes her glory, her tumult,
her uproar, and the revelry in her.

‡ About six bushels yielding just one.

¹⁵ So humanity will be bowed down,
 mankind will be humbled,
 and the eyes of the lofty humbled."
¹⁶ But *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* will be exalted through justice,
 and the Holy God consecrated through righteousness.
¹⁷ Then lambs will graze as if in their own pasture,
 and nomads will eat in the ruins of the wealthy.
¹⁸ *Oy* to those that drag iniquity along with cords of
 deceit,
 and sin as if with a cart rope!
¹⁹ They say: "Let Him hurry up
 and hasten His work, so we may see it!
 Let the plan of the Holy One of Israel
 draw near and come,
 so we may know it!"
²⁰ *Oy* to those who call evil good
 and good evil,
 who present darkness as light
 and light as darkness,
 who present bitter as sweet,
 and sweet as bitter!
²¹ *Oy* to those who are wise in their own eyes,
 and clever in their own sight!
²² *Oy* to those who are heroes at drinking wine,
 and valiant at mixing drinks,
²³ who justify the wicked for a bribe,
 and deprive the innocent of justice!
²⁴ Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes straw,
 and as chaff collapses into the flame,
 so their root will be like rot,
 and their blossom will go up like dust.
 For they have rejected the *Torah* of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* ,
 and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.
²⁵ Therefore *ADONAI* 's anger is kindled
 against His people.
 When He has stretched out His hand
 against them and struck them,
 the hills trembled, and their carcasses
 were like refuse in the streets.
 For all this His anger is not turned away,
 yet His hand is still outstretched.
²⁶ He will lift up a banner to nations far off,
 and will whistle for them from the ends of the earth.
 Look! Swiftly, speedily they come!
²⁷ None will be weary
 and none stumble among them;
 none will slumber or sleep;
 no belt will be loose at the waist;
 no strap of sandals be broken.
²⁸ Their arrows are sharp
 and all their bows bent;
 their horse hooves will be like flint
 and their wheels like a whirlwind.
²⁹ Their roaring will be like a lion.
 They will growl like young lions—
 yes, they will roar, seize their prey
 and carry it away safely—

and there will be none to rescue.
³⁰ They will roar against them
 like the roaring of the sea.
 If one looks to the land,
 behold, darkness and distress!
 The light is darkened by the clouds.

Judah's Encounter with *ADONAI*

⁶ In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw *ADONAI*
 sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, [†] and the
 train of His robe filled the Temple. ² Seraphim were
 standing above Him. Each had six wings: with two he
 covered his face and with two he covered his feet, and
 with two he flew. ³ One called out to another, and said:
 "Holy, holy, holy, is *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* !
 The whole earth is full of His glory." ^{††}
⁴ Then the posts of the door trembled at the voice of
 those who called, and the House was filled with
 smoke. [‡]
⁵ Then I said:
 " *Oy* to me! For I am ruined!
 For I am a man of unclean lips,
 and I am dwelling among a people of unclean lips.
 For my eyes have seen the King, *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* !"
⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a glow-
 ing coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs
 from the altar. ⁷ He touched my mouth with it and
 said:
 "Behold, this has touched your lips.
 Your iniquity is taken away, and your sins atoned for."
⁸ Then I heard the voice of *ADONAI* saying:
 "Whom should I send, and who will go for Us?"
 So I said, " *Hineni* . Send me."
⁹ Then He said:
 "Go! Tell this people:
 'Hear without understanding,
 and see without perceiving.' ^{††}
¹⁰ Make the heart of this people fat,
 their ears heavy, and their eyes blind.
 Else they would see with their eyes,
 and hear with their ears,
 and understand with their heart,
 and return, and be healed." ^{‡‡}
¹¹ Then I said, " *ADONAI* , how long?"
 He answered,
 "Until cities are laid waste
 and without inhabitant,
 houses are without people,
 and the land is utterly desolate.
¹² *ADONAI* will drive people far away.
 The desertion of the land will be vast.
¹³ Though a tenth still be in it,
 it will again be burned.
 As a terebinth tree or as an oak
 whose stump remains when cut down,

[†] cf. John 12:41; Rev. 4:2. ^{††} cf. Rev. 4:8, 11. [‡] cf. Rev. 15:8.
^{‡‡} cf. Matt. 13:14-15; 28:19; Luke 8:10. ^{‡‡} cf. Matt. 13:13-15;
 Mark 4:12; 8:18; John 9:39; 12:40.

so the holy seed will be the stump.”

Reassurance Regarding a Threat

7 Now it came about in the days of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah, son of Remaliah of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. ² When it was reported to the house of David saying: “Aram is camped in Ephraim,” his heart as well as the heart of his people shook like the trees of the forest shaking with the wind.

³ Then *ADONAI* said to Isaiah: “Go out now to meet Ahaz—you and Shear-jashub your son, at the end of the aqueduct from the upper pool, in the highway of the fullers’ field †; ⁴ and say to him, ‘Keep calm and be quiet. Do not fear nor be faint-hearted because of these two stubs of smoldering firebrands, because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram, nor of the son of Remaliah, ⁵ because Aram has plotted harm against you, along with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah saying, ⁶ “Let us go up against Judah, terrorize it, divide it for ourselves, and appoint Tabeel’s son as king in the midst of it.”’”

⁷ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :

“It will not stand, nor will it occur.

⁸ For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin.

Within 65 years Ephraim will be broken and not be a people.

⁹ The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son. If you do not trust, you will not stand.”

The Sign of Immanuel

¹⁰ Then *ADONAI* spoke again to Ahaz saying, ¹¹ “Ask for a sign from *ADONAI* your God—from the depths of *Sheol* or the heights of Heaven.”

¹² But Ahaz said, “I won’t ask—I wouldn’t test *ADONAI*!”

¹³ Then he said, “Hear now, house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men? Will you also weary my God? ¹⁴ Therefore *ADONAI* Himself will give you a sign:

“Behold, the virgin †† will conceive.

When she is giving birth to a son, she will call his name Immanuel. ‡

¹⁵ He will be eating curds and honey by the time he knows to refuse evil and choose good.

¹⁶ “For before the boy knows to refuse evil and choose good, the land of the two kings you dread will be abandoned. ¹⁷ *ADONAI* will bring—on you, on your people, and on your father’s house such days as have never come since the day Ephraim separated from Judah—the king of Assyria!”

¹⁸ In that day *ADONAI* will whistle for the fly at the source of the Nile of Egypt and for the bee in the land of Assyria. ¹⁹ Then they will come, all of them—and will settle in the steep wadis and in the clefts of the cliffs and in all the thorn bushes and in all the watering holes. ²⁰ In that day *ADONAI* will shave—with a razor hired beyond the River—with the king of Assyria—the head and the hair of the legs, and even clip off the beard.

²¹ In that day it will be that a man will rear a calf and two sheep, ²² and from the abundant milk they give, he will eat curds—for anyone left in the land will eat curds and honey.

²³ In that day it will be that every place where there were 1,000 vines worth 1,000 silver shekels will become briars and thorns. ²⁴ With arrows and bows one will come there, since all the land will become briars and thorns. ²⁵ As for all the hills that were tilled with the hoe—you will not go there for fear of briars and thorns. Instead, it will be for grazing of oxen and roaming of sheep.

Assyria Will Rise to Judah’s Neck

8 Then *ADONAI* said to me: “Take yourself a great tablet, and write on it with a man’s stylus: ‘Maher-Shalal-Hashbaz.’” ^{†2} So I took for myself trustworthy witnesses—Uriah the *kohen* and Zechariah son of Jerebemiah.

³ Then I went to the prophetess; and she conceived and bore a son. Then *ADONAI* said to me: “Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hashbaz. ⁴ For before the child will have knowledge to cry ‘my father!’ or ‘my mother!’ the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria.” ⁵ Then *ADONAI* spoke to me further, saying:

⁶ “Because these people have refused the softly flowing waters of Shiloah, and rejoice with Rezin and Remaliah’s son, ⁷ therefore behold, *ADONAI* is bringing on them the waters of the River—mighty and massive—Assyria’s king with all his glory!

It will rise over all its channels and spill over all its banks.

⁸ Then it will sweep through Judah, overflow as it passes through, reaching even to the neck!

So the spread of its wings will be the full breadth of your land! Immanuel!

⁹ “Make an uproar, O peoples—but you will be broken in pieces. Give ear, all you of far countries. Arm yourselves—yet be shattered! Arm yourselves—yet be shattered!

¹⁰ Take counsel together, but it will amount to nothing. Speak a word, but it will not stand.

† Also Washer’s Field †† Or maiden
‡ Meaning God with us

†† Lit. The spoil speeds, the prey hastens

For God is with us!"
¹¹ For thus *ADONAI* spoke to me, with a strong hand, warning me that I should not walk in the way of these people, saying: ¹² "Do not say: 'It's a conspiracy!' about everything that these people call a conspiracy. You must not fear or tremble at what they fear.
¹³ " *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, Him will you sanctify, and let Him be your fear, trembling at Him.
¹⁴ He will be a Sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence † to both the houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
¹⁵ Many among them will stumble, fall, and be broken, snared and caught.
¹⁶ Bind up the testimony, seal the instruction with My disciples.
¹⁷ I will wait for *ADONAI*, who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look eagerly for Him."

¹⁸ Here I am with the children that *ADONAI* has given me as signs and wonders in Israel, from *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* who dwells on Mount Zion. ¹⁹ When they say to you: "Consult the mediums and necromancers who chirp and mutter," shouldn't a people seek their God? Should a people consult the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ To *Torah* and to the testimony!

If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no light. ²¹ They will pass this way that are hard-pressed and hungry, and it will turn out that when they are hungry, they will become enraged and curse their king and their God. Whether they turn their faces upward ²² or look to the earth, behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be driven into darkness.

A Great Light in Galilee

²³ (9:1) But there is no gloom to her who was in anguish, as in time past. He treated lightly the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future He will bring glory—by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan—Galilee of the Gentiles.

9 (2) The people walking in darkness will see a great light.
 Upon those dwelling in the land of the shadow of death, light will shine. ††
² (3) You will multiply the nation. You will increase the joy. They will rejoice before You like the joy in the harvest, as they revel when they divide spoil.

† cf. Luke 2:34; 20:18; Rom. 9:32-33; 1 Pet. 2:8. †† cf. Matt. 4:14-16; Luke 1:79.

³ (4) For You will break the burdensome yoke and the rod on his shoulder—the war-club of his oppressor—as in the day of Midian.
⁴ (5) For every stomping boot quaking and cloak rolled in blood will be for burning—fuel for the fire.

Prince of Peace

⁵ (6) For to us a child is born, a son will be given to us, ‡ and the government will be upon His shoulder. †† His Name will be called Wonderful Counselor, †† Mighty God, My Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. †††
⁶ (7) Of the increase of His government and *shalom* there will be no end—on the throne of David and over His kingdom—to establish it and uphold it through justice and righteousness from now until forevermore. ††† The zeal of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* will accomplish this.

Warning about Defiance

⁷ (8) *ADONAI* sent a word to Jacob, and it fell upon Israel.
⁸ (9) All the people will know what Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria say in pride and in arrogance of heart:
⁹ (10) "The bricks are fallen, but we will rebuild with cut stones. The sycamores are cut down, but we will replace them with cedars."
¹⁰ (11) Therefore *ADONAI* raises up Rezin's adversaries against them, and spurs on his enemies.
¹¹ (12) The Arameans from the east and the Philistines from the west—they will devour Israel with open mouth. For all this His anger is not turned away, yet His hand is still outstretched.
¹² (13) Yet the people will not turn back to the One who strikes them, nor will they seek *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.
¹³ (14) So *ADONAI* will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and bulrush in a single day.
¹⁴ (15) The elder and the man of rank—he is the head. The prophet who teaches falsehood—he is the tail.
¹⁵ (16) The leaders of this people lead them astray.

‡ (6a) cf. Luke 2:11; John 3:16. †† (6b) cf. Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:24-25. ††† (6c) cf. John 14:26; 15:26. †††† (6d) cf. Luke 2:14; John 14:27. ††††† (7a) cf. Luke 1:32-33.

Those they mislead are swallowed up.
¹⁶ (17) Therefore *ADONAI* will have no joy in their young men,
 nor will He have compassion on their orphans and widows,
 for everyone is ungodly and an evildoer,
 and every mouth speaks foolishness.
 For all this His anger is not turned away,
 yet His hand is still outstretched.
¹⁷ (18) For wickedness burns like a fire
 and consumes the briars and thorns.
 It kindles the thickets of the forest,
 so they roll up in a column of smoke.
¹⁸ (19) By the wrath of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*
 is the land burnt up;
 The people are as fuel for the fire.
 No one spares his brother.
¹⁹ (20) One grabs with the right hand
 but is hungry,
 and eats with the left hand
 but is not satisfied.
 Everyone will eat the flesh of his own arm—
²⁰ (21) Manasseh will devour Ephraim,
 and Ephraim, Manasseh,
 both are against Judah.
 For all this His anger is not turned away,
 yet His hand is outstretched.

Oy to Unjust Legislators

10 Oy to those enacting unjust decrees
 and recording corrupt legislation,
² to deprive the helpless of justice
 and rob the rights of the poor of My people,
 so that widows may be their spoil
 and orphans their prey!
³ What will you do in the day of visitation,
 when desolation comes from afar?
 To whom will you flee for help?
 Where will you leave your wealth?
⁴ One can only crouch among the captives
 or collapse among the slain.
 For all this His anger is not turned away,
 yet His hand is still outstretched.

Assyria, the Rod

⁵ Oy to Assyria, the rod of My anger—
 the club in their hand is My indignation!
⁶ I am sending it against an ungodly nation,
 and against the people of My fury I am commissioning it,
 to take spoil and plunder,
 to trample them down
 like mud in the streets.
⁷ Yet that is not what Assyria intends,
 nor is that what he is thinking about.
 Rather his heart is to destroy,
 and to cut down nations—only a few!

⁸ For he says: "Aren't all my princes kings?
⁹ Isn't Calno like Carchemish?
 Isn't Hamath like Arpad?
 Isn't Samaria like Damascus?
¹⁰ As my hand has reached the kingdoms of the idols—
 with more graven images than Jerusalem and Samaria—
¹¹ as I've done to Samaria and her idols,
 won't I also do to Jerusalem and her idols?"
¹² Therefore it will come to pass, when *ADONAI* finishes all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glorying of his haughty eyes." ¹³ For he said:
 "By the strength of my own hand I've done it,
 and my own wisdom,
 for I am shrewd!
 I abolished the borders of peoples,
 and plundered their treasures.
 As a mighty one I cast down inhabitants.
¹⁴ My hand found the riches of the peoples as a nest—
 like gathering forsaken eggs,
 I have gathered the entire earth.
 Not a wing fluttered,
 not a beak opened or chirped!"
¹⁵ Should the axe boast against the One who chops with it?
 Should the saw magnify itself against the One who wields it?
 It would be like a rod waving the One who lifts it,
 or like a staff hoisting up the One who is not wood!
¹⁶ Therefore will the Lord *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* ,
 send leanness among his fat ones.
 Under its glory He will kindle a burning
 like a blazing fire.
¹⁷ So the light of Israel will become a fire,
 and its Holy One a flame.
 He will burn and consume
 its thorns and briars in one day.
¹⁸ Both the glory of his forest
 and his fruitful field,
 he will consume, both soul and body.
 It will be like a sick man wasting away.
¹⁹ The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few,
 a child could record them.

A Remnant Will Return

²⁰ Yet it will come about in that day
 that the remnant of Israel—
 those of the house of Jacob who escaped—
 will never again depend on the one
 who struck them down,
 but will depend upon *ADONAI* ,
 the Holy One of Israel, in truth.
²¹ A remnant will return,

even the remnant of Jacob, †
to the Mighty God.

²² For though your people, O Israel,
be as the sand of the sea,
only a remnant of them will return. ††
Destruction has been decreed.
Justice overflows.

²³ For a complete destruction, as decreed,
will *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot* make throughout the whole
land. ‡

²⁴ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohei - Tzva'ot* :
"O My people dwelling in Zion,
do not be afraid of Assyria,
though he strike you with the war-club,
and lift up his rod against you, as Egypt did.

²⁵ "For in a very little while My indignation against
you will be spent, and My anger will turn to their de-
struction." ²⁶ *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* will stir up against him a
scourge, as in the slaughter of Midian at the Rock of
Oreb. As His staff was over the sea, so will He lift it up,
as He did in Egypt.

²⁷ In that day his burden will be taken off your shoul-
ders,
and his yoke off your neck.
Indeed, the yoke will be broken
because of fatness.

Assyria Advancing

²⁸ He has come to Aiath,
and passed through Migron.
At Michmas he deposited his supplies.

²⁹ They have crossed over the pass.
They have taken up lodging at Geba.
Ramah is terrified;
Gibeath-shaul has fled.

³⁰ Shriek your cry, daughter of Gallim!
Listen, O Laish! O poor Anathoth!

³¹ Madmenah has fled.
The inhabitants of Gebim take cover.

³² This very day he will halt at Nob.
He shakes his fist at the mountain
of the Daughter of Zion,
the hill of Jerusalem.

³³ Behold, the Lord, *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*
will lop off the branches with terror!
So the tall ones will be cut down
and the lofty ones laid low.

³⁴ Yes, He will hack down the thickets of the forest
with iron,
and Lebanon with its majesty will fall.

The Branch from David

11 Then a shoot will come forth out of the stem of
Jesse,
and a branch will bear fruit out of His roots. ††

² The *Ruach* of *ADONAI* will rest upon Him,
the Spirit of wisdom and insight,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge
and of the fear of *ADONAI*. ††

³ His delight will be in the fear of *ADONAI*.
He will not judge by what His eyes see,
nor decide by what His ears hear.

⁴ But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
and decide with fairness for the poor of the land.
He will strike the land with the rod of His mouth, †††
and with the breath of His lips He will slay the
wicked.

⁵ Also righteousness will be the belt around His loins,
and faithfulness the belt around His waist.

Messianic Age of *Shalom*

⁶ The wolf will dwell with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the kid,
the calf and the young lion and the yearling together,
and a little child will lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear will graze,
their young ones lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like an ox.

⁸ A nursing child will play by a cobra's hole,
and a weaned child will put his hand into a viper's
den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy moun-
tain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of *ADONAI*,
as the waters cover the sea.

Second Return from Diaspora

¹⁰ It will also come about in that day
that the root of Jesse will stand
as a banner for the peoples. †††
The nations will seek for Him,
and His resting place will be glorious. §

¹¹ It will also come about in that day that my Lord will
again redeem—a second time with His hand—the
remnant of His people who remain ††
from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush,
Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

¹² He will lift up a banner for the nations,
and assemble the dispersed of Israel,
and gather the scattered of Judah
from the four corners of the earth. †††

¹³ Ephraim's envy will end,
those hostile to Judah will be cut off.
Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah will not harass Ephraim.

¹⁴ They will swoop down on the Philistine slope to the
west.

Together they will plunder the children of the east—
laying their hand on Edom and Moab,

† cf. Rom. 11:5. †† cf. Rom. 9:27. ‡ cf. Rom. 9:28. †† cf. Matt. 1:1; Rev. 5:5.

†† cf. Matt. 3:16. ††† cf. Rev. 19:11, 15. ††† cf. John 12:32; Rom. 15:12. § cf. Luke 2:32; Acts 11:18. †† cf. Rom. 11:5. ††† cf. Matt. 24:30-31.

the children of Ammon obeying them.
¹⁵ Then *ADONAI* will dry up the gulf of the Egyptian sea.
 He will wave His hand over the River with His scorching wind,
 and will strike it into seven streams,
 and let men walk over in sandals.
¹⁶ So there will be a highway for the remnant of His people
 who remain, from Assyria,
 as there was for Israel in the day
 they came up out of the land of Egypt.

Wells of Salvation

12 In that day you will say:
 "I will give You thanks, *ADONAI*,
 for though You were angry with me,
 Your anger is turned away,
 and You comfort me.
² Behold, God is my salvation!
 I will trust and will not be afraid.
 For the Lord *ADONAI* is my strength
 and my song.
 He also has become my salvation." †
³ With joy you will draw water
 from the wells of salvation.
⁴ In that day you will say:
 "Give thanks to *ADONAI*.
 Proclaim His Name!
 Declare His works to the peoples,
 so they remember His exalted Name.
⁵ Sing to *ADONAI*, for He has done gloriously.
 Let this be known in all the earth.
⁶ Cry out and shout, inhabitant of Zion!
 For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

End of Babylon and the World

13 The burden †† of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw:
² Lift up a banner on a bare mountain,
 raise a voice to them, wave a hand,
 so that they may enter the gates of the nobles.
³ I have commanded My consecrated ones,
 yes, I have called My mighty ones,
 My proud exulting ones, for My fury.
⁴ A sound of tumult in the mountains
 like that of many people!
 A sound of uproar of kingdoms,
 of nations gathered!
ADONAI - Tzva'ot is mustering
 the army for battle.
⁵ They are coming from a far country—
 from the end of the heavens—
ADONAI and the weapons of His wrath,
 to destroy the whole land.
⁶ Wail, for the day of *ADONAI* is near!

it will come as destruction from *Shaddai*.
⁷ Therefore all hands will fall limp,
 and every man's heart will melt.
⁸ They will be terrified;
 pain and anguish will take hold of them;
 they will writhe as a woman in labor;
 they will look aghast at one another—
 their faces aflame!
⁹ Behold, the day of *ADONAI* comes,
 cruel, full of wrath and fierce fury,
 to make the earth a desolation,
 and destroy its sinners from it.
¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations
 will not give their light.
 The rising sun will be darkened,
 and the moon will not give its light. ‡
¹¹ I will punish the world for evil,
 and the wicked for their iniquity.
 I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud,
 and abase the insolence of tyrants.
¹² I will make people scarcer than gold,
 even than the pure gold of Ophir.
¹³ Therefore I will make heaven tremble,
 and the earth will shake from its place
 at the wrath of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*,
 in the day of His fierce fury.
¹⁴ It will be like a hunted gazelle,
 or like sheep with no one gathering.
 Each will return to his own people,
 each will flee to his own country.
¹⁵ Everyone found will be thrust through.
 Everyone caught will fall by the sword.
¹⁶ Their babes will be dashed in pieces before their eyes.
 Their houses will be plundered,
 and their wives ravished.
¹⁷ Behold, I will stir up against them the Medes,
 who will not value silver
 and will take no delight in gold.
¹⁸ Their bows will cut down the young men,
 with no pity on the fruit of the womb,
 nor will their eye spare children.
¹⁹ So Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
 the beauty of Chaldean pride,
 will be just as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
²⁰ It will never be inhabited,
 nor will it be dwelt in
 from generation to generation,
 nor will an Arab pitch a tent there,
 nor will shepherds let flocks lie there.
²¹ But desert creatures will lie there.
 Their houses will be full of owls.
 Ostriches will dwell there,
 and goat-demons will dance †† there.
²² Hyenas will howl in their citadels
 and jackals in their pleasant palaces.

† cf. John 4:10, 14. †† Or weighty oracle

‡ cf. Matt. 24:29; Rev. 8:12. †† Or wild goats will leap about

Her time is near to come—
her days will not drag on long.

God's People Restored

14 For *ADONAI* will have compassion on Jacob
and will again choose Israel
and settle them in their own land.
The outsider will join himself with them
and will cling to the house of Jacob.
²The peoples will take them
and escort them to their place.
The house of Israel will possess them
in the land of *ADONAI* as servants and handmaids.
They will take their captors captive,
and rule over their oppressors.

Taunt against Babylon's King

³ Now in the day when *ADONAI* will give you rest from
your sorrow and your turmoil, and from the hard ser-
vice you were forced to do, ⁴ you will take up this taunt
against the king of Babylon and say:

"How the taskmaster has ceased!
The raging oppressor, exacter of gold, has ceased!

⁵ *ADONAI* has broken the rod of the wicked,
the scepter of the rulers,

⁶ which struck the people in wrath
with continual strokes,
which ruled the nations in fury,
with relentless persecution.

⁷ The whole earth is at rest, and quiet.
They break forth with a ringing cry!

⁸ Even the cypress trees rejoice over you,
along with the cedars of Lebanon:

'Since you were laid low,
no woodcutter comes up against us.'

⁹ *Sheol* from below is excited about you,
to meet you at your coming!

He stirs up the dead spirits for you,
even the chief ones [†] of the earth.

He makes all the kings of the nations
rise up from their thrones.

¹⁰ They all answer and say to you:
'Even you have become as weak as us?
Have you become like us?

¹¹ Your pomp is brought down to *Sheol*
with the music of your harps.

Maggots are spread out under you,
and worms cover you."

Shining One Fallen from Heaven

¹² How you have fallen from heaven,
O bright star ^{††}, son of the dawn! [‡]
How you are cut down to the earth,
you who made the nations prostrate!

¹³ You said in your heart:
"I will ascend to heaven,

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. ^{‡†}

I will sit upon the mount of meeting,
in the uttermost parts of the north.

¹⁴ I will ascend above the high places of the clouds—
I will make myself like *Elyon*."

¹⁵ Yet you will be brought down to *Sheol*,
to the lowest parts of the Pit.

¹⁶ Those who see you will stare at you,
reflecting on what has become of you:

"Is this the one who shook the earth,
who made kingdoms tremble,

¹⁷ who made the world a wilderness
and destroyed its cities,

who never opened the house of his prisoners?"

¹⁸ All the kings of the nations, all of them,
lie in glory, each in his own house.

¹⁹ But you are cast out of your tomb
as a discarded branch,

garment of the slain,
pierced with a sword,
dumped into a stony pit,
a corpse trodden underfoot.

²⁰ You will not join with them in burial,
because you ruined your land,
you slaughtered your own people.

The offspring of evildoers will never be named.

²¹ Prepare slaughter for his children
for the iniquity of their fathers,
so they would not rise up and possess the land,
or fill the face of the earth with cities.

²² "For I will rise up against them"—it is a declaration
of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*—"and I will cut off from Babylon
name and remnant, offshoot and offspring," declares
ADONAI. ²³ "I will also make it a possession for the por-
cupine, with marshes of water, and I will sweep it with
the broom of destruction." It is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.

²⁴ *ADONAI Tzva'ot* has sworn, saying:
"Surely, as I thought it, so it will be.

As I have purposed, so it will stand.

²⁵ I will break Assyria in My land.

On My mountains I will trample him.

Then his yoke will be taken off them,
his burden removed from their shoulder.

²⁶ This is the purpose planned for the whole earth,
and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the
nations."

²⁷ For *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has purposed,
so who will annul it?

Since His hand is stretched out,
who will turn it back?

Doom of Philistia

²⁸ In the year king Ahaz died came this burden:

²⁹ Do not rejoice, all you of Philistia,
that the rod that struck you is broken.

For from the serpent's root comes a viper

[†] Lit. rams ^{††} Or shining one [‡] cf. Luke 10:18.

^{‡†} cf. 2 Thes. 2:3-4.

and its fruit will be a flying serpent.
³⁰ The firstborn of the poor will feed,
 and the needy will lie down in safety.
 I will kill your root with famine,
 and your survivors will be slain.
³¹ Wail, O gate! Cry, O city!
 Melt away, all you of Philistia!
 For smoke is coming from the north,
 and there is no straggler in its ranks.
³² What will they answer the messengers of the nation?
 For *ADONAI* has founded Zion,
 and the afflicted of His people will find refuge in her.

15 The burden of Moab.
 For in the night that Ar is devastated,
 Moab is ruined;
 for in the night that Kir is devastated,
 Moab is ruined.
² He has gone up to the shrine, to Dibon,
 to the high places to weep.
 Moab wails over Nebo and Medeba.
 Every head is bald, every beard shaven.
³ In their streets they wear sackcloth.
 On their housetops and in their plazas,
 everyone wails, weeping profusely.
⁴ Heshbon and Elealeh cry out.
 Their voice is heard as far as Jahaz.
 Therefore the soldiers of Moab cry aloud,
 his soul faints within him.
⁵ My heart cries out for Moab.
 Her fugitives are as far as Zoar
 as a three year old heifer,
 for by the ascent of Luhith
 they go up with weeping,
 for on the way of Horonaim
 they raise a cry of distress.
⁶ The waters of Nimrim are desolate.
 The grass is withered away,
 the new grass withers,
 there is nothing green.
⁷ Therefore the riches they had gotten
 and whatever they have stored,
 they carry over the Wadi of Willows.
⁸ For the cry has gone around
 the borders of Moab,
 the wailing to Eglaim,
 and the wailing to Beer-Elim.
⁹ For the waters of Dimon are full of blood,
 but I will bring on Dimon even more—
 a lion for those escaping from Moab,
 and for those remaining in the land.

16 Send lambs to the ruler of the land
 from Sela in the desert
 to the mountain of the Daughter of Zion.
² For like fluttering birds,
 scattered from a nest,
 so will the daughters of Moab be
 at the fords of Arnon.

³ Give counsel, execute justice.
 Cast your shadow like night at noonday.
 Hide the refugees,
 do not betray the fugitive.
⁴ Let My refugees stay with you.
 Be for Moab a hiding place
 from the face of the destroyer.
 For the extortion is at an end,
 devastation ceases,
 oppressors are gone from the land.
⁵ A throne will be established in mercy,
 and One will sit on it in truth
 —in the tent of David—
 One who seeks justice
 and is ready for righteousness. †
⁶ We have heard of the pride of Moab—
 very proud is he—
 of his haughtiness, his arrogance, his insolence,
 and his dishonest boasting.
⁷ Therefore Moab will wail for Moab—
 everyone will wail!
 For the sweet cakes of Kir-Hareseth
 you will moan, utterly stricken.
⁸ For the fields of Heshbon have withered,
 as well as the vine of Sibmah.
 Rulers of nations have trampled the choice clusters,
 that reached as far as Jazer and into the desert,
 its branches spread out
 and crossed to the sea.
⁹ Therefore I will weep bitterly for Jazer,
 for the vine of Sibmah.
 I will drench you with my tears,
 O Heshbon and Elealeh.
 For on your summer and your harvest
 the battle cry has fallen.
¹⁰ Gladness and joy are taken away from the fruitful
 field.
 In the vineyards, no singing for joy, no happy shout-
 ing,
 no treading wine in the presses.
 I have made the shouting stop.
¹¹ Therefore my heart moans for Moab
 like a lyre,
 and my inward part for Kir-Heres.
¹² So it will be, when Moab is
 weary upon the high place
 and comes to his sanctuary to pray,
 it will do him no good.
¹³ This is the word that *ADONAI* spoke concerning
 Moab in the past. ¹⁴ But now *ADONAI* has spoken, say-
 ing: “Within three years (as with the years of a hired
 worker), the glory of Moab will be disgraced; for all his
 large population, the remnant will be very small and
 feeble.”

17 The burden of Damascus:
 Behold, Damascus will cease as a city
 and will become a ruinous heap.

† cf. Luke 1:32.

²The cities of Aroer are forsaken.
They will be for flocks—they will lie down
and no one will frighten them.
³The fortress will also cease from Ephraim,
and the kingdom from Damascus.
The remnant of Aram will be
like the glory of *Bnei-Yisrael*.
It is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.

Jacob's Glory Fades

⁴Now in that day Jacob's glory will fade,
and the fatness of his flesh grow lean.
⁵It will be as when the harvester gathers the stand-
ing grain
and reaps the heads with his arm,
as when one gleanes grain in the valley of Rephaim.
⁶Only gleanings will remain,
as when beating an olive tree—
two or three olives at the very top,
four or five on a fruitful tree's branches.
It is a declaration of *ADONAI* God of Israel.
⁷In that day a man will look to his Maker and his
eyes will turn to the Holy One of Israel. ⁸He will not
look to the altars, the work of his hands, nor will he
look to what his fingers have made—neither the
Asherah poles nor the sun-images.
⁹In that day the strong cities will be like forsaken
forests and treetops that were abandoned, because of
Bnei-Yisrael—they will be laid waste.
¹⁰For you have forgotten the God of your salvation
and you have not remembered the Rock of your
strength.
Therefore you plant delightful plants
and set out exotic vines.
¹¹In the day that you plant, you fence it in,
and in the morning you made your seed to sprout—
but the harvest will be a heap
in a day of grief and incurable pain.
¹²Oy! The uproar of many peoples
who roar like the roaring of the seas.
The rumbling of nations,
who rush in like the rumbling of mighty waters!
¹³The nations will rush in like the rumbling of many
waters,
but He will rebuke them so they will flee far away,
chased like chaff on the hills before the wind,
like whirling dust before the storm.
¹⁴At evening time—sudden terror!
Before morning, they are no more.
This is the reward of those who plunder us
and the lot of those who pillage us.

Ode of Ethiopia

18 Oy! The land of whirring wings,
which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,
²that sends ambassadors by sea,
in papyrus vessels upon the water.

Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall
and smooth-skinned, to a people feared far and
wide,
a nation powerful and oppressive,
whose land the rivers divide.
³All you inhabitants of the world,
and dwellers on earth,
when a banner is raised on the mountains,
look!
When a *shofar* is blown,
listen!
⁴For so *ADONAI* has said to me:
"I will remain quiet, and look from My dwelling place,
like shimmering heat in sunshine,
like a cloud of dew in harvest heat."
⁵For before the harvest, as soon as blossoming is
over
and flower becomes ripening grape,
He will cut off the shoots with pruning knives,
He will cut back and remove the twigs.
⁶They will be left together for the mountain birds of
prey
and the beasts of the land.
The birds of prey will summer on them,
and all the beasts of the land will winter upon them.
⁷At that time tribute will be brought to *ADONAI - Tz-
va'ot*
from a nation tall and smooth-skinned,
from a people feared far and wide,
a nation powerful and oppressive,
whose land the rivers divide—
to the place of the Name of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*—Mount
Zion!

Egypt Will Know *ADONAI*

19 The burden of Egypt:
Behold, *ADONAI* rides upon a swift cloud
and comes to Egypt.
Egypt's idols tremble before Him
and Egypt's heart melts within them.
²I will stir up Egyptian against Egyptian.
Everyone will fight against his brother,
and everyone against his neighbor—
city against city,
kingdom against kingdom.
³The spirit of Egypt will drain within it,
and I will confuse its counsel.
So they will resort to idols, charmers,
mediums and familiar spirits.
⁴I will give the Egyptians
into the hand of a cruel master—
a fierce king will rule over them.
It is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.
⁵The waters from the sea will dry up,
and the river will be drained dry.
⁶Then the channels will stink.
The streams of Egypt will dwindle and dry up.
Reeds and rushes will rot.

7 The bulrushes by the Nile,
by the mouth of the Nile,
and everything sown by the Nile
will wither, blow away, and be no more.
8 Then the fishermen will lament.
All who cast hooks in the Nile will mourn,
and those who spread nets on the waters
will languish.
9 Moreover the workers of fine flax,
and the weavers of white cloth will be ashamed.
10 Her pillars will be crushed,
All hired workers will be grieved in soul.
11 The princes of Zoan are utter fools.
Pharaoh's wisest counselors are stupid.
How can you say to Pharaoh,
"I am the son of the wise,
a son of ancient kings?"
12 Where then are your wise men?
Let them tell you now!
Let them know what *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*
has purposed against Egypt.
13 The princes of Zoan are fools.
The princes of Noph are deceived.
The cornerstone of her tribes
have led Egypt astray.
14 *ADONAI* has mixed within her
a spirit of dizziness.
They make Egypt stagger in every work,
as a drunkard staggers in his vomit.
15 There will be no work for Egypt to do,
for head or tail, palm branch or rush.
16 In that day Egypt will be like women trembling
with fear, because of the shaking hand of *ADONAI - Tz-
va'ot*, which He is about to wave over it. 17 The land of
Judah will terrify Egypt. Anyone who mentions it will
be afraid, because of what *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has surely
purposed against it.
18 In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak
the language of Canaan, swearing allegiance to *ADON-
AI - Tzva'ot*. One used to be called the City of the Sun.
19 In that day there will be an altar to *ADONAI* in the
middle of the land of Egypt, and next to the border a
pillar to *ADONAI*. 20 It will be as a sign and a witness to
ADONAI - Tzva'ot in the land of Egypt. For they will cry
to *ADONAI* because of oppressors, and He will send
them a savior and defender—and he will deliver them.
21 So *ADONAI* will make Himself known to Egypt, and
the Egyptians will know *ADONAI* in that day. They will
worship with sacrifice and offering. They will vow to
ADONAI, and fulfill it. 22 So *ADONAI* will strike
Egypt—striking yet healing—so they will return to
ADONAI, and He will respond to them and heal them.
23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to
Assyria, and the Assyrians will come to Egypt, and the
Egyptians to Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship
with the Assyrians.

24 In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt
and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the earth.

25 For *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has blessed, saying:

"Blessed is Egypt My people,
and Assyria My handiwork,
and Israel My inheritance."

Sign of Nakedness

20 In the year that the Tartan † came to Ashdod,
when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him and
he fought against Ashdod and captured it, 2 at that
time *ADONAI* spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz saying,
"Go, remove the sackcloth from your loins and your
sandals from your feet." So he did so, walking naked
and barefoot.

3 Then *ADONAI* said: "Just as My servant Isaiah has
walked naked and barefoot for three years, as a sign
and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia, 4 so will the
king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt and the
exiles of Ethiopia, young and old, naked and barefoot,
with their buttocks uncovered, to Egypt's shame. 5 So
they will be dismayed and ashamed, because they
hoped in Ethiopia and boasted in Egypt. 6 Then the in-
habitants of the coastland will say in that day, 'Look,
such is our hope—there we fled for help to be deliv-
ered from the king of Assyria! Now, how will we es-
cape?'"

Watchman, Pay Attention!

21 The burden of the desert by the sea:
As windstorms sweep over the South,
so it comes from the desert,
a terrifying land.

2 A harsh vision has been shown to me:
"The traitor betrays, and the plunderer plunders.
Go up, Elam! Besiege, Media!
I have put an end to all her groaning."

3 Therefore my body is filled with pain.
Pangs have taken hold of me like the pangs of a
woman in labor.

I am bewildered by what I hear,
terrified by what I see.

4 My heart is bewildered,
terror overwhelms me.

The twilight I longed for
has been turned into trembling.

5 Set the table, spread out the cloth!
Eat! Drink!

"Rise up, you princes, oil the shield!"

6 For *ADONAI* has said to me.

"Go, post a watchman—
let him declare what he sees!

7 When he sees a chariot
with a pair of horsemen,
riders on donkeys,
riders on camels,

† A title, possibly Supreme Commander

let him pay attention—
 very close attention!”
⁸ Then he cried out like a lion:
 “Upon the watch tower, *ADONAI*, I stand continually in
 the daytime,
 and stay at my post every night.
⁹ Look! Here comes a chariot of men,
 with a pair of horsemen.”
 Then one answered and said,
 “Fallen, fallen is Babylon!
 All the images of her gods
 are broken on the ground.”
¹⁰ O my people, crushed on the threshing floor,
 what I heard from *ADONAI Tzva’ot*, God of Israel,
 I have declared to you.
¹¹ The burden of Dumah †:
 One calls to me from Seir,
 “Watchman, what is left of the night?
 Watchman, what is left of the night?”
¹² The watchman said,
 “Morning comes, yet also it is night.
 If you would inquire, inquire.
 Come back again.”
¹³ The burden of Arabia:
 In the desert brush of Arabia you will stay for the
 night,
 you caravans of Dedanites.
¹⁴ To him who is thirsty bring water,
 inhabitants of the land of Tema,
 meet the fugitive with food.
¹⁵ For they fled from swords,
 from drawn sword,
 from bent bow
 and distress of war.
¹⁶ For thus *ADONAI* said to me, “Within a year (as with
 the years of a hired worker), all the glory of Kedar will
 cease, ¹⁷ and the remainder of the number of the
 archers, the mighty men of the sons of Kedar, will be
 few. For *ADONAI* God of Israel has spoken.”

Vision of Jerusalem’s Catastrophe

22 The burden of the Valley of Vision:
 What is the matter with you now?
 For you have gone up to the rooftops.
² You were full of noise,
 a boisterous city, an exultant town?
 Your dead were not slain with the sword,
 nor dead in battle.
³ All your rulers have fled together,
 then captured without a bow.
 All who were caught were taken into exile together,
 though they had fled far off.
⁴ Therefore I said, “Look away from me!
 Let me weep bitterly—
 don’t try to comfort me
 about the ruin of the daughter of my people.”
⁵ For my Lord *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* has a day

of panic, trampling, and confusion—
 in the Valley of Vision—
 of tearing down a wall,
 a catastrophe on the mountain.
⁶ Elam took up the quiver,
 with chariots of men and horsemen,
 and Kir uncovered the shield.
⁷ So it will come to pass that your choicest valleys will
 be full of chariots and horsemen posted at the gate.
⁸ So He will expose Judah’s defense, and in that day
 you will look for the armor in the Forest House. ⁹ Then
 you will see the breaches in the walls of the city of
 David—for they will be many—though you collect the
 water of the lower pool. ¹⁰ Though you counted the
 houses of Jerusalem, you broke down the houses to
 fortify the wall. ¹¹ You even made a reservoir between
 the two walls for the water of the old pool—but you
 did not look to the Maker, or consider the One who
 planned it long before.
¹² Now in that day, *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot*
 will call for weeping and wailing,
 for baldness and putting on sackcloth.
¹³ But instead, there is joy and gladness,
 slaughtering cattle and killing sheep,
 meat and drinking wine!
 “Let’s eat and drink,
 for tomorrow we will die!”
¹⁴ But *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* revealed in my ears:
 “Surely this sin will not be atoned for until you die,”
 says my Lord *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* .
¹⁵ Thus says my Lord *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* : “Go, say to this
 steward, to Shebna, who is over the house: ¹⁶ “What
 are you doing here, and who are you to be here, that
 you cut out a grave for yourself, carving out a tomb on
 the height, chiseling a crypt for yourself in the rock?
¹⁷ Behold, strong man, *ADONAI* is about to hurl you
 headlong, and seize you firmly. ¹⁸ He will roll you up
 tightly and toss you like a ball into a large country.
 There you will die, and your glorious chariots will be
 the shame of your Master’s house. ¹⁹ I will remove you
 from your post, and pull you down from your station.
²⁰ “In that day I will summon my servant Eliakim, son
 of Hilkiyah. ²¹ I will clothe him in your robe and fasten
 your sash on him. I will give your authority into his
 hands, so he will be a father to the inhabitants of
 Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. ²² I will set the
 key †† of the house of David upon his shoulder—what
 he opens, no one can shut; what he shuts, no one can
 open. ²³ I will fasten him as a peg in a firm place, and
 he will be a throne of honor to his father’s house.
²⁴ They will hang all the glory of his father’s house on
 him—offspring and posterity, all the small vessels,
 from bowls to all the jars.
²⁵ “In that day,” says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* , “the peg that
 was fastened in a firm place will give way, break away
 and fall, and the load that was on it will be cut off.” For
ADONAI has spoken.

† Meaning silence

†† cf. Rev. 3:7.

Shaking Tyre and Sidon

23 The burden of Tyre.
 Wail, ships of Tarshish!
 For Tyre is destroyed.
 There is no house and no harbor.
 From the land of Cyprus,
 it was revealed to them.
² Be still, inhabitants of the coastland,
 you merchants of Sidon,
 your messengers crossing the sea.
³ On many waters the grain of Shihor,
 the harvest of the Nile was her revenue
 and a marketplace of nations.
⁴ Be ashamed, O Sidon.
 For the sea has spoken,
 the stronghold of the sea, saying,
 "I have not writhed or given birth.
 I have not reared young men or brought up maid-
 ens."
⁵ When the report reaches Egypt,
 they will be in anguish at the report about Tyre.
⁶ Cross over to Tarshish.
 Wail, you inhabitants of the island!
⁷ Is this your jubilant city?
 Whose antiquity is from long ago,
 whose feet have taken her
 to settle in far off lands?
⁸ Who planned this against Tyre,
 the crowning city,
 whose merchants were princes,
 whose traders were the honored of the earth?
⁹ *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* has planned it,
 to defile the pride of all glory,
 to shame all the honored of the earth.
¹⁰ Overflow through your land like the Nile,
 O daughter of Tarshish!
 There is no restraint any more.
¹¹ His hand has stretched out over the sea,
 He has shaken the kingdoms.
ADONAI has given a commandment concerning
 Canaan,
 to destroy its strongholds.
¹² He said, "You will exult no more."
 O crushed virgin daughter of Sidon.
 Arise, cross over to Cyprus—
 even there you will have no rest.
¹³ Look, the land of the Chaldeans—
 this is the people who no longer exist.
 Assyria set it up for desert animals.
 They set up their siege towers;
 they stripped its palaces;
 they made it a ruin.
¹⁴ Wail, you ships of Tarshish!
 For your stronghold is destroyed.
¹⁵ Then it will come about in that day that Tyre will be
 forgotten for 70 years, like the days of one king. At the

end of 70 years it will happen to Tyre just as in the
 song of the prostitute:

¹⁶ "Take a harp, stroll about the city,
 forgotten harlot!
 Skillfully play many songs,
 so you may be remembered."
¹⁷ Then it will come about after the end of 70 years

that *ADONAI* will take note of Tyre. She will return to
 her trade and will prostitute herself with all the king-
 doms of the world on the face of the earth. ¹⁸ Yet her
 profit and her wages will be set apart to *ADONAI*. They
 will not be stored up or hoarded. For her profit will be
 for those who dwell in the presence of *ADONAI*, as am-
 ple food and as fine clothing.

Curse of Empty Land

24 Behold, *ADONAI* makes the land empty
 and makes it waste,
 twists its face,
 and scatters its inhabitants.
² So it shall be:
 as with the people, so with the *kohen*,
 as with a servant, so with his master,
 as with a maid, so with her mistress,
 as with a buyer, so with the seller,
 as with a lender, so with the borrower,
 as with a creditor, so with the debtor.
³ The land will be utterly emptied,
 and totally plundered.
 For *ADONAI* has spoken this word.
⁴ The land faints and fades away,
 The world wilts and fades away,
 The exalted people of the earth wilt.
⁵ The land is polluted by its inhabitants,
 for they have transgressed *Torah*,
 violated statutes,
 and broken the everlasting covenant.
⁶ Therefore a curse will devour the land.
 Those dwelling there are found guilty.
 Therefore the inhabitants of the land will be burned
 up,
 so the people remaining are few.
⁷ The new wine fails, the vine wilts,
 all the merry-hearted sigh.
⁸ The glee of tambourines stops,
 the noise of revelers ends,
 the joy of the harp ceases.
⁹ They no longer drink wine with song.
 Liquor is bitter to those drinking it.
¹⁰ The shattered city is in chaos.
 Every house is shut up, none may enter.
¹¹ In the streets is an outcry for wine;
 all joy becomes dark as evening;
 the mirth of the land is banished.
¹² The city is left in ruins;
 the gate is battered down.

Last Days' Judgments

13 So will it be in the earth and among the nations,
as when shaking an olive tree,
or as when gleanings are left after the grape harvest.
14 They will raise their voices,
They will sing for joy, of the majesty of *ADONAI*
they shout from the sea.
15 Therefore glorify *ADONAI* in the east,
the Name of *ADONAI*, the God of Israel,
in the isles of the sea.
16 From the ends of the earth we have heard songs:
"Glory to the righteous!"
But I say, "I waste away, I waste away!
Oy to me! Traitors betray!
With treachery traitors betray!"
17 Panic, pit, and trap are upon you,
O inhabitant of the earth.
18 And it shall come to pass:
whoever flees from the sound of panic
will fall in the pit,
and whoever climbs up out of the pit
will be caught in the trap.
For the windows of heaven are opened
and the foundations of the earth shake.
19 The earth is broken apart,
the earth is split open,
the earth is shaken utterly.
20 The earth reels to and fro like a drunk,
and sways like a hut.
its transgression is so heavy upon it
that it will fall and never rise again.
21 It will come about in that day,
ADONAI will punish the host of heaven on high,
and the kings of the earth on the earth.
22 They will be gathered together,
like prisoners in the Pit,
and will be shut up in the prison,
and after many days be punished.
23 Then the moon will be abashed and the sun
ashamed,
for *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* will reign on Mount Zion and in
Jerusalem,
and before His elders, gloriously.

Last Days' Deliverance

25 *ADONAI*, You are my God, I will exalt You,
I will praise Your Name,
for You have done wonderful things,
plans of old with steadfast faithfulness.
2 For You have made a city into a heap,
a fortified city into a ruin,
a foreigner's palace a city no more—
never to be rebuilt.
3 Therefore a strong people will honor You.
Cities of ruthless nations will fear You.
4 For You have been a stronghold for the poor,

a stronghold for the needy in distress,
a refuge from the rainstorm,
a shade from the heat.
For the breath of the ruthless
is like a storm against the wall.
5 Like heat in a dry place,
You subdue the roar of foreigners.
Like heat in the shade of a cloud,
the song of tyrants is brought low.
6 On this mountain, *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*
will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples—
a banquet of aged wine—
of rich food, of choice marrow, of aged wine well re-
fined.
7 On this mountain He will swallow up
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the veil spread over all nations.
8 He will swallow up death forever. †
My Lord *ADONAI* will wipe away tears from every face.
††
He will remove His people's reproach from all the
earth.
For *ADONAI* has spoken.
9 It will be said in that day:
"Behold, this is our God,
We waited for Him—He will save us.
This is *ADONAI*—we waited for Him.
We will rejoice and be glad in His salvation."
10 For the hand of *ADONAI* will rest on this mountain.
Moab will be trampled under Him,
as straw is trampled in a manure pile.
11 When he spreads his hands in it
as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim,
his pride will be brought down low
together with the trickery of his hands.
12 He will level your high-fortified walls,
lay them low,
and cast them down to the ground,
down to dust.

Trust the Rock of Ages

26 In that day, this song will be sung in the land of
Judah:
"We have a strong city.
He appoints salvation
as its walls and ramparts.
2 Open the gates! ‡
Let the righteous nation enter—
one that keeps faith.
3 You keep in perfect peace
one whose mind is stayed on You,
because he trusts in You.
4 Trust in *ADONAI* forever,
for the *LORD ADONAI* is a Rock of ages.
5 For He humbles those dwelling on high,
leveling the lofty city,
leveling it to the ground,

† cf. 1 Cor. 15:54-55. †† cf. Rev. 7:17; 21:4. ‡ cf. Rev. 22:14.

bringing it down to the dust.
⁶ Feet will trample it down,
 feet of the afflicted,
 the footsteps of the poor.
⁷ The way of the righteous is straight.
 Upright One, You make smooth the path of the right-
 eous.
⁸ Yes, in the way of Your judgments,
ADONAI, we have waited for You.
 Your Name and Your remembrance
 is the desire of our soul.
⁹ My soul longs for You at night,
 yes, my spirit within me seeks You.
 For when Your judgments are in the earth,
 the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.
¹⁰ Though grace is shown to the wicked,
 he does not learn righteousness.
 Even in a land of uprightness he will act wrongly,
 not perceiving the majesty of *ADONAI*.
¹¹ *ADONAI*, Your hand is lifted up,
 yet they do not see it;
 They will see Your zeal for the people and be put to
 shame.
 Yes, fire will devour Your enemies.

Your Dead Will Live!

¹² “*ADONAI*, You will establish *shalom* for us,
 for all our works You have done for us.
¹³ *ADONAI Eloheinu*, other lords beside You have had
 dominion over us,
 but we remember Your Name alone.”
¹⁴ The dead do not live—
 dead souls do not rise.
 Thus You punished and destroyed them
 and wiped out all memory of them.
¹⁵ You have increased the nation, *ADONAI*,
 You have increased the nation.
 You are glorified as You have expanded
 all the borders of the land.
¹⁶ *ADONAI*, they sought You in distress,
 they poured out a whispered prayer
 when Your discipline was upon them.
¹⁷ As a pregnant woman about to give birth
 writhes and cries out in her pain,
 so we were before You, *ADONAI*.
¹⁸ We have been with child,
 we have been in pain,
 yet we gave birth to wind.
 We are accomplishing no deliverance for the earth,
 nor are inhabitants of the world coming to life.
¹⁹ “Yet it will be:
 Your dead will live!
 My corpses will rise!
 Awake and shout for joy,
 you who dwell in the dust!
 Your dew is like the dew of the dawn.
 The land of dead souls will come to life!
²⁰ “Go, my people, enter your rooms,

and shut your doors behind you.
 Hide for a little while,
 until the wrath is past.
²¹ For behold, *ADONAI* is coming out from His place
 to punish inhabitants of the earth for iniquity.
 The earth will disclose her bloodshed,
 no longer covering up her slain.”

Leviathan the Dragon

27 In that day *ADONAI* will punish
 Leviathan the fleeing serpent
 with His fierce, great, strong sword,
 Leviathan the twisted serpent!
 He will slay the dragon in the sea.

Second Song of the Vineyard

² “In that day sing to her,
 ‘A vineyard of delight!’
³ I, *ADONAI*, watch over it,
 I water it every moment.
 I guard it day and night,
 so that no one may harm it.
⁴ It is not that I have wrath.
 Who would give me thorns and thistles?
 Into battle I would march against them!
 I would burn them up altogether!
⁵ Rather let them rely on My strength.
 Let them make peace with Me—
 make peace with Me.”

Israel Will Blossom Again

⁶ In days to come Jacob will take root,
 Israel will blossom and bud
 and fill the face of the world with fruit.
⁷ Did He strike Israel
 as He struck those who struck them?
 Or were they slain
 as their slayers were slain?
⁸ You contended with her by banishing her,
 by driving her away.
 With His fierce wind He expelled them
 on the day of the east wind.
⁹ So by this will Jacob’s sin be atoned
 and this the full price to remove his sin:
 When he makes all the altar stones
 like shattered chalk stones,
 so that the Asherah poles and incense
 rise no more.
¹⁰ The fortified city is a lonely habitation,
 forlorn and forsaken like the desert.
 There the calf will graze,
 there lie down
 and consume its branches.
¹¹ When the boughs are withered,
 they will be broken off.
 Women come and set them on fire,
 for it is a people of no understanding.

Therefore their Maker will show them no mercy—
 He who formed them will give them no grace.
¹² It will come about in that day,
ADONAI will thresh from the channel of the River to
 the Wadi of Egypt,
 and you will be gathered one by one, *Bnei-Yisrael*.
¹³ It will also come about in that day, a great *shofar*
 will be blown. †
 Those perishing in the land of Assyria and the exiles
 in the land of Egypt will come and worship *ADONAI* on
 the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

A Cornerstone of Zion

28 *Oy*, the proud crown of Ephraim's drunks!
 Its glorious beauty is a fading flower,
 which is at the head of the fertile valleys
 of those overcome with wine!
² Behold, *ADONAI* is strong and mighty,
 like a hailstorm, a destructive tempest,
 like a downpour of overflowing water,
 He hurls it down to earth with His hand.
³ The proud crown of Ephraim's drunks
 will be trampled underfoot.
⁴ The glorious beauty is a fading flower
 which is at the head of the fertile valley,
 like a first-ripe fig before summer—
 whoever sees it, swallows it up while it is still in his
 palm.
⁵ In that day *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*
 will be a crown of glory,
 a diadem of beauty
 to the remnant of His people,
⁶ a spirit of judgment for him
 who sits on the judgment seat,
 and strength for those
 turning back the battle at the gate.
⁷ But these also reel from wine
 and stagger from strong drink
 —the *kohen* and the prophet reel from strong
 drink—
 are confused because of wine,
 they stagger because of strong drink,
 they are muddled in vision,
 they stumble in judgment.
⁸ Since all the tables are full of the filth of vomit,
 no place is left.
⁹ To whom will He teach knowledge?
 To whom will He explain the message?
 Those just weaned from milk?
 Those just taken from the breast?
¹⁰ For it must be 'precept upon precept,
 precept upon precept,
 line upon line, line upon line,
 here a little, there a little.'
¹¹ For through stammering lips and a foreign tongue
 He will speak to this people,
¹² To whom He said,

"Here is rest, give rest to the weary,
 here is repose"—but they would not listen.
¹³ So the word of *ADONAI* is to them
 'precept on precept, precept on precept,
 line upon line, line upon line,
 here a little, there a little.'
 So they walk, and fall backward,
 and are broken, trapped, and captured.
¹⁴ Therefore hear the word of *ADONAI*, you scoffers,
 who rule this people who are in Jerusalem:
¹⁵ "Because you have said,
 'We cut a covenant with death,
 we made a pact with *Sheol*,
 so when the overflowing scourge passes through,
 it won't come for us,
 for we have made lies our refuge,
 and hid ourselves in falsehood'—
¹⁶ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
 'Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
 a tested stone,
 a costly cornerstone, ††
 a firm foundation—
 whoever trusts will not flee in haste. ‡
¹⁷ But I will make justice the measuring line
 and righteousness the plumb line.
 Hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
 and water will overflow the hiding place.
¹⁸ Your covenant with death is annulled,
 and your pact with *Sheol* will not stand.
 An overflowing scourge will pass through
 and you will be its trampling place.
¹⁹ As often as it passes through, it will seize you—
 morning by morning, by day and by night passing
 through.
 It will be sheer terror
 to understand the message."
²⁰ For too short is the bed to stretch on,
 too narrow the blanket to wrap up in.
²¹ For *ADONAI* will rise up as at Mount Perazim,
 He will quake with awe as at the valley of Gibeon,
 to do His deed, His strange deed,
 and to work His work, His extraordinary work.
²² So now, stop your scoffing,
 lest your shackles be strengthened!
 For I have heard from *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot*
 of destruction determined upon the whole land.
²³ Give ear and hear my voice!
 Pay attention and hear my words.
²⁴ Does a plowman plow all day to sow the seed?
 Does he continually break open
 and harrow his ground?
²⁵ No! When he has leveled its surface,
 he scatters dill and sows cumin,
 plants wheat in rows,
 places barley, and rye on its border.
²⁶ For his God teaches him judgment,

† cf. Matt. 24:30-31.

†† cf. Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:19-20. ‡ cf. Rom. 9:33; 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:6.

instructing him.

²⁷ For dill is not threshed with a sledge,
nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin.
Rather, dill is beaten out with a staff,
and cumin with a rod.

²⁸ Bread grain is crushed, but not endlessly.
Rumbling cart wheels and horses over it
would only crush it to powder.

²⁹ This also comes from *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* :
Wonderful is His counsel, great is His wisdom.

Night Vision of Ariel

29 *Oy*, Ariel †, Ariel! City where David camped.
Year to year again—festivals in a cycle.

² But I will distress Ariel.

There will be lamenting and moaning—
then will she be like Ariel to Me?

³ I will encamp against you all around,
I will set up siege-works against you
and will raise up ramps against you.

⁴ You will be brought low, you will speak from the
ground.

From the dust where you are prostrate your speech
will come.

Your voice will be like a ghost out of the ground,
and your speech will whisper out of the dust.

⁵ Yet the multitude of your foes will become like fine
dust,
and the multitude of the terrifying like chaff that
passes away.

It will happen in an instant, suddenly.

⁶ You will be visited by *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*
with thunder, earthquake, huge noise,
whirlwind and storm-wind, and the flame of a con-
suming fire.

⁷ It will be like a dream, a night vision:
the multitude of all the nations warring against Ariel,
yes, all warring against her,
the ramparts around her and her besiegers.

⁸ It will be like a hungry man dreaming and behold,
he is eating,

but awakes with his hunger unsatisfied,
or like a thirsty man dreaming and behold, he is
drinking,

but awakes faint, his soul thirsting.

So it will be with the multitude of all the nations
warring against Mount Zion.

⁹ Wait, and be astounded!

Blind yourselves, and be blind!

Drunk, but not with wine,

Stagger, but not with strong drink.

¹⁰ For *ADONAI* has poured out on you a spirit of deep
sleep,

and has shut your eyes—the prophets,
and covered your heads—the seers.

¹¹ So this entire vision is for you like the words of a
sealed scroll, which they give to one who knows

books, saying, “Read this, please,” but he says, “I can’t,
because it’s sealed.” ¹² Then the scroll is given to one
who does not know books, saying, “Read this, please,”
but he says, “I don’t know books.”

¹³ So *ADONAI* says,

“Since these people draw near with their mouths
and honor Me with their lips,
yet their hearts are far from Me,
and their fear of Me is a *mitzvah* taught by men. ††

¹⁴ Therefore, behold, once more I will do a marvelous
work among this people—
a marvel and a wonder—
so the wisdom of their wise will perish,
and the discernment of their discerning will be con-
cealed.”

¹⁵ *Oy*, those who go to great depths
to hide their plans from *ADONAI*!

Their works are in the dark.

They say, “Who sees us?”

Who knows us?”

¹⁶ Your perversity!

Should the potter be regarded the same as the clay?
Should the thing made say to its maker,
“You did not make me”?

Or the thing formed say of its former,

“You have no understanding”? ‡

¹⁷ Will it not be just a very little while
before Lebanon turns into a garden,
and a garden will seem like a forest?

¹⁸ In that day the deaf will hear words of a book,
and out of gloom and darkness
the eyes of the blind will see.

¹⁹ The meek will add to their joy in *ADONAI*,
and the needy of humanity will rejoice in the Holy
One of Israel.

²⁰ For the ruthless will come to an end
and the scorner will be finished,
and all watching to do evil cut off.

²¹ Those who make a man out to be guilty with a
word,

and trap him who reproves at the gate,
and deny justice with meaninglessness.

²² Therefore, thus says *ADONAI*, Redeemer of Abra-
ham, concerning the house of Jacob:

“Jacob will no longer be ashamed,
no longer will his face grow pale;

²³ for when he sees his children,
the work of My hands in his midst,
they will sanctify My Name;

they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob,
and stand in awe of the God of Israel.

²⁴ “Those who go astray in spirit will come to under-
standing,
and those who murmur will learn instruction.”

† Meaning Lion of God

†† cf. Matt. 15:8-9; Mark 7:6-7. ‡ cf. Rom. 9:20.

No Help in Egypt

30 “*Oy*, the rebellious children”
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—
“Who carry out a plan, but not Mine,
and make an alliance, but not of My *Ruach*,
so they may add sin to sin,
² who go down to Egypt,
but did not consult Me,
to take refuge in Pharaoh’s stronghold,
to seek shelter in Egypt’s shadow.
³ Therefore Pharaoh’s stronghold will become your
shame,
and the shelter in Egypt’s shadow will become your
disgrace.
⁴ For though their princes are at Zoan
and their ambassadors reach Hanes,
⁵ they will all be ashamed of a people
who cannot profit them.
They are neither help nor profit,
but shame and disgrace.”
⁶ The burden concerning the beasts of the Negev †:
Through a land of trouble and anguish,
in which are lioness and lion,
viper and flying serpent,
they are carrying their riches on the backs of young
donkeys,
their treasures on camel humps,
to a people who cannot profit them.
⁷ Egypt’s help is futile and pointless.
Therefore I have called her
“Rahab who just sits.”

Witness against False Prophets

⁸ Now go, write it on a tablet for them
and inscribe it in a scroll,
so that it may be as a witness
for the last day, forever.
⁹ For this is a rebellious people, lying children,
children unwilling to obey the *Torah* of *ADONAI*.
¹⁰ They say to the seers,
“Do not see,”
and to the prophets,
“Do not prophesy to us what is right.
Speak to us smooth words.
Prophecy illusions.
¹¹ Get out of the way!
Turn away from the path!
Let’s hear no more about
the Holy One of Israel.”
¹² Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel:
“Because you despise this word,
and trust in oppression
and rely on perversity,
¹³ therefore this sin will be to you
like a crack bulging in a high wall, about to fall—

its collapse comes suddenly,
in an instant!
¹⁴ Its collapse is like smashing a clay jar,
so ruthlessly shattered
that a shard will not be found among the pieces
to take fire from the hearth
or scoop water from the cistern.”

Longing to Be Gracious

¹⁵ For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, the Holy One of Is-
rael:
“By repentance and rest you are saved,
in quietness and trust is your strength—
but you were not willing.”
¹⁶ But you said, “No, we will flee on horses!”
Therefore you will flee.
And, “We will ride on swift horses!”
Therefore your pursuers will be swift.
¹⁷ A thousand will flee at the threat of one,
at the threat of five you will flee,
until you are left
like a flag on the top of a mountain,
and like a banner on a hill.
¹⁸ Therefore *ADONAI* is longing to be gracious to you.
Thus He will be exalted, so He may have mercy on
you.
For *ADONAI* is a God of justice.
Blessed are all who wait for Him.
¹⁹ For the people of Zion who are dwelling in
Jerusalem will weep no more. He will surely be gra-
cious to you at the sound of your cry. When He hears
you, He will answer. ²⁰ Though *ADONAI* gives you the
bread of adversity and the water of oppression, your
teachers will no longer be hidden, but your eyes will
see your teachers. ²¹ Your ears will hear a word behind
you saying:
“This is the way, walk in it.
When you turn to the right, or when you turn to the
left.”
²² You will defile your graven images overlaid with sil-
ver, and your metal images covered with gold. You will
throw them away like a menstrual cloth. You will say,
“Be gone!”
²³ Then He will give you rain for your seed, which you
will sow in the ground, and bread, the produce of the
ground, will be rich and plentiful. In that day your cat-
tle will feed in wide-open pasture. ²⁴ The oxen and the
young donkeys that till the ground will eat seasoned
fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and
pitchfork.
²⁵ There will be, on every high mountain and on every
lofty hill,
streams running with water—
on a day of the great slaughter,
when the towers fall.
²⁶ Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light
of the sun,
and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter—

† Or the South

like the light of seven days—
in the day *ADONAI* binds up the brokenness of His
people,

and heals the wounds He inflicted.

²⁷ Look, *ADONAI* 's Name comes from afar,
burning with His anger, in thick rising smoke,
His lips full of indignation,

His tongue like a consuming fire,

²⁸ His *Ruach* like an overflowing torrent
rising up to the neck,
to sift the nations with the sieve of the worthless,
to put in the jaws of the peoples
a bridle that leads away.

²⁹ You will have songs
as in the night when you keep a holy festival,
and gladness of heart

like one walking with the flute
to go to the mountain of *ADONAI* ,
to the Rock of Israel.

Punishing Rod

³⁰ *ADONAI* will make His glorious voice heard,
and reveal His arm descending
with fierce fury in a consuming fire,
in cloudburst, rainstorm, and hailstones.

³¹ For at the voice of *ADONAI* , Assyria will be terri-
fied—

when He strikes with the rod.

³² Every stroke of His punishing rod
that *ADONAI* brings down on him
—with tambourines and harps,
and battles brandishing His arm—
He will fight against them.

³³ For Topheth † has long been ready,
prepared for the king,
its fire pit made deep and wide,
a pyre of fire with plenty of wood.
The breath of *ADONAI* ,
like a torrent of brimstone,
sets it aflame.

Egypt's Horses Will Stumble

31 *Oy* , those going down to Egypt for help.
They are relying on horses,
trusting in chariots since they are many,
and in horsemen since they are very mighty,
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel
nor seek *ADONAI* !

² Yet He is also wise.

He brings disaster, and does not take back His words.
He rises against the house of evildoers,
against help for workers of iniquity.

³ Now Egyptians are men and not God,
and their horses are flesh, not spirit.
When *ADONAI* stretches out His hand,
both he who helps will stumble

and he who is helped will fall,
and both will perish together.

A Lion Protects Zion

⁴ For thus says *ADONAI* to me:
“As a lion or a young lion
growls over its prey,
though a company of shepherds
is called out against him
—their voice does not disturb him,
nor does their noise upset him—
so *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* will come down
to fight on Mount Zion, on its hill.

⁵ Like hovering birds,
so *ADONAI* -*Tzva'ot* will protect Jerusalem.
By protecting, He will deliver.
By passing over, He will save.”

⁶ Return to the One from whom rebellion is so deep,
Bnei-Yisrael .

⁷ For in that day everyone will cast away his idols of
silver and his idols of gold, which you made for your-
selves with your hands of sin.

⁸ “Then Assyria will fall, not by a sword of man,
so a sword not of man will devour him
and he will flee from the sword.

His young men will be put to forced labor.

⁹ His rock will pass away because of fear.
His princes will be afraid of the banner”

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
His fire is in Zion,
and His furnace is in Jerusalem.

Reign in Righteousness

32 Behold, a king will reign in righteousness
and princes will rule in justice.

² Each will be like a refuge from the wind
and a shelter from the storm,
like streams of water in a dry place,
like the shade of a massive rock in a weary land.

³ Then the eyes of those who see will not be closed,
and the ears of those who hear will pay attention.

⁴ The heart of the hasty will understand knowledge,
and the tongue of stammerers will speak fluently,
clearly.

⁵ No longer will a fool be called noble,
or a scoundrel said to be a gentleman.

⁶ For the fool speaks foolishness
and his heart works wickedness,
to practice ungodliness,
and speak error about *ADONAI* ,
to deprive the hungry of food
and withhold drink from the thirsty.

⁷ The scoundrel's methods are evil—
he makes up wicked schemes
to destroy the poor with lies,
even when the plea of the needy is just.

⁸ But the noble devises noble plans,

† *Lit. high place for burning*

and for noble causes he stands.
⁹ Rise up, you women at ease,
 And hear my voice.
 You complacent daughters,
 give ear to my words.
¹⁰ Within a year and a few days
 you will shudder, complacent ones.
 For the grape harvest will fail
 and the gathering will not come.
¹¹ Tremble, you women at ease!
 Shudder, you complacent ones!
 Strip and make yourselves bare,
 and put sackcloth on your waist.
¹² Beat your breasts lamenting for pleasant fields,
 for fruitful vine,
¹³ for the land of my people,
 where thorns and briars come up,
 for all the joyful houses
 of the jubilant city.
¹⁴ For the palace will be abandoned;
 the bustling city will be deserted;
 the citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland
 forever,
 a delight of wild donkeys,
 a pasture for flocks,
¹⁵ until the *Ruach* is poured out on us from on high, †
 and the desert becomes a garden,
 and a garden seems like a forest.
¹⁶ Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
 and righteousness abide in the garden.
¹⁷ The result of righteousness will be *shalom*
 and the effect of righteousness will be quietness and
 confidence forever.
¹⁸ My people will live in a peaceful place,
 in secure dwellings,
 quiet resting places.
¹⁹ Then hail will flatten the forest;
 and the city will be utterly laid low.
²⁰ Blessed are you, sowing by all waters,
 letting the feet of the ox and the donkey range free.

Ambassadors of Peace Weep Bitterly

33 *Oy*, you destroyer, never destroyed,
 you traitor, never betrayed!
 When you have stopped destroying,
 you will be destroyed;
 and when you finish betraying,
 they will betray you.
² *ADONAI*, be gracious to us!
 We long for You.
 Be our strength every morning,
 our salvation in time of trouble.
³ From the noise of tumult people will flee;
 When You lift Yourself up, the nations will be scat-
 tered.
⁴ Your spoil is gathered as the caterpillar gathers;
 like a swarm of locusts, they are rushing over it.

⁵ *ADONAI* is exalted, for He dwells on high!
 He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.
⁶ It will be your time of faithfulness,
 a wealth of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge—
 the fear of *ADONAI* is His treasure.
⁷ Behold, heroes cry outside.
 Ambassadors of peace weep bitterly.
⁸ Highways are desolate;
 travel has ceased;
 covenant is broken;
 cities are despised;
 there is no regard for humanity.
⁹ The land mourns and languishes;
 Lebanon is shamed and withers;
 Sharon is like a wilderness;
 Bashan and Carmel are shaken bare.

Our Eternal Judge Arises

¹⁰ "Now I will arise," says *ADONAI*.
 "Now I will be exalted.
 Now I will lift Myself up.
¹¹ You conceive chaff,
 you will give birth to stubble.
 My breath is a fire that will consume you.
¹² Then peoples will be burned as lime,
 like thorns cut down, burned in the fire.
¹³ Hear, you who are afar off, what I have done,
 and you who are near, acknowledge My might."
¹⁴ Sinners in Zion are afraid.
 Trembling has seized the godless:
 "Who among us can live with the consuming fire?
 Who among us can live with everlasting burnings?"
¹⁵ One who walks righteously, and speaks uprightly,
 who refuses unjust gain by extortion,
 who shakes his hands free of bribes,
 who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed,
 and shuts his eyes from looking on evil.
¹⁶ He will dwell on the heights—
 his refuge will be an impregnable cliff.
 His bread will be provided,
 his water assured.
¹⁷ Your eyes will see the King in His beauty.
 They will gaze at a far-distant land.
¹⁸ Your heart will meditate on terror:
 "Where is the counter?
 Where is the weigher?
 Where is the counter of towers?"
¹⁹ You will no longer see the fierce people,
 the people of speech too obscure to comprehend,
 with a stammering tongue no one understands.
²⁰ Look upon Zion, city of our Festivals.
 Your eyes will see Jerusalem as a quiet home,
 a tent that will never be folded,
 Its stakes never pulled up,
 its cords never broken.
²¹ For there the majestic One, *ADONAI*, will be for us—
 a place of rivers and wide canals,
 on which no boat with oars will go,

† cf. Acts 2:33; Rom. 5:5.

nor any mighty ship will travel by.
²² For *ADONAI* is our Judge,
ADONAI is our Lawgiver,
ADONAI is our King—
 He will save us!
²³ Your cords hang slack,
 not holding the mast in place firmly,
 nor spreading out the sail.
 Then abundant spoil will be divided—
 even the lame will carry off plunder.
²⁴ No inhabitant will say, "I am sick."
 The people dwelling there will be forgiven their iniquity.

End-Time Vision

34 Draw near, O nations, to hear,
 and listen, O peoples!
 Let the earth hear, and all it contains,
 the world, and all its offspring!
² For *ADONAI* is enraged at all the nations,
 and furious at all their armies.
 He will utterly destroy them.
 He will give them over to slaughter.
³ So their slain will be thrown out,
 and the stench of their corpses will rise,
 and the hills will be drenched with their blood.
⁴ Then all the host of heaven will dissolve,
 and the skies will be rolled up like a scroll—
 so all their array will wither away,
 like a leaf drooping from a vine,
 like a fig shriveling from a fig tree.

Seek the Scroll and Read

⁵ For My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens.
 See, it will come down upon Edom,
 upon the people I have devoted to judgment.
⁶ The sword of *ADONAI* is filled with blood, gorged
 with fat—
 the blood of lambs and goats,
 the fat of kidneys of rams.
 For *ADONAI* has a sacrifice in Bozrah,
 a great slaughter in the land of Edom.
⁷ Wild oxen will go down with them,
 bull calves with mighty steers.
 So their land will be soaked with blood
 and their dust greasy with fat.
⁸ For *ADONAI* has a day of vengeance,
 a year of recompense for the hostility against Zion.
⁹ Its streams will be turned into pitch,
 its dust into brimstone,
 and its land will become burning tar.
¹⁰ It will not be quenched night or day.
 Its smoke will go up forever.
 From generation to generation it will lay waste—
 forever and ever none will pass through it.
¹¹ But pelican and porcupine will have it,
 owl and raven will dwell in it.

He will stretch a line of chaos over it
 and stones of desolation.
¹² As for its nobles, there are none there to call it a
 kingdom,
 and all its princes will come to nothing.
¹³ Thorns will come up in its palaces,
 nettles and thistles in its fortresses.
 It will be a haunt of jackals,
 an abode for ostriches.
¹⁴ Wildcats will meet with wolves,
 the goat-demon will cry to its kind—
 yes, the night monster will settle there
 and find itself a resting place.
¹⁵ A tree snake will nest and lay eggs there,
 hatch and gather them under its shadow.
 Surely, hawks are gathered there,
 each one with her mate.
¹⁶ Seek from the scroll of *ADONAI*, and read!
 Not one of them will be missing;
 none will lack its mate.
 For His mouth commanded it,
 and His *Ruach* gathered them.
¹⁷ He cast the lot for them,
 and His hand divided it out to them with the line.
 They will possess it forever,
 and dwell in it from generation to generation.

Highway in the Wilderness

35 The wilderness and dry land will be glad.
 The desert will rejoice and blossom like a lily.
² It will blossom profusely,
 will rejoice with joy and singing,
 will be given the glory of Lebanon,
 the splendor of Carmel and Sharon.
 They will see the glory of *ADONAI*,
 the splendor of our God.
³ Strengthen the limp hands,
 make firm the wobbly knees.
⁴ Say to those with anxious heart,
 "Be strong, have no fear!"
 Behold, your God!
 Vengeance is coming!
 God's recompense—it is coming!
 Then He will save you.
⁵ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped. †
⁶ Then the lame will leap like a deer,
 and the tongue of the mute will sing. ††
 For water will burst forth in the desert
 and streams in the wilderness.
⁷ The parched land will become a pool,
 the thirsty ground springs of water.
 In the haunt of jackals, where they rest,
 grass will become reeds and rushes.
⁸ A highway will be there—a roadway.
 It will be called the Way of Holiness.
 The unclean will not travel on it.

† cf. John 9:6-7; Acts 26:18. †† cf. Matt. 9:35-36; Luke 11:14.

It is for the one who walks the way.

Fools will not go astray.

⁹ No lion will be there.

No ravenous beast will go up on it.

They will not be found there.

But the redeemed will walk there.

¹⁰ The ransomed of *ADONAI* will return

and come to Zion with singing,

with everlasting joy upon their heads.

They will obtain gladness and joy,

and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Sennacherib Dares Jerusalem

36 Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah that King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. ² The king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh † from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a massive army. The Rabshakeh stood by the aqueduct of the upper pool in the highway of the washer's field. ³ Then Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder came out to him.

⁴ So the Rabshakeh said to them, "Say now to Hezekiah: 'Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: "What is this confidence you've relied on? ⁵ I say your strategy and strength for war are only words of a lip. Who do you rely on now, so that you have rebelled against me? ⁶ Behold, you rely on this splintered reed as a staff—Egypt! If a man leans on it, it will go into the palm of his hand and pierce it—thus Pharaoh king of Egypt is to all who trust in him.

⁷ "But if you say to me: 'We trust in *ADONAI* our God'—is it not He whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, and then said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You must worship before this altar?'

⁸ "So now, make a bargain with my master, the king of Assyria. I'll give you 2,000 horses—if you could put riders of your own on them. ⁹ So, how can you repulse a single lieutenant—the least of my master's servants? Yes, you're relying on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen.

¹⁰ "Moreover, have I now come up against this land to destroy it without *ADONAI*'s approval? *ADONAI* said to me: 'Go up against this land, and destroy it.'"

¹¹ Then Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to the Rabshakeh: "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it. Don't speak to us in the language of the Jews when the people on the wall are listening."

¹² But the Rabshakeh said: "Has my master sent me only to your master and to you to speak these words? Hasn't he sent me to the men who sit on the wall—who will eat their own waste and drink their own urine with you?"

¹³ Then the Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the language of the Jews and said: "Hear the

† Official title, possibly meaning Chief Cupbearer Chief Adviser

words of the great king, the king of Assyria. ¹⁴ Thus says the king: 'Don't let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you! ¹⁵ Nor let Hezekiah persuade you to trust in *ADONAI* by saying, " *ADONAI* will surely deliver us—this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'"

¹⁶ "Don't listen to Hezekiah! For thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make peace with me and come out to me. Then everyone will eat from his own vine and fig tree, and everyone will drink 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, ' *ADONAI* will deliver us.' Has any one 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, when did they deliver Samaria from my hand? ²⁰ Who among all the gods of these lands have delivered their country out of my hand? So will *ADONAI* deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

²¹ But they were silent, and did not answer him a word, for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him."

²² Then Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph the recorder came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

Hezekiah Tears His Clothes

37 When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the House of *ADONAI*. ² Then he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and the senior *kohanim*, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, son of Amoz.

³ Then they said to him: "Thus says Hezekiah: This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and contempt. For children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength for giving birth. ⁴ Perhaps *ADONAI* your God, will hear the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words which *ADONAI* your God has heard. So offer prayer for the remnant that is left."

⁵ When the officials of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, ⁶ Isaiah said to them: "Thus you will say to your master, 'Thus says *ADONAI*: Do not be afraid of the words you have heard, with which the boys of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. ⁷ Behold, I am putting a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor, and will return to his own country; then I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"

⁸ Then the Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard he had withdrawn from Lachish. ⁹ Now he had heard them say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, saying:

"He has come out to fight against you." When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah saying:
¹⁰ "Thus you will say to King Hezekiah of Judah, saying, 'do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying: "Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria." ¹¹ Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands—utterly destroying them—so will you be delivered? ¹² Have the gods of the nations delivered those my fathers destroyed—Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, or the children of Eden who were in Telassar? ¹³ Where is the king of Hamath, or the king of Arpad, or the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, or Ivvah?"

¹⁴ Then Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it.

Then Hezekiah went up to the House of *ADONAI* and spread it before *ADONAI*. ¹⁵ Hezekiah prayed to *ADONAI* saying: ¹⁶ " *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, God of Israel, who is enthroned upon the *cheruvim*, You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁷ Incline Your ear, *ADONAI*, and hear! Open Your eyes, *ADONAI*, and see! Listen to all the words of Sennacherib, who was sent to mock the living God. ¹⁸ It is true, *ADONAI*, the kings of Assyria have devastated all the countries and their lands, ¹⁹ and have cast their gods into the fire—for they were not gods, but the work of human hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. ²⁰ Now, *ADONAI* our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone are *ADONAI*!"

Answered Prayer and Sennacherib's Demise

²¹ Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent word to Hezekiah saying, "Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: 'Because you prayed to Me about King Sennacherib of Assyria, ²² this is the word that *ADONAI* has spoken about him:

"The virgin Daughter of Zion
 will despise you and mock you.
 The daughter of Jerusalem
 will shake her head at you.

²³ Whom did you taunt and blaspheme?
 Against whom did you raise your voice
 and haughtily lift up your eyes?
 Against the Holy One of Israel!

²⁴ Through your servants,
 you have blasphemed my Lord and said:
 'With my many chariots

I have climbed to the heights of the mountains,
 to the remotest parts of Lebanon!
 I cut down its tall cedars
 and choice cypress trees.

I have gone to its farthest peak,
 its thickest forest.

²⁵ I dug and drank water,
 and with the sole of my feet,
 I dried up all the streams of Egypt."

²⁶ "Have you not heard?
 I did it long ago!

From ancient times I planned it.
 Now I have brought it to pass—
 that you should turn fortified cities
 into heaps of rubble.

²⁷ Their inhabitants are weak handed,
 shattered and ashamed.

They are like the grass of the field
 and green herb,
 like grass on roofs,
 scorched before it is grown up.

²⁸ But I know your sitting down,
 your going out, and your coming in,
 and your raging against Me.

²⁹ Because your raging against Me
 and your arrogance reached My ears,
 I will put My hook in your nose,
 and My bridle in your lips,
 and I will turn you back
 by the way that you came."

³⁰ "So this shall be the sign to you: This year you will eat what grows by itself, in the second year what springs from that. But in the third year, you will sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.

³¹ "The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will take root downward and bear fruit upward. ³² For from Jerusalem a remnant will go out, and survivors from Mount Zion. The zeal of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* shall perform this.

³³ Therefore thus says *ADONAI* concerning the king of Assyria:

"He will not come to the city,
 or shoot an arrow there,
 or come before it with a shield,
 or throw up a siege-ramp against it.

³⁴ By the way that he came, by the same he will return,
 and he will not come into this city"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³⁵ "For I will defend this city to save it,
 for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake."

³⁶ Then the angel of *ADONAI* went out and struck down 185,000 men in the Assyrian camp. When the men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. ³⁷ So King Sennacherib of Assyria withdrew, and returned home, and stayed in Nineveh. ³⁸ It also came to pass, as he was worshiping in the house of his god Nisroch, that his sons Adrammelech and Sarezer struck him down with the sword, and escaped into the land of Ararat. Then his son Esarhaddon became king in his place.

"Put Your House in Order"

38 In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. So Isaiah the prophet son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says *ADONAI*: Put your house in order. For you are dying, and will not live."

² Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed to *ADONAI*. ³ He said: "Please, *ADONAI*, remem-

ber how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart, and have done what is good in Your eyes." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

⁴ Then it came to pass, the word of *ADONAI* came to Isaiah saying: ⁵ "Go, and say to Hezekiah, thus says *ADONAI*, the God of your father David: 'I have heard your prayer and I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add 15 years to your life. ⁶ I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city.'

⁷ "Now this will be the sign to you from *ADONAI*, that *ADONAI* will do this word He has spoken: ⁸ Behold, I will cause the shadow on the stairs, which went down with the sun on the sundial of Ahaz, to turn back ten steps." So the sun's shadow went back ten steps on the sundial on which it had gone down.

⁹ A writing of King Hezekiah of Judah, after his illness, when he recovered from his illness:

¹⁰ I said: "In the prime of my life,
I am to enter the gates of *Sheol*.
I am deprived of the rest of my years."

¹¹ I said: "I will not see *ADONAI*,
ADONAI, in the land of the living.
I will look on humanity no longer
among the inhabitants of the world.

¹² Like a shepherd's tent,
my dwelling is pulled up and carried away from me.
Like a weaver I rolled up my life.
He cuts me off from the loom.

From day until night You make my end.

¹³ I stilled my soul till morning.
Like a lion, He will break all my bones.
From day till night You make my end.

¹⁴ Like a swallow or a crane, I whisper,
I moan like a dove.

My eyes are weary, looking upward.
ADONAI, I am oppressed, be my security!

¹⁵ What should I say?

For He has spoken to me—

He Himself has done it!
I will wander about all my years
because of the bitterness of my soul.

¹⁶ *ADONAI*, by such things men live,
and my spirit has life in them too.
Restore me to health,
and let me live!

¹⁷ Behold, it was for my own *shalom*
that I had great bitterness.

You have loved my soul
out of the Pit of destruction!
For You have flung all my sins
behind Your back.

¹⁸ For *Sheol* cannot thank You,
death cannot praise You.

Those who go down to the Pit
cannot hope for Your faithfulness.

¹⁹ The living, the living—they praise You—
as I do today.

A father makes Your faithfulness
known to his children.

²⁰ *ADONAI* will save me.

So we will play my songs on stringed instruments
all the days of our life in the House of *ADONAI*."

²¹ Now Isaiah had said, "Let them take a cake of figs,
and apply it to the boil, and he will live." ²² Hezekiah
had said, "What is the sign that I will go up to the
House of *ADONAI*?"

Hezekiah Shows Off

39 At that time Merodach-baladan, son of King Baladan of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that he had been sick and had recovered. ² Now Hezekiah was pleased with them, so he showed them his treasure house—the silver and the gold, the spices and the precious oil—and his whole armory, and everything that was found in his treasuries. There was nothing in his house or in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

³ Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say, and from where did they come to you?"

Hezekiah replied, "They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon."

⁴ Then he asked, "What have they seen in your house?"

Hezekiah said, "They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my treasuries that I didn't show them."

⁵ Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah: "Hear the word of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, ⁶ Behold, days are coming when everything in your house, which your fathers have stored up to this day, will be carried to Babylon—nothing will be left," says *ADONAI*. ⁷ "Moreover, some of your descendants—who will issue from you, whom you will father—will be taken away and will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

⁸ Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of *ADONAI* which you have spoken is good." For he thought, "For there will be *shalom* and security in my days."

Comfort, Proclaim Good News

40 "Comfort, comfort My people,"
says your God.

² Speak kindly to the heart of Jerusalem
and proclaim to her
that her warfare has ended,
that her iniquity has been removed.
For she has received from *ADONAI*'s hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out in the wilderness,
"Prepare the way of *ADONAI*,
Make straight in the desert
a highway for our God. †

⁴ "Every valley will be lifted up,

† cf. Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23.

every mountain and hill made low,
 the rough ground will be a plain
 and the rugged terrain smooth.
 5 The glory of *ADONAI* will be revealed,
 and all flesh will see it together."
 For the mouth of *ADONAI* has spoken.
 6 A voice is saying, "Cry out!"
 So I said, "What shall I cry out?"
 "All flesh is grass,
 and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.
 7 The grass withers, the flower fades.
 For the breath of *ADONAI* blows on it.
 Surely the people are grass.
 8 The grass withers, the flower fades.
 But the word of our God stands forever." †
 9 Get yourself up on a high mountain,
 you who bring good news to Zion!
 Lift up your voice with strength,
 you who bring good news to Jerusalem!
 Lift it up! Do not fear!
 Say to the cities of Judah:
 "Behold your God!"
 10 Look, *ADONAI Elohim* comes with might,
 with His arm ruling for Him.
 Behold, His reward is with Him,
 and His recompense before Him. ††
 11 Like a shepherd, He tends His flock. ‡
 He gathers the lambs in His arms
 carries them in his bosom,
 and gently guides nursing ewes.

Who Is like Him?

12 Who has measured the waters in the palm of His
 hand,
 or measured out heaven with a span,
 or calculated the dust of the earth in a measure,
 or weighed the mountains in scales,
 or the hills in a balance?
 13 Who can fathom the *Ruach ADONAI*?
 Or instruct Him as His counselor?
 14 With whom did He consult,
 and who instructed Him?
 Who taught Him in the path of justice
 or taught Him knowledge?
 Who informed Him about
 the way of understanding?
 15 Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
 and count as a speck of dust on the scales.
 Behold, the islands weigh as fine dust.
 16 Lebanon is not enough to burn,
 or its animals enough for a burnt offering.
 17 All the nations are as nothing before Him.
 By Him they are accounted null and void.
 18 To whom then will you liken God?
 To what likeness will you compare Him?
 19 To an idol? A craftsman casts it,
 a goldsmith overlays it with gold

and fashions silver chains for it.
 20 One too poor for such an offering
 chooses wood that will not rot.
 He looks for a skilled craftsman
 to prepare him an idol that will not totter.
 21 Do you not know?
 Have you not heard?
 Has it not been told to you from the beginning?
 Have you not understood from the foundations of
 the earth?

22 He sits above the circle of the earth—
 its inhabitants are like grasshoppers—
 He stretches out the skies like a curtain,
 spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.
 23 He reduces princes to nothing.
 He makes the judges of the earth a confusion.
 24 Scarcely are they planted,
 scarcely are they sown,
 scarcely their stem takes root in the earth,
 when He blows on them and they wither,
 and a storm carries them off as stubble.
 25 "To whom then will you liken Me?
 Or who is My equal?" says the Holy One.
 26 Lift up your eyes on high, and see!
 Who created these?

The One who brings out their host by number,
 the One who calls them all by name.
 Because of His great strength and vast power,
 not one is missing.
 27 Why do you say, O Jacob,
 and assert, O Israel,
 "My way is hidden from *ADONAI*,
 and the justice due me escapes
 the notice of my God"?"
 28 Have you not known?
 Have you not heard?
ADONAI is the eternal God,
 the Creator of the ends of the earth.
 He does not grow tired or weary.
 His understanding is unsearchable.
 29 He gives strength to the weary,
 and to one without vigor He adds might.
 30 Even youths grow tired and weary,
 and young men stumble and fall,
 31 but they who wait for *ADONAI*
 will renew their strength.
 They will soar up with wings as eagles.
 They will run, and not grow weary.
 They will walk, and not be faint.

Coming Conqueror

41 "Be silent before Me, O islands!
 Let peoples renew their strength.
 Let them draw near, then let them speak.
 Let us come together for judgment.
 2 Who has stirred up one from the east?
 He calls justice to His feet.
 He gives nations over to him and subdues kings.

† cf. 1 Pet. 1:22-25. †† cf. Rev. 22:12. ‡ cf. John 10:11.

He makes them like dust with his sword, as driven stubble with his bow.

³ He pursues them, passing on safely, by a path his feet had not traveled.

⁴ Who has performed and done it? Calling forth the generations from the beginning, I, *ADONAI*, am the first and the last, I am He!"

⁵ The coastlands have seen and fear. The ends of the earth tremble. They draw near and come.

⁶ Each one helps his neighbor and says to his brother, "Be strong!"

⁷ The craftsman encourages the smith, who smooths with the hammer, who strikes with the anvil, saying of the soldering, "It's good!" as he fastens it with nails so that it will not totter.

My Servant, My Friend

⁸ "But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen,

descendant of Abraham, My friend—
⁹ I took hold of you from the ends of the earth, and called from its uttermost parts, and said to you, 'You are My servant—I have chosen you, not rejected you. †

¹⁰ Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Surely I will help you.

I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

¹¹ Behold, all who were angry at you will be ashamed and disgraced. Those who quarrel with you will be as nothing and perish.

¹² Though you will look for those who contended with you, you will not find them.

Those who warred against you will be as nothing at all.

¹³ For I am *ADONAI* your God who upholds your right hand, who says to you,

'Fear not, I will help you.'

¹⁴ Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I will help you."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵ "Look, I will make you a threshing sledge, new, with sharp, double-edged spikes. You will thresh the mountains and grind them up, and will make the hills like chaff.

¹⁶ You will winnow them, and a wind will carry them away, a storm-wind will scatter them.

But you will rejoice in *ADONAI*.

You will glory in the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁷ "The poor and needy ask for water, but there is none,

Their tongues are parched with thirst. I, *ADONAI*, will answer them, I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

¹⁸ I will open rivers on the bare hills and springs in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land into fountains of water.

¹⁹ I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, the myrtle and the olive tree.

I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine together with the box tree—

²⁰ so they may see and know, consider and understand together, that the hand of *ADONAI* has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it."

Challenge to Idolaters

²¹ "Present your case," says *ADONAI*. "Bring forth your reasons," says the King of Jacob.

²² Let them bring forth and tell us what will happen. The former things, what were they? Tell us, that we may consider them and know their outcome.

Or announce to us things to come. ²³ Declare the things coming afterward, so we may know that you are gods! Indeed, do good or do evil, so we may all see and be awestruck.

²⁴ Behold, you are nothing, and your work is null. Whoever chooses you is loathsome.

²⁵ "I have stirred up one from the north, and he has come.

From the rising of the sun, He will call upon My Name. He will trample rulers as on mortar, like a potter treading clay."

²⁶ Who told this from the beginning, so that we may know?

Or from former times, so we may say, "He is right"?

In fact, no one foretold it,

In fact, no one announced it.

In fact, no one heard Your words.

²⁷ First it was to Zion:

"Behold, here they are!"

And to Jerusalem:

"I will give a herald of good news." ††

²⁸ But when I look, there is no one. There is no counselor among them.

† cf. Rom. 11:1-2.

†† cf. Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:14-15.

When I ask them, they have no response.
 29 Indeed, they are all a delusion.
 Their works are null.
 Their molten images are wind and waste.

First Servant Song: Justice

42 Behold My servant †, whom I uphold.
 My Chosen One, †† in whom My soul delights.
 I have put My *Ruach* on Him, ‡
 He will bring justice to the nations.
 2 He will not cry out or raise His voice,
 or make His voice heard in the street.
 3 A bruised reed He will not break.
 A smoldering wick He will not snuff out.
 He will faithfully bring forth justice. ‡†
 4 He will not be disheartened or crushed
 until He establishes justice on earth.
 The islands will wait for His *Torah*.
 5 Thus says God, *ADONAI*,
 who created the heavens and stretched them out,
 who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
 who gives breath to the people on it,
 and *Ruach* to those who walk in it ‡—
 6 “I, *ADONAI*, called You in righteousness,
 I will take hold of Your hand,
 I will keep You and give You
 as a covenant to the people, ‡††
 as a light to the nations, ‡†††
 7 by opening blind eyes,
 bringing prisoners out of the dungeon,
 and those sitting in darkness out of the prison
 house. §
 8 “I am *ADONAI*—that is My Name!
 My glory I will not give to another,
 Or My praise to graven images.
 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass,
 Now I declare new things.
 Before they spring forth
 I announce them to you.”
 10 Sing to *ADONAI* a new song,
 His praise from the end of the earth,
 you who go down to the sea with all its fullness,
 islands and their inhabitants.
 11 Let the desert and its cities exult—
 the villages that Kedar inhabits.
 Let the dwellers of Sela sing for joy.
 Let them shout for joy
 from the top of the mountains.
 12 Let them give glory to *ADONAI*
 and declare His praise in the islands.
 13 *ADONAI* goes out as a mighty one.
 He stirs up His zeal like a man of war.
 He will shout, yes, raise a war cry!
 He will prevail over His enemies.
 14 “I have held My peace a long time,

I have been still and restrained Myself.
 Now like a woman in labor I groan,
 gasping and panting at once.
 15 I will lay waste mountains and hills,
 and dry up all their vegetation.
 I will turn the rivers into islands,
 and dry up the pools.
 16 I will bring the blind by a way they do not know.
 in paths they have not known, I will guide them.
 I will turn darkness before them to light
 and the rough places smooth.
 These are the things I will do,
 and I will not forsake them.
 17 They will be turned back, utterly put to shame—
 those trusting in idols,
 who say to molten images, ‘You are our gods.’
 18 Hear, you deaf!
 Look, you blind, so you may see.
 19 Who is blind, but My Servant?
 Or deaf as My Messenger that I send?
 Who is so blind as the one in covenant with Me,
 blind as *ADONAI*’s Servant?
 20 You have seen many things,
 but you do not pay attention.
 Though ears are open, no one hears.” §†
 21 *ADONAI* was pleased,
 for the sake of His righteousness,
 to make *Torah* great and glorious.
 22 But this is a people robbed and looted.
 all of them trapped in holes,
 hidden away in prisons.
 They have become a prey
 with no one to deliver them,
 and plunder,
 with none to say, “Give them back!”
 23 Who among you will give ear to this?
 Who will listen and heed hereafter?
 24 Who gave Jacob to the looter,
 Israel to the plunderers?
 Was it not *ADONAI*?
 Have we not sinned against Him?
 In His ways they were unwilling to walk
 and His *Torah* they did not obey.
 25 So He poured out on him the fury of His anger,
 and the fierceness of battle.
 It blazed all around him, yet he did not understand it.
 It burned him, yet he did not take it to heart.

Love for Israel

43 But now, thus says *ADONAI*—
 the One who created you, O Jacob,
 the One who formed you, O Israel:
 “Fear not, for I have redeemed you,
 I have called you by name, you are Mine.
 2 When you pass through the waters,
 I will be with you,
 or through the rivers,

† cf. Matt. 20:28. †† cf. Luke 9:35; 1 Pet. 2:4. ‡ cf. Matt. 3:16.
 ‡† cf. Rev. 19:11. ‡†† cf. Gal. 5:25. ‡††† cf. Heb. 9:15. ‡†††† cf.
 Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; 26:23. § cf. Luke 4:18-21.

§† cf. Matt. 13:13-14.

they will not overflow you.
 When you walk through the fire,
 you will not be burned,
 nor will the flame burn you.
³ For I am *ADONAI* your God,
 the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
 I have given Egypt as your ransom,
 Ethiopia and Seba in your place.
⁴ Since you are precious in My eyes, honored,
 because I love you,
 I will give a man in exchange for you,
 and other peoples for your life.
⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you.
 I will bring your offspring from the east
 and gather you from the west.
⁶ I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'
 and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'
 Bring My sons from far
 and My daughters from the ends of the earth.
⁷ Everyone who is called by My Name,
 whom I created for My glory,
 I formed him—yes, I made him!"

You Are My Witnesses

⁸ Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes,
 who are deaf, yet have ears.
⁹ All the nations are gathered together,
 and the peoples are assembled.
 Who among them can declare this,
 and proclaim to us former things?
 Let them present their witnesses
 so they may be justified,
 or let them hear and say, "It's true."
¹⁰ "You are My witnesses"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "and My Servant whom I have chosen,
 so that you may know and believe Me,
 and understand that I am He.
 Before Me no God was formed,
 and there will be none after Me.
¹¹ "I, I am *ADONAI* —
 and there is no savior beside Me. †
¹² I alone declared, saved and proclaimed,
 and not some foreign god among you.
 So you are My witnesses"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "and I am God.
¹³ From eternity, I am He.
 None can deliver from My hand.
 I act, and who can reverse it?"
¹⁴ Thus says *ADONAI* ,
 your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
 "For your sake I will send to Babylon
 and bring down the fleeing Chaldeans, all of them,
 in the ships in which they exult.
¹⁵ I am *ADONAI* , your Holy One,
 the Creator of Israel, your King."

† cf. Acts 5:31; 13:23; 1 Tim. 2:3; 4:10.

¹⁶ Thus says *ADONAI* ,
 who makes a way in the sea
 and a path in the mighty waters.
¹⁷ who drew out chariots and horses,
 the army and the warrior
 (they will lie down together, and not rise again;
 they are extinguished—quenched like a wick):
¹⁸ "Do not remember former things,
 nor consider things of the past.
¹⁹ Here I am, doing a new thing;
 Now it is springing up—
 do you not know about it?
 I will surely make a way in the desert,
 rivers in the wasteland.
²⁰ The field animals honor Me
 —the jackals and the ostriches—
 because I give waters in the desert,
 rivers in the wilderness,
 to give drink to My chosen people,
²¹ the people I formed for Myself,
 so they might declare My praise.
²² Yet you have not called on Me, Jacob,
 for you have been weary of Me, Israel.
²³ You have not brought Me sheep for your burnt of-
 ferings;
 nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices.
 I did not compel you to serve offerings
 nor wearied you with incense.
²⁴ You have not spent money buying Me aromatic
 cane,
 nor have you satisfied Me with the fat of your sacri-
 fices.
 Rather you burdened Me with your sins,
 wearied Me with your iniquities.
²⁵ I, I am the One who blots out
 your transgressions for My own sake,
 and will not remember your sins.
²⁶ Remind me, when we argue our case together—
 state your case, so you may be proved right.
²⁷ Your first father sinned,
 and your mediators rebelled against Me.
²⁸ So I profaned the Sanctuary officials,
 and gave Jacob over to destruction,
 and Israel to scorn.

No Profit in Casting Idols

44 "But now listen, Jacob My servant,
 Israel, whom I have chosen."
² Thus says *ADONAI* who made you,
 and formed you from the womb,
 who will help you:
 "Do not fear, Jacob My servant,
 Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.
³ For I will pour water on the thirsty land
 and streams on the dry ground.
 I will pour My Spirit on your offspring,
 and My blessing on your descendants.
⁴ They will spring up among the grass

like willows by flowing streams.

⁵ This one will say, 'I am *ADONAI* 's.'
That one will be called by the name Jacob.
Another will write on his hand, '*ADONAI* 's'
and will take the name Israel."

First and Last

⁶ Thus says *ADONAI*,
Israel's King and his Redeemer, *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* :
"I am the first, and the last,
and there is no God beside Me. †
⁷ Who is like Me?
Let him proclaim and announce it!
Let him arrange it in order for Me—
as I established the ancient nation.
Let them declare to them
what is coming and future events.
⁸ Do not dread or be afraid.
Have I not told you and declared it long ago?
So you are My witnesses!
Is there any God beside Me?
Is there any other Rock?
I know of none.

Folly of Idols

⁹ "Those who fashion idols are empty.
Their precious things do not profit.
Their witnesses do not see or know,
so they will be put to shame.
¹⁰ Who fashions a god or casts an idol
for no profit?
¹¹ Behold, all his friends will be ashamed,
for the craftsmen are only human.
Let them all assemble.
Let them stand up.
Let them dread.
Let them be put to shame together.
¹² The blacksmith takes a tool
and works with it over the coals,
fashioning it with hammers
and working it with his strong arm.
Yet when he is hungry, his strength fails.
When he drinks no water, he gets tired.
¹³ A carpenter stretches out a line;
he marks it with a pencil;
he shapes it with planes;
he marks it with a compass;
he shapes it like the figure of a man
—like the beauty of a man—
so that it may sit in a shrine.
¹⁴ He chops down cedars for himself,
or he takes a cypress or an oak.
He lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest.
He plants a pine and rain nourishes it.
¹⁵ Then it is something for a man to burn.
so he takes one of them and warms himself.

He also makes a fire to bake bread.
He also makes a god and worships it.
He makes an idol and bows before it.
¹⁶ He burns half of it in the fire.
With this half, he eats meat.
He roasts a roast and is satisfied.
He also warms himself and says,
'Ah! I am warm, I have seen the fire.'
¹⁷ Yet with the rest he makes a god, his carved image.
He falls down before it and worships.
He even prays to it and says,
'Deliver me, for you are my god!'
¹⁸ "They do not know or understand!
For He smeared over their eyes, so they cannot see,
and their hearts, so they cannot understand.
¹⁹ No one reflects in his heart,
with no knowledge or discernment
to say, "I burned half of it in the fire
and I also baked bread on its coals.
I roasted meat and ate—
and then I make the rest of it an abomination?
Should I bow before a block of wood?"
²⁰ He is feeding on ashes.
A deceived heart has led him astray,
so he cannot deliver his soul, nor say,
'Isn't what is in my right hand a fraud?'
²¹ "Remember these things, Jacob,
and Israel, for you are My servant.
I formed you, you are My servant.
Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me!
²² I have blotted out your transgressions
like a thick cloud and your sins like a mist.
Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."
²³ Sing, O heavens, for *ADONAI* has done it!
Shout, depths of the earth!
Break forth into singing, mountains,
forest, and every tree in it!
For *ADONAI* has redeemed Jacob
and will be glorified through Israel.
²⁴ Thus says *ADONAI*,
your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb:
"I am *ADONAI*, Maker of all things,
stretching out the heavens alone,
spreading the earth abroad by Myself,
²⁵ causing the omens of boasters to fail,
making fools of diviners,
turning wise men backward,
and making their knowledge foolish,
²⁶ while confirming the word of His servant,
fulfilling the counsel of His messengers,
saying of Jerusalem, 'She will be lived in,'
and of the cities of Judah, 'They will be built,
and I will raise up their ruins,'
²⁷ while saying to the deep, 'Be dry,
I will dry up your rivers,'
²⁸ while saying of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd,
and he shall fulfill all My purpose,'
while saying to Jerusalem, 'You will be built'

† cf. Rev. 1:8, 17; 22:13.

and to the Temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.'

Cyrus the Anointed

45 Thus says *ADONAI* to His anointed, Cyrus,
 whose right hand I have grasped,
 to subdue nations before him,
 to loose the belts of kings,
 to open doors before him
 so that gates may not be shut.
² I will go before you
 and make crooked places straight.
 I will shatter bronze doors
 and cut through iron bars.
³ I will give you treasures of darkness
 and hidden riches of secret places,
 so you may know that I am *ADONAI*,
 the God of Israel, who calls you by your name.
⁴ For the sake of Jacob My servant,
 and Israel My chosen one,
 I have also called you by name,
 I have given you a title of honor,
 though you have not known Me.
⁵ I am *ADONAI*—there is no other.
 Besides Me there is no God.
 I will strengthen you,
 though you have not known Me,
⁶ so they may know,
 from the rising to the setting of the sun,
 that there is no one besides Me.
 I am *ADONAI*—there is no other.
⁷ I form light and create darkness.
 I make *shalom* and create calamity.
 I, *ADONAI*, do all these things.
⁸ "Rain down, O heavens, from above,
 and let the clouds pour down justice.
 Let the earth open up,
 let salvation sprout,
 and righteousness spring up with it.
 I, *ADONAI*, have created it."
⁹ *Oy*, to one who quarrels with his Maker,
 like a pot among the pots of the earth!
 Shall the clay say to the potter,
 "What have you made?"
 Or does your work say,
 "It has no handles"? †
¹⁰ *Oy*, to him who says to his father,
 "What have you begotten?"
 Or to a woman,
 "What have you born?"
¹¹ Thus says *ADONAI*,
 the Holy One of Israel and its Maker,
 "Ask Me about the things to come
 upon My children.
 Then you will commit to Me the work of My hands.
¹² I made the earth and created man on it.
 My hands stretched out the heavens
 and I commanded all their host.

† cf. Rom. 9:20.

¹³ "I stirred Cyrus up in righteousness
 and I will level all his roads.
 He will build My city
 and set My exiles free,
 with no price or bribe,"
 says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*.
¹⁴ Thus says *ADONAI*:
 "Egypt's toil, Ethiopia's merchandise, and the tall
 Sabeans
 will come over to you and be yours.
 They will walk behind you in chains.
 They will bow down to you, and pray,
 saying, 'Surely God is with you!'
 There is none else— no other God!"

Mystery of Creation

¹⁵ Truly You are a God who hides Himself,
 O God of Israel, Savior!
¹⁶ All of them will be ashamed, disgraced—
 idol-makers go in dishonor together.
¹⁷ Israel has been saved by *ADONAI*
 with an everlasting salvation.
 You will not be put to shame
 or disgraced, for ever and ever.
¹⁸ For thus says *ADONAI*—
 He is God who fashioned the heavens,
 who formed the earth and made it,
 He established it
 and did not create it desolate
 but formed it to be inhabited—
 "I am *ADONAI*—there is no other!
¹⁹ I have not spoken in secret,
 in a place of a land of darkness.
 I did not say to the seed of Jacob,
 'Seek Me in desolation.'
 I, *ADONAI*, speak righteousness,
 declaring uprightly."

No Other God and Savior

²⁰ "Assemble yourselves and come,
 draw near together, fugitives of the nations!
 Those who carry their wooden idols have no knowl-
 edge,
 praying to a god who cannot save.
²¹ Declare and present your case,
 Indeed, let them consult together.
 Who foretold this from ancient time?
 Who has declared it of old?
 Is it not I, *ADONAI*?
 There is no other God beside Me
 —a righteous God and a Savior—
 there is none besides Me! ††
²² Turn to Me, and be saved,
 all the ends of the earth.
 For I am God—there is no other.
²³ By Myself I have sworn—

†† cf. Mark 12:29-34; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6.

the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness,

and is irrevocable:

that to Me every knee will bow,
every tongue will swear. †

²⁴ They will say of Me,

‘Only in *ADONAI* is righteousness and strength.’

All who have raged against Him
will come to Him and be put to shame.

²⁵ In *ADONAI* all the seed of Israel
will be justified and give praise.”

Idols a Weary Burden

46 Bel bows down; Nebo stoops over.
Their idols are for beasts and cattle.

The things you carry are borne
as burdens on weary beasts.

² They stoop, they bow down together,
they cannot save the burden,
but themselves go into captivity.

³ “Listen to Me, house of Jacob,
all the remnant of the house of Israel,
borne by Me from birth,
carried from the womb.

⁴ Even to your old age I will be the same,
until you are gray I will carry you.

I have done it; I will bear you;
I will carry you; I will deliver you.

⁵ To whom will you liken Me,
or make Me equal or compare Me,
that we should be alike?

⁶ They lavish gold from a purse
and weigh out silver on the scales.
They hire a goldsmith so he makes a god.
They bow down. Yes, they worship it.

⁷ They lift it upon a shoulder and carry it.
They set it in its place and there it stands.
It does not budge from its place.

Even if one cry to it, it cannot answer,
nor save anyone from his trouble.”

Purpose for Cyrus

⁸ “Remember this, and be assured.

Recall it to mind, you transgressors.

⁹ Remember the former things of old:
For I am God—there is no other.

I am God, and there is none like Me—

¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning,
from ancient time, what is yet to come,
saying, ‘My purpose will stand,
and I will accomplish all that I please.’

¹¹ From the east I am calling a bird of prey,
a man for My purpose from a far country.

Truly I have spoken; I will bring it to pass;
I have planned it; surely I will do it.

¹² Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted,

who are far from righteousness:

¹³ I bring My justice near, it is not far off.

So My salvation will not delay.

I put salvation in Zion,

My glory in Israel.”

Catastrophe of Babylon

47 Come down and sit in the dust,
virgin daughter of Babylon.

Sit on the ground without a throne,
daughter of the Chaldeans.

For you will no more be called
tender and delicate.

² Take the millstones and grind flour.

Remove your veil, strip off the skirt,
uncover the leg, cross the rivers.

³ Your nakedness will be uncovered,
and your shame will be exposed.

I will take vengeance,
and will spare no one.

⁴ Our Redeemer, *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* is His Name,
is the Holy One of Israel.

⁵ Sit in silence, go into darkness,
daughter of the Chaldeans.

For you will no more be called
the mistress-queen of kingdoms.

⁶ I was angry with My people.

I profaned My heritage.

I gave them into your hand,
but you showed them no mercy.

You made your yoke very heavy on the aged.

⁷ You said, “Forever,

I will be the eternal mistress-queen!”

You did not lay these things to heart
or remember their end.

⁸ Now then, hear this, voluptuous one,
dwelling securely, saying in your heart,

“I am, and there is no one besides me!

I will not sit as a widow,

or know the loss of children,”

⁹ These two things will come upon you
in a moment, in one day—

loss of children and widowhood—

they will come upon you in full measure
in spite of your many sorceries

and your many spells.

¹⁰ You felt secure in your wickedness,

You said, “No one sees me.”

Your wisdom and your knowledge
led you astray,

so you have said in your heart,

“I am—there is no one else beside me!”

¹¹ But calamity will come upon you.

You won't know how to charm it away.

Disaster will fall on you,

for which you cannot atone.

Catastrophe you cannot foresee

will suddenly come upon you.

† cf. Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:5-11.

12 Stand fast in your enchantments
and your many sorceries,
which you have toiled over since your youth.
Perhaps you will succeed?
Perhaps you will cause terror?
13 You are weary of your consultations.
So many!
So let the astrologers, star-gazers, predicting by new
moons,
stand up and save you from what will come upon
you.
14 Behold, they shall be as stubble.
Fire will consume them.
They cannot deliver themselves
from the power of the flame!
It is not a coal for warming by
or a fire to sit before!
15 So much have they become to you,
with whom you have toiled,
trafficking with you from your youth,
each wandering about his own way.
No one will save you!

Who Foretold These Things?

48 Hear this, house of Jacob,
who are called by the Name of Israel,
who came from the wellspring of Judah,
who swear by the Name of *ADONAI*
and confess the God of Israel—
but not in truth or righteousness.
2 For they call themselves by the holy city,
and lean on the God of Israel,
ADONAI - Tzva'ot is His Name.
3 "I foretold the former things long ago.
They went forth from My mouth,
and I caused them to be heard.
Suddenly I acted, so they came about.
4 For I know that you are obstinate,
and your neck is iron sinew,
and your forehead bronze.
5 So I foretold it to you long ago.
before it came about I made you hear,
lest you should say, 'My idol did them,
my carved image, yes,
my molded image commanded them.'
6 You have heard. See all of it.
So will you not admit it?
I proclaim to you new things from now on—
hidden things that you have not known.
7 They are created now, not long ago.
Before today you had not heard them.
So you will not say, 'Sure, I knew them.'
8 You have not heard; you never knew;
even from long ago your ear has not been open.
For I knew that you are treacherous,
and from birth were called a rebel.
9 For My Name's sake I defer My anger,
for My praise I will restrain it for you—

otherwise I would cut you off.
10 Behold, I have refined you,
though not as silver.
I tested you in the furnace of affliction. †
11 For My own sake, for My own sake, I act.
For how should I be profaned?
I will not give My glory to another.
12 Listen to Me, Jacob,
Israel whom I called:
I am He;
I am the first; I am also the last. ††
13 Surely My hand founded the earth,
My right hand spread out the heavens.
When I call to them, they stand together.
14 Assemble, all of you, and listen!
Who among them foretold these things?
ADONAI loves him.
He will do His will against Babylon—
His arm against the Chaldeans.
15 I, I have spoken, yes I called him.
I will bring him, so his ways will succeed.
16 Draw near to Me, hear this:
Since the beginning, I have not spoken in secret.
From the time it existed, I was there.
So now *ADONAI Elohim* has sent Me,
and His *Ruach*." ‡
17 Thus says *ADONAI*, your Redeemer,
the Holy One of Israel:
"I am *ADONAI* your God,
who teaches you to profit,
who leads you in the way you should go.
18 If only you had listened to My commandments!
Then your peace would be like a river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.
19 Your seed would have been like sand,
and your offspring like its grains.
Their name would never be cut off
or destroyed from before Me.
20 Get out of Babylon,
flee from Chaldea!
With a shout of joy,
proclaim this,
send it out to the end of the earth, say:
'*ADONAI* has redeemed His servant Jacob!
21 They did not thirst when He led them through the
deserts.
He caused the water to flow out of the rock for them.
He split the rock also,
and the waters gushed out."
22 "There is no *shalom*," says *ADONAI*,
"for the wicked."

Second Servant Song: Light of the Nations

49 Listen, to Me, islands!
Pay attention, peoples far away.
ADONAI called Me from the womb,

† cf. 1 Pet. 1:7-9. †† cf. Rev. 1:17-18; 22:12-18. ‡ cf. John 1:1-5.

from My mother's belly He named Me.
 2 He made My mouth like a sharp sword.
 In the shadow of His hand He hid Me.
 He made Me a polished arrow,
 He has hidden Me in His quiver.
 3 He said to Me, "You are My servant,
 Israel, in whom I will be glorified."
 4 But I said, "I have labored in vain,
 I have spent my strength for nothing and futility.
 Yet surely the justice due to me is with *ADONAI*,
 and my reward with My God."
 5 So now says *ADONAI*,
 who formed Me from the womb to be His servant,
 to bring Jacob back to Him,
 to gather Israel back to Him.
 For I am honored in the eyes of *ADONAI*
 and My God has become my strength.
 6 So He says,
 "It is too trifling a thing that You should be My ser-
 vant
 to raise up the tribes of Jacob
 and restore the preserved ones of Israel.
 So I will give You as a light for the nations,
 that You should be My salvation to the end of the
 earth." †
 7 Thus says *ADONAI*,
 the Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One,
 to the One despised, †† to the One the nation abhors,
 to a servant of rulers:
 "Kings will see and arise,
 princes will also bow down,
 because of *ADONAI* who is faithful,
 the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You."

Compassion on Zion's Children

8 Thus says *ADONAI*:
 "In a time of favor I will answer you.
 In a day of salvation I will help you.
 I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the peo-
 ple,
 to restore the land,
 to make them possess its desolate inheritances,
 9 saying to the prisoners, 'Come out!'
 to those in darkness, 'Be shown!'
 Along the roads they will graze—
 their pasture will be on all the barren heights.
 10 They will not hunger or thirst,
 nor scorching wind or sun strike them,
 for their compassionate One will lead them,
 and will guide them by springs of water.
 11 I will make all My mountains a road,
 and My highways will be raised up.
 12 "Behold, these shall come from afar.
 behold, these from the north and from the west,
 and from the land of Sinim.
 13 Shout for joy, heavens!

Rejoice, earth!
 Break forth into ringing shouts, O mountains!
 For *ADONAI* has comforted His people
 and has compassion on His afflicted."
 14 But Zion said: " *ADONAI* has forsaken me,
ADONAI has forgotten me."
 15 "Can a woman forget her nursing baby
 or lack compassion for a child of her womb?
 Even if these forget,
 I will not forget you.
 16 Behold, I have engraved you
 on the palms of My hands.
 Your walls are continually before Me.
 17 Your children will come quickly.
 Your destroyers and devastators will go away from
 you.
 18 Lift up your eyes around and see:
 all of them will gather and come to you.
 As I live"
 —it is *ADONAI*'s declaration—
 "you will wear them all as jewelry
 and bind them on like a bride.
 19 For your waste and desolate places
 and your destroyed land
 will now be surely too small for the inhabitants,
 and those who swallowed you up will be far away.
 20 The children of your bereavement
 will yet say in your ears,
 'The place is too cramped for me!
 Make room for me to settle in.'
 21 Then you will say in your heart,
 'Who has borne these for me?
 Wasn't I bereaved of my children—
 barren, an exile and wandering?
 So who has raised these?
 Behold, I was left alone—
 these, where were they?'"
 22 Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:
 "Look, I will lift My hand to the nations,
 and raise My banner to the peoples!
 They will bring your sons on their chest,
 and carry your daughters on their shoulders.
 23 Kings will be your guardians,
 their princesses your nurses.
 They will bow down to you with their face to the
 ground,
 and lick the dust of your feet.
 Then you will know that I am *ADONAI* —
 those hoping in Me will not be ashamed."
 24 Can plunder be taken from the mighty,
 or captives of the righteous freed?
 25 For thus says *ADONAI*:
 "Yes, captives of the mighty will be taken
 and the prey of the tyrant will be freed.
 For I will oppose your adversary.
 I will save your children.
 26 I will feed your oppressors their flesh.

† cf. Luke 2:28-32; Acts 13:47; 26:22-23. †† cf. Mark 9:12;
 Luke 17:20-36.

They will be drunk with their blood as with sweet wine.

Then all flesh will know
that I, *ADONAI*, am your Savior
and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

50 Thus says *ADONAI*:
“Where is the divorce certificate,
by which I sent your mother away?
Or to whom of My creditors did I sell you?
See, you were sold for your iniquities,
and for your transgressions your mother was sent
away.

² Why was no one there when I came?
Why was there no one to answer when I called?
Is My hand too short to redeem?
Or have I no power to deliver?
Behold, I dry up the sea at My rebuke,
I make rivers a wilderness—
their fish stink for lack of water
and die of thirst.

³ I clothe the heavens with blackness
and make sackcloth their covering.”

Third Servant Song: Face like Flint

⁴ *ADONAI Elohim* has given Me the tongue of the
learned, †
that I may know how to sustain the weary with a
word.

He awakens Me morning by morning.
He awakens My ear to give heed as a disciple.

⁵ *ADONAI Elohim* has opened My ear,
and I was not rebellious,
nor did I turn back.

⁶ I gave My back to those who strike,
and My cheeks to those pulling out My beard;
I did not hide My face
from humiliation and spitting. ††

⁷ For *ADONAI Elohim* will help Me.
Therefore I have not been disgraced.
Therefore I set My face like flint,
and I know that I will not be ashamed.

⁸ The One who vindicates Me is near.
Who will accuse Me?

Let us stand up to each other.
Who is My adversary?
Let him confront Me.

⁹ See, *ADONAI Elohim* will help Me.
Who is he who would condemn Me?
See, they all wear out like a garment.
A moth will eat them up.

¹⁰ Who among you fears *ADONAI*?
Who hears the voice of His servant?
Who walks in darkness and has no light?
Let him trust in the Name of *ADONAI*
and lean on his God.

¹¹ “Behold, all you who kindle a fire,

encircling yourselves with firebrands.
Walk in the light of your fire
and among the brands you have lit.
This you will have from My hand:
you will lie down in torment.”

Comfort Zion with Justice

51 “Listen to Me, you who pursue justice,
you who seek *ADONAI*.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn,
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

² Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you.
For when I called him, he was but one,
then I blessed him and multiplied him.”

³ For *ADONAI* will comfort Zion.
He will comfort all her waste places.
He will make her wilderness like Eden,
her desert like the garden of *ADONAI*.
Joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and a sound of melody.

⁴ “Pay attention to Me, My people,
give ear to Me, My nation.
For *Torah* will go out from Me,
My justice as a light to the peoples. ‡

⁵ My righteousness is near,
My salvation has gone out,
and My arms will judge the nations.
The coastlands will wait for Me—
for My arm they will wait expectantly.

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 its inhabitants will die like gnats,
but My salvation will be forever,
and My righteousness never wane.

⁷ Listen to Me, you who know justice,
a people with My *Torah* in their heart:
Do not fear the taunt of men,
nor be dismayed at their insults.

⁸ For the moth will eat them like a garment,
and the worm will eat them like wool.
But My righteousness will be forever
and My salvation for all generations.”

⁹ Awake, awake, put on strength,
O arm of *ADONAI*,
awake, as in days of old, the generations of long
ago.

Was it not You who cut Rahab in pieces,
who pierced the dragon?

¹⁰ Was it not You who dried up the sea,
the waters of the great deep,
who made the depths of the sea a path
for the redeemed to pass over?

¹¹ Now the ransomed of *ADONAI* will return,
and come to Zion with singing.

† cf. Matt. 7:28-29; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 4:31-32. †† cf. Matt. 26:57-68; 27:27-31; Mark 14:53-65; 15:16-20; John 19:1-16.

‡ cf. Luke 2:28-32; John 1:1-19; 8:12.

Everlasting joy will be upon their heads.
 They will obtain gladness and joy,
 and sorrow and sighing will flee away.
 12 "I, I am the One who comforts you.
 Who are you that you should fear man,
 who dies, or a son of man,
 who is given up like grass?"
 13 But you forgot *ADONAI* your Maker,
 who stretched out the heavens
 and laid the foundations of the earth.
 Are you in constant dread all day
 because of the fury of the oppressor
 as he makes ready to destroy?
 But where is the fury of the oppressor?
 14 Soon one bowed down will be released.
 He will not die and go to the Pit,
 nor will his bread be lacking.
 15 "For I am *ADONAI* your God,
 who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
ADONAI - Tzva'ot is His Name.
 16 I have put My words in your mouth,
 and covered you with the shadow of My hand—
 I who set the heavens in place,
 who laid the foundations of the earth,
 and say to Zion, "You are My people."
 17 Awake, awake!
 Stand up, Jerusalem!
 From *ADONAI*'s hand you have drunk the cup of His
 fury,
 the chalice of reeling
 that you have drained to the dregs.
 18 There is none to guide her
 among all the sons she has borne,
 nor is there one to take her by the hand
 among all the sons she has raised.
 19 These two things have befallen you
 —who will mourn for you?—
 devastation and destruction, famine and the sword.
 How will I comfort you?
 20 Your sons have fainted.
 They lie at every street corner,
 like an antelope in a net.
 They are full of *ADONAI*'s fury,
 the rebuke of your God.
 21 Therefore hear this, you who are afflicted,
 who are drunk, but not with wine.
 22 Thus says your Lord, *ADONAI* your God who defends
 His people:
 "Behold, I have taken from your hand the cup of
 reeling,
 the bowl of My wrath.
 You will never drink it again.
 23 Then I will put it into the hand of your tormentors,
 who said to you, 'Lie down, so we may walk over you.'
 You have made your back like the ground
 and like a street for passersby."

Ma Navu : The Song of Salvation

52 Awake, awake!
 Clothe yourself in your strength, Zion!
 Clothe yourself in beautiful garments, Jerusalem, the
 holy city,
 for the uncircumcised and the unclean
 will never invade you again.
 2 Shake off the dust and arise!
 Be enthroned, Jerusalem.
 Loose the bonds off your neck,
 captive Daughter of Zion.
 3 For thus says *ADONAI* :
 "You were sold for nothing.
 So you will be redeemed without silver."
 4 For thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
 "At first My people went down to Egypt to reside
 there,
 then the Assyrian oppressed them for nothing.
 5 Now therefore, what do I have here?"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "My people are taken away for nothing?
 Its rulers wail,"
 —it is *ADONAI*'s declaration—
 "and My Name is continually blasphemed all day
 long. †
 6 Therefore My people will know My Name.
 Therefore in that day,
 I am the One who will be saying, ' *Hineni!* "'
 7 How beautiful on the mountains are
 the feet of him who brings good news,
 who announces *shalom* ,
 who brings good news of happiness, ††
 who announces salvation,
 who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"
 8 The voice of your watchmen—they will lift up their
 voices.
 Together they are shouting for joy!
 For they will see eye to eye
 when *ADONAI* returns to Zion.
 9 Break forth in joy, sing together,
 you ruins of Jerusalem,
 for *ADONAI* has comforted His people.
 He has redeemed Jerusalem.
 10 *ADONAI* has bared His holy arm
 before the eyes of all the nations.
 All the ends of the earth will see
 the salvation of our God. ‡
 11 Leave, leave! Get out of there!
 Touch no unclean thing.
 Go out of her midst. Purify yourselves,
 you who carry the vessels of *ADONAI* .
 12 For you will not go out in haste,
 nor will you go in flight,
 for *ADONAI* will go before you,
 and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

† cf. Rom. 2:24. †† cf. Rom. 10:15. ‡ cf. Luke 2:28-32; 3:4-6.

Fourth Servant Song: The Lamb

¹³ "Behold, My servant will prosper,
He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. †
¹⁴ Just as many were appalled at You—
His appearance was disfigured more than any man,
His form more than the sons of men.
¹⁵ So He will sprinkle many nations.
Kings will shut their mouths because of Him,
for what had not been told them they will see,
and what they had not heard they will perceive."

Isaiah 53

53 Who has believed our report? ††
To whom is the arm of *ADONAI* revealed?
² For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,
like a root out of dry ground.
He had no form or majesty that we should look at
Him,
nor beauty that we should desire Him.
³ He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief,
One from whom people hide their faces.
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. †
⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs ††
and carried our pains.
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
struck by God, and afflicted.
⁵ But He was pierced ††
because of our transgressions,
crushed because of our iniquities.
The chastisement for our *shalom* was upon Him,
and by His stripes we are healed.
⁶ We all like sheep have gone astray.
Each of us turned to his own way.
So *ADONAI* has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.
⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted
yet He did not open His mouth.
Like a lamb led to the slaughter, †††
like a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so He did not open His mouth. †††
⁸ Because of oppression and judgment He was taken
away.
As for His generation, who considered?
For He was cut off from the land of the living,
for the transgression of my people—
the stroke was theirs.
⁹ His grave was given with the wicked,
and by a rich man in His death, §
though He had done no violence,
nor was there any deceit in His mouth. §†
¹⁰ Yet it pleased *ADONAI* to bruise Him.
He caused Him to suffer.

† cf. Phil. 2:5-11. †† cf. John 12:38; Rom. 10:16. ‡ cf. Luke 18:31-33; John 1:10-11. †† Or illnesses ††† Or wounded ††† cf. Acts 8:26-39; 1 Pet. 2:21-25. ††† cf. Matt. 26:57-63; 27:12-14; Luke 23:8-11; John 19:1-16. § cf. Matt. 27:57-60. §† cf. 1 Pet. 2:21-25.

If He makes His soul a guilt offering,
He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days,
and the will of *ADONAI* will succeed by His hand.
¹¹ As a result of the anguish of His soul
He will see it and be satisfied by His knowledge.
The Righteous One, My Servant will make many right-
eous
and He will bear their iniquities. §††
¹² Therefore I will give Him a portion with the great,
and He will divide the spoil with the mighty—
because He poured out His soul to death,
and was counted with transgressors. §†
For He bore the sin of many,
and interceded for the transgressors. §††

Your Husband is Your Maker

54 "Sing, barren one, who has not given birth.
burst into singing and shout,
you who have not travailed.
For more are the children of the desolate
than the children of the married one,"
says *ADONAI*.
² "Enlarge the place of your tent,
stretch out your tabernacle curtains.
Do not hold back—
lengthen your cords,
strengthen your stakes.
³ For you will spread out to the right hand and to the
left.
Your offspring will possess the nations
and will resettle the desolate cities.
⁴ Fear not, for you will not be ashamed.
Nor cringe, for you will not be disgraced.
For you will forget the shame of your youth,
and you will remember the reproach of your widow-
hood no more.
⁵ For your Maker is your husband §†
— *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* is His Name—
the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer.
He will be called God of all the earth.
⁶ "For *ADONAI* has called you back
like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit,
like a wife of one's youth that is rejected,"
says your God.
⁷ "For a brief moment I deserted you,
but I will regather you with great compassion.
⁸ In a surge of anger
I hid My face from you a moment,
but with everlasting kindness
I will have compassion on you,"
says *ADONAI* your Redeemer.
⁹ "For this is like the waters of Noah to Me:
for as I swore that the waters of Noah should no
more cover the earth,
so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you,

§†† cf. Rom. 4:18-25; 5:18-19. §† cf. Mark 15:21-32; Luke 22:37. §†† cf. Luke 23:32-34; Rom. 8:31-39; Heb. 7:23-25. §† cf. Rev. 21:1-4.

nor will I rebuke you.
 10 Though the mountains depart and the hills be shaken,
 My love will not depart from you,
 nor will My covenant of peace be shaken,
 says *ADONAI* who has compassion on you.
 11 Afflicted one, storm-tossed, unconsolated,
 behold, I set your stones in antimony,
 lay your foundations with sapphires,
 12 make your pinnacles of rubies,
 your gates of crystal,
 and all your walls of precious stones.
 13 All your children will be taught by *ADONAI*.
 Your children will have great *shalom*.

No Weapon Formed against You

14 "In righteousness you will be established.
 You will be far from oppression
 —for you will not fear—
 and from terror—
 for it will not come near you.
 15 Behold, anyone fiercely attacking is not from Me.
 Whoever stirs up strife with you will fall because of you.
 16 Behold, I created the smith
 who blows the fire of coals
 and produces a weapon for its work,
 and I created the destroyer to ruin.
 17 No weapon formed against you will prosper
 and you will condemn every tongue that rises against you in judgment.
 This is the heritage of *ADONAI*'s servants—
 their vindication is from Me."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Trees of the Field Will Clap Their Hands

55 "Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the water, †
 and 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?
 Your wages for what does not satisfy?
 Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourself in abundance.
 3 Incline your ear and come to Me.
 Listen, so that your soul may live.
 I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
 the trustworthy loyalty to David.
 4 Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
 5 Behold, you will summon a nation you do not know,
 and a nation that did not know you will run to you,
 because of *ADONAI* your God
 and the Holy One of Israel,

for He has glorified you."
 6 Seek *ADONAI* while He may be found,
 call on Him while He is near. ††
 7 Let the wicked forsake his way,
 and the unrighteous one his thoughts,
 let him return to *ADONAI*, so He may have compassion on him,
 and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.
 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
 nor are your ways My ways."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
 9 "For as the heavens are higher than earth,
 so are My ways higher than your ways,
 and My thoughts than your thoughts.
 10 For as the rain and snow
 come down from heaven,
 and do not return there
 without having watered the earth,
 making it bring forth and sprout,
 giving seed to sow and bread to eat,
 11 so My word will be that goes out from My mouth.
 It will not return to Me in vain,
 but will accomplish what I intend,
 and will succeed in what I sent it for.
 12 "Yes, you will go out with joy
 and be led forth with peace.
 The mountains and the hills
 will break forth before you singing,
 and all the trees of the field
 will clap their hands!
 13 Instead of the thorn bush, a cypress will come up,
 and instead of the brier, a myrtle will come up,
 and it will be a memorial to *ADONAI*,
 as an everlasting sign
 that will never be cut off."

Foreigners Keeping *Shabbat*

56 Thus says *ADONAI*:
 "Preserve justice,
 do righteousness.
 For My salvation is about to come,
 and My righteousness to be revealed.
 2 Blessed is the one who does this,
 the son of man who takes hold of it,
 who keeps from profaning *Shabbat*,
 and keeps his hand from doing any evil.
 3 Do not let a son of a foreigner who has joined himself to *ADONAI* ‡ say,
 ' *ADONAI* will surely exclude me from His people.'
 Nor let the eunuch say,
 'Behold, I am a dry tree.'
 4 For thus says *ADONAI*,
 "To the eunuchs who keep My *Shabbatot*,
 who choose what pleases Me,
 and hold fast My covenant:
 5 I will give to them in My House and within My walls
 a memorial and a name ††

† cf. John 4:14; 7:37; Rev. 21:6; 22:17.

†† cf. Matt. 7:7; Luke 11:9. ‡ cf. Eph. 2:12-22.

better than sons and daughters.
 I will give them an everlasting name
 that will not be cut off.
⁶ Also the foreigners who join themselves to *ADONAI*,
 to minister to Him,
 and to love the Name of *ADONAI*,
 and to be His servants—
 all who keep from profaning *Shabbat*,
 and hold fast to My covenant—
⁷ these I will bring to My holy mountain,
 and let them rejoice in My House of Prayer.
 Their burnt offerings and sacrifices
 will be acceptable on My altar.
 For My House will be called
 a House of Prayer for all nations.” †
⁸ *ADONAI Elohim*,
 who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares,
 “I will gather still others to him,
 to those already gathered.”
⁹ All you beasts of the field, come to eat,
 all you beasts in the forest.
¹⁰ His watchmen are all blind.
 All of them know nothing.
 All of them are mute dogs unable to bark,
 dreamers lying down, lovers of slumber,
¹¹ and the dogs are greedy—
 they never have enough.
 They are shepherds with no discernment.
 They have all turned to their own way,
 each to his own gain, one and all.
¹² “Come, let’s get wine, let’s guzzle strong drink.
 Tomorrow will be like today,
 only even better!”

Remove Every Stumbling Block

57 The righteous one perishes,
 but no one takes it to heart.
 Godly men are taken away,
 but no one discerns
 that the righteous man is taken from evil.
² He enters into *shalom*.
 They rest on their beds,
 each who walked in his integrity.
³ But as for you, come here, you children of a sorcer-
 ess,
 offspring of an adulterer and prostitute.
⁴ Whom are you mocking?
 At whom do you open your mouth wide
 and stick out your tongue?
 Are you not children of transgression,
 offspring of deceit?
⁵ You who burn with lust among the oaks
 and under every green tree,
 who sacrifice your children in the wadis
 and under the clefts of the rocks?

⁶ Among the smooth stones of the wadi is your por-
 tion—
 they are your lot.
 To them you have even poured out a drink offering,
 made a grain offering.
 Shall I relent concerning these things?
⁷ Upon a high and lofty mountain you made your
 bed.
 You also went up there to offer sacrifice.
⁸ Behind the door and the doorpost
 you have set up your memorial sign.
 For away from Me, you uncovered,
 went up and made your bed wide,
 and cut covenant with them.
 You loved their bed—
 you looked on their nakedness.
⁹ You journeyed to the king with oil
 and multiplied your perfumes.
 You sent your ambassadors far away,
 and made them go down to *Sheol*.
¹⁰ You wearied of the length of your way,
 yet you did not say, “It is hopeless!”
 You found renewed strength,
 so you did not weaken.
¹¹ “Whom was it you dreaded and feared,
 so that you lied.
 But you did not remember Me
 or take it to heart?
 Have I not kept silent a long time—
 yet you do not fear Me?
¹² I will expose your ‘righteousness’, and your deeds—
 they will not profit you.
¹³ When you cry out,
 will your collection of idols save you?
 The wind will carry them off,
 a breath will take them away.
 But he who takes refuge in Me
 will possess the land,
 and will inherit My holy mountain.”
¹⁴ Then it will be said:
 “Build up, build up, prepare the way,
 remove every stumbling block out of the way of My
 people.”
¹⁵ For thus says the High and Exalted One
 who inhabits eternity, whose Name is Holy:
 “I dwell in a high and holy place,
 yet also with a contrite and humble spirit,
 to revive the spirit of the humble,
 and revive the heart of the contrite.
¹⁶ For I will not contend forever,
 nor will I always be angry,
 for the spirit would grow weak before Me,
 the breath of those whom I made.
¹⁷ Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was an-
 gry;
 I struck him; I hid My face; I was angry—
 but he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.
¹⁸ I have seen his ways, but I will heal him.

† Hebrew *Yad Vashem* † cf. *Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46.*

I will lead him and restore comfort to him
and his mourners.
¹⁹ Creating the praise of lips:
 ‘*Shalom*, *shalom* to him who is far and to him who is
near,’
 says *ADONAI*, ‘and I will heal him.’”
²⁰ But the wicked are like a troubled sea,
for it cannot rest,
and its waters toss up mire and dirt.
²¹ “There is no *shalom*,” says my God
“for the wicked.”

Fasting and *Tzedakah*

58 “Cry aloud, do not hold back!
Raise your voice like a *shofar*.
Tell My people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins.
² Yet they seek Me day to day
and delight to know My ways,
as if they were a nation that did right,
and had not forsaken their God’s decree.
They ask Me for righteous judgments;
they delight in the nearness of God.”
³ “Why have we fasted,
yet You do not see?
Why have we afflicted our souls,
yet You take no notice?”
 “Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own
pleasure,
and exploit all your laborers.
⁴ Behold, you fast for strife and contention
and to strike with a wicked fist.
You should not fast as you do today
to make your voice heard on high.
⁵ Is this the fast I have chosen?
A day for one to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a reed,
and spreading out sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast
and a day acceptable to *ADONAI*?
⁶ “Is not this the fast I choose:
to release the bonds of wickedness,
to untie the cords of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to tear off every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
to bring the homeless poor into your house?
When you see the naked, to cover him,
and not hide yourself from your own flesh and blood?
⁸ Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will spring up speedily.
Your righteousness will go before you,
the glory of *ADONAI* as your rear guard.”
⁹ Then you will call, and *ADONAI* will answer.
You will cry and He will say, “Here I am.”
If you get rid of the yoke among you—
finger-pointing and badmouthing—
¹⁰ If you give yourself to the hungry,

and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then your light will rise in darkness,
and your gloom will be like midday.
¹¹ Then *ADONAI* will guide you continually,
satisfy your soul in drought
and strengthen your bones.
You will be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water whose waters never fail.
¹² Some of you will rebuild the ancient ruins,
will raise up the age-old foundations,
will be called Repairer of the Breach,
Restorer of Streets for Dwelling.
¹³ If you turn back your foot from *Shabbat*,
from doing your pleasure on My holy day,
and call *Shabbat* a delight,
the holy day of *ADONAI* honorable,
If you honor it, not going your own ways,
not seeking your own pleasure,
nor speaking your usual speech,
¹⁴ then You will delight yourself in *ADONAI*,
and I will let you ride over the heights of the earth,
I will feed you with the heritage of your father Jacob.”
For the mouth of *ADONAI* has spoken.

Separation from God

59 Behold, *ADONAI*’s hand is not too short to save,
nor His ear too dull to hear.
² Rather, your iniquities have made a separation
between you and your God.
Your sins have hidden His face from you,
so that He does not hear.
³ For your hands are defiled with blood
and your fingers with iniquity.
Your lips have spoken lies,
your tongue mutters wickedness.
⁴ No one sues justly,
and none pleads a case honestly.
They trust in confusion and speak lies.
They conceive mischief,
and bring forth iniquity.
⁵ They hatch adders’ eggs,
and weave the spider’s web—
whoever eats their eggs dies;
crack one open, a viper breaks out.
⁶ Their webs will not become clothing,
nor will they cover themselves with what they make.
Their deeds are works of iniquity,
an act of violence is in their hands.
⁷ Their feet run after evil.
They rush to shed innocent blood. †
Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity.
Violence and ruin are on their highways.
⁸ They do not know the path of peace,
and there is no justice in their tracks.
They have made their paths crooked.
Whoever walks in them will not experience *shalom*.
⁹ That is why justice is far from us

† cf. Rom. 3:17.

and righteousness does not reach us.
 We hope for light, but behold darkness,
 for brightness, but walk in gloom.
¹⁰ We grope along the wall like the blind.
 We grope like those with no eyes.
 We stumble at noon as at twilight.
 We are like the dead in desolation.
¹¹ All of us growl like bears
 or moan like doves.
 We hope for justice, but there is none;
 for salvation, but it is far from us.
¹² For our transgressions are multiplied before You,
 and our sins testify against us,
 for our transgressions are with us,
 and we know our iniquities:
¹³ transgressing and denying *ADONAI* ,
 turning back from following our God,
 speaking oppression and revolt,
 conceiving and uttering lying words from the heart.
¹⁴ Justice is turned back,
 and righteousness stands far off.
 For truth has stumbled in the street,
 and uprightness cannot enter.
¹⁵ So now truth is missing,
 and whoever shuns evil becomes prey.
 Now when *ADONAI* saw it, it was displeasing in His
 eyes
 that there was no justice.
¹⁶ He saw that there was no one—
 He was astonished that no one was interceding. †
 Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him,
 and His righteousness upheld Him.
¹⁷ He put on righteousness as a breastplate
 and a helmet of salvation on His head.
 He clothed Himself in robes of vengeance
 and wrapped Himself in zeal as a cloak.
¹⁸ According to their deeds,
 so He will repay:
 wrath to His adversaries,
 retribution to His enemies.
 To the islands He will repay as due.
¹⁹ So from the west they will fear the Name of *ADONAI*
 ,
 and His glory from the rising of the sun.
 For He will come like a rushing stream
 driven along by the *Ruach ADONAI* .
²⁰ "But a Redeemer will come to Zion,
 and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .
²¹ "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says
ADONAI : "My *Ruach* who is on you, †† and My words
 that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from
 your mouth, or from the mouth of your offspring, or
 from the mouth of your children's offspring," says
ADONAI , "from now on and forever."

Arise, Shine, O Zion

60 Arise, shine, for your light has come!
 The glory of *ADONAI* has risen on you.
² For behold, darkness covers the earth,
 and deep darkness the peoples.
 But *ADONAI* will arise upon you,
 and His glory will appear over you.
³ Nations will come to your light,
 kings to the brilliance of your rising.
⁴ Lift up your eyes and look all around:
 they all gather—they come to you—
 your sons will come from far away,
 your daughters carried on the hip.
⁵ Then you will see and be radiant,
 and your heart will throb and swell with joy.
 For the abundance of the sea will be turned over to
 you.
 The wealth of nations will come to you.
⁶ A multitude of camels will cover you,
 young camels of Midian and Ephah,
 all those from Sheba will come.
 They will bring gold and frankincense, ‡
 and proclaim the praises of *ADONAI* .
⁷ All Kedar's flocks will be gathered to you.
 Nebaioth's rams will minister to you.
 They will go up with favor on My altar,
 and I will beautify My glorious House.
⁸ Who are these who fly like a cloud,
 like doves to their windows?
⁹ Surely the islands will hope in Me,
 with the ships of Tarshish in the lead,
 to bring your sons from afar,
 their silver and gold with them,
 for the Name of *ADONAI* your God,
 and for the Holy One of Israel,
 because He has glorified you.
¹⁰ Foreigners will build up your walls,
 and their kings will minister to you.
 For in My fury I struck you,
 but in My favor I will show you mercy.
¹¹ Your gates will be open continually.
 They will not be shut day or night,
 so that men may bring to you the wealth of the na-
 tions,
 with their kings led in procession.
¹² For the nation and the kingdom which will not
 serve you will perish—
 those nations will be utterly ruined.
¹³ The glory of Lebanon will come to you
 —cypress, elm and pine together—
 to beautify the place of My Sanctuary.
 I will give to the place of My feet glory.
¹⁴ The sons of those who afflicted you will come bow-
 ing to you,
 and all those who despised you will fall at the soles of
 your feet.

† cf. Heb. 7:25. †† cf. Matt. 12:17-21; Acts 2:16-21.

‡ cf. Matt. 2:1-12.

They will call you the city of *ADONAI*,
 Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
 15 Instead of deserted and hated,
 no one passing through,
 I will make you an eternal pride,
 joy from generation to generation.
 16 You will also suck the milk of nations
 and nurse at the breast of kings.
 Then you will know that I, *ADONAI*, am your Savior
 and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.
 17 "Instead of bronze I will bring gold,
 instead of iron I will bring silver,
 instead of wood, bronze,
 and instead of stones, iron.
 I will make *shalom* your overseer,
 and righteousness your taskmasters.
 18 No more will violence be heard in your land,
 devastation nor destruction within your borders.
 But you will call your walls Salvation
 and your gates Praise.
 19 No more will the sun be your light by day,
 nor the glow of the moon be your light,
 but *ADONAI* will be your everlasting light,
 and your God for your glory. †
 20 No more will your sun set,
 nor will your moon wane,
 for *ADONAI* will be your everlasting light,
 as the days of your mourning end. ††
 21 Then your people will all be righteous.
 They will possess the land forever—
 the branch of His planting,
 the work of My hands—
 that I may be glorified.
 22 The smallest will become a thousand,
 and the least a mighty nation.
 I, *ADONAI*, will hasten it in its time."

Besorah for the Brokenhearted

61 The *Ruach* of *ADONAI Elohim* is on me, ‡
 because *ADONAI* has anointed me
 to proclaim Good News to the poor. ††
 He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives,
 and the opening of the prison to those who are
 bound,
 2 to proclaim the year of *ADONAI*'s favor
 and the day of our God's vengeance,
 to comfort all who mourn
 3 to console those who mourn in Zion,
 to give them beauty for ashes,
 the oil of joy for mourning, ‡‡
 the garment of praise
 for the spirit of heaviness,
 that they might be called oaks of righteousness,
 the planting of *ADONAI*,
 that He may be glorified.

† cf. Rev. 21:22-27; 22:1-5. †† cf. Rev. 21:1-4. ‡ cf. Luke
 4:18-19. ‡† cf. Matt. 11:5; Luke 7:22. ‡‡ cf. Heb. 1:9.

4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins.
 They will restore former desolations.
 They will repair the ruined cities,
 the desolations of many generations.
 5 Strangers will stand and shepherd your flocks,
 children of foreigners will be your plowmen and vine-
 dressers.
 6 But you will be called the *kohanim* of *ADONAI*,
 They will speak of you as the ministers of our God.
 You will eat the wealth of nations
 and boast in their abundance.
 7 Instead of your shame, double portion.
 Instead of disgrace they will sing for joy.
 Therefore in their land they will inherit a double por-
 tion;
 they will have everlasting joy.
 8 For I, *ADONAI*, love justice.
 I hate robbery in the burnt offering.
 In faithfulness I will reward My people
 and cut an eternal covenant with them.
 9 Then their offspring will be known among the na-
 tions,
 their descendants among the peoples.
 All who see them will recognize them,
 for they are the seed that *ADONAI* has blessed.
 10 I will rejoice greatly in *ADONAI*.
 My soul will be joyful in my God.
 For He has clothed me with garments of salvation,
 He has wrapped me in a robe of righteousness—
 like a bridegroom wearing a priestly turban,
 like a bride adorning herself with her jewels.
 11 For as the earth brings forth its sprouts,
 and as a garden causes things sown to spring up,
 so *ADONAI Elohim* will cause justice and praise
 to spring up before all the nations.

Watchmen for Jerusalem

62 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
 for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
 until her righteousness shines out brightly,
 and her salvation as a blazing torch.
 2 Nations will see your righteousness,
 and all kings your glory.
 You will be called by a new name,
 which *ADONAI*'s mouth will bestow.
 3 You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of
ADONAI,
 and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
 4 No longer will you be termed "Forsaken,"
 no longer your land termed "Desolate."
 Instead you will be called, "My Delight is in Her,"
 and your land, "Married."
 For *ADONAI* delights in you,
 and your land will be married.
 5 For as a young man marries a virgin,
 so your sons will marry you.
 As a bridegroom rejoices over a bride,
 so your God will rejoice over you.

6 On your walls, Jerusalem, I have set watchmen.
 All day and all night, they will never hold their peace.
 "You who remind *ADONAI*,
 take no rest for yourselves,
 7 And give Him no rest until He establishes
 and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.
 8 *ADONAI* has sworn by His right hand
 and by His strong arm:
 "Surely I will never again give your grain
 as food for your enemies,
 nor will foreigners drink your new wine,
 for which you have labored.
 9 But those who have garnered it will eat it
 and praise *ADONAI*,
 and those who have gathered it
 will drink it in the courts of My Sanctuary."
 10 Go through, go through the gates.
 Clear the way for the people!
 Build up, build up the highway!
 Remove the stones.
 Lift up a banner over the peoples.
 11 Behold, *ADONAI* has proclaimed
 to the end of the earth:
 Say to the Daughter of Zion,
 "Behold, your salvation comes!
 See, His reward is with Him,
 and His recompense before Him." †
 12 Then they will call them "The Holy People,"
 "The Redeemed of *ADONAI*,"
 and you will be called, "Sought Out,"
 "A City Not Forsaken."

Winepress of Vengeance

63 "Who is this coming from Edom,
 in crimsoned garments from Bozrah?
 This One splendid in His apparel,
 pressing forward in His great might?"
 "It is I who speak in righteousness,
 mighty to save."
 2 "Why is Your apparel so red,
 and Your garments like one who treads in a wine
 press?" ††
 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone—
 from the peoples, no man was with Me.
 I trod them in My anger,
 and trampled them in My wrath.
 Their lifeblood spattered My garments,
 so I stained all My robes.
 4 For a day of vengeance was in My heart,
 and My year of redemption has come.
 5 I looked, but there was no one to help.
 I was amazed, but no one was assisting.
 So My own arm won victory for Me,
 and My wrath upheld Me.
 6 So I trod down the peoples in My anger,
 and made them drunk in My wrath,
 and I poured out their lifeblood ‡ on the earth."

Remembering His *Chesed*

7 I will remember the lovingkindnesses of *ADONAI*,
 the praises of *ADONAI*, according to all that *ADONAI* has
 granted us, and the great goodness toward the house
 of Israel, which He has granted them according to His
 compassion, and according to the abundance of His
 lovingkindnesses.
 8 For He said, "Surely they are My people,
 children who will not deal falsely."
 So He became their Savior.
 9 In all their affliction He was afflicted.
 So the angel of His presence saved them.
 In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them,
 then He lifted them and carried them
 all the days of old.
 10 But they rebelled,
 and grieved His *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.
 So He turned to become their enemy.
 He Himself fought against them.
 11 Then His people remembered the days of old,
 the days of Moses:
 "Where is He who brought them through the sea
 with the shepherd of His flock?
 Where is He who put among them
 His *Ruach ha-Kodesh* ?
 12 Who caused His glorious arm to go
 at the right hand of Moses?
 Who divided the waters before them—
 to make Himself a Name forever?
 13 Who led them through the depths?
 Like a horse in the desert,
 they did not stumble."
 14 Like cattle that go down into a valley,
 the *Ruach ADONAI* gave them rest.
 So You led Your people,
 to make Yourself a glorious Name.
 15 Look down from heaven and see
 from Your holy, glorious, lofty abode.
 Where are Your zeal and mighty deeds?
 Are the yearnings of Your heart,
 Your compassions, withheld from me?
 16 For You are our Father—
 even if Abraham would not know us
 or Israel not recognize us.
 You, *ADONAI*, are our Father, our Redeemer—
 from everlasting is Your Name.
 17 *ADONAI*, why do You cause us to stray from Your
 ways,
 and harden our heart from fearing You?
 Return for Your servants' sake,
 the tribes of Your heritage.
 18 Briefly Your holy people possessed it—
 our foes have trampled Your Sanctuary.
 19 We have become like those over whom
 You have never ruled,
 like those not called by Your Name.

† cf. Rev. 22:12. †† cf. Rev. 19:11-16.

‡ Or juice of grapes

(64:1) Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at Your presence!

As Unclean Rags

64 (2) As fire kindles brushwood,
as fire causes water to boil,
make Your Name known to Your foes,
so the nations may tremble before You!
2 (3) When You did awesome things that we were not
expecting,
You came down—the mountains shook at Your pres-
ence!
3 (4) For from days of old no one has heard,
no ear perceived,
no eye has seen God, except You,
who acts on behalf of the one waiting for Him.
4 (5) You meet him who rejoices in doing righteous-
ness,
who remembers You in Your ways.
Behold, You were angry.
When we kept sinning all the time,
would we be saved?
5 (6) For all of us have become like one who is un-
clean,
and all our righteousness is like a filthy garment,
and all of us wither like a leaf,
and our iniquities carry us away, like the wind.
6 (7) No one calls on Your Name,
or stirs himself up to take hold of You.
For You have hidden Your face from us,
and have consumed us, because of our iniquities.
7 (8) But now, *ADONAI*, You are our Father.
We are the clay and You are our potter,
We are all the work of Your hand.
8 (9) Do not be angry much more, *ADONAI*,
or remember iniquity forever.
Oh, please see,
we are all Your people!
9 (10) Your holy cities became a wilderness,
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.
10 (11) Our holy and beautiful House, where our fa-
thers praised You,
Has been burned with fire—
all our pleasant things are laid waste.
11 (12) Will You restrain Yourself at these things?
ADONAI, will You stay silent,
and afflict us very severely?

Outstretched Hands

65 "I was sought by those who did not ask for Me,
I was found by those who did not seek Me.
I said, 'Hineni, hineni!'
to a nation not called by My Name. †
2 I have stretched out My hands all day

to a rebellious people, ††
who walk in a way that is not good,
following their own thoughts.
3 These people provoke Me continually
to My face,
sacrificing in gardens,
burning incense on bricks,
4 sitting among graves,
spending the night in cave-tombs;
eating swine's flesh,
and the broth of detestable things is in their pots,
5 who say, 'Keep to yourself, don't come to me,
for I am holier than you!'
These are smoke in My nostrils,
a fire that burns all day.
6 Behold, it is written before Me;
I will not keep silence, but will repay,
even repay into their laps,
7 your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers to-
gether,"
says *ADONAI*,
"because they burned incense on the mountains,
and scorned Me on the hills.
So I will measure into their laps
full wages for their former deeds."
8 Thus says *ADONAI*:
"As new wine is found in a cluster,
and one says, 'Do not destroy it,
for a blessing is in it,'
so I will do for My servants' sakes,
that I may not destroy them all.
9 I will bring forth offspring from Jacob,
an heir of My mountains from Judah.
My chosen ones will inherit it,
and My servants will dwell there.
10 Sharon will be a fold of flocks,
and the valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down
in,
for My people who seek Me.
11 But you who forsake *ADONAI*,
who forget My holy mountain,
who prepare a table for Fortune,
who fill cups of mixed wine for Fate,
12 I will fate you to the sword,
and all of you will kneel to slaughter.
For I called, but you did not answer,
I spoke, but you did not hear.
So you did what was evil in My sight,
and chose what I did not delight in."
13 Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:
"Behold, My servants will eat,
while you will go hungry.
Behold, My servants will drink,
but you will be thirsty.
Behold, My servants will rejoice,
but you will be put to shame.
14 Behold, My servants will sing for joy

† cf. Rom. 10:20.

†† cf. Rom. 10:21.

with a happy heart,
 but you will cry from pain of heart,
 and wail out of a broken spirit.
 15 You will leave your name behind
 as a curse for My chosen ones,
 and *ADONAI Elohim* will slay you.
 But He will call His servants by another name.
 16 So he who says a *bracha* in the land
 will be blessed by the God of truth,
 and he who swears in the land
 will swear by the God of truth.
 For the former troubles are forgotten,
 because they are hidden from My sight!

New Heavens and New Earth

17 "For behold, I create new heavens
 and a new earth. †
 The former things will not be remembered
 or come to mind.
 18 But be glad and rejoice forever
 in what I am creating.
 For behold, I am creating Jerusalem for rejoicing,
 and her people for joy.
 19 Then I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
 and be glad in My people.
 No longer will the voice of weeping
 or the voice of crying be heard in her.
 20 No longer will there be in it an infant
 who lives but a few days,
 or an old man who does not fill out his days.
 For the youth will die at a hundred years,
 But one who misses the mark of a hundred
 must be accursed.
 21 They will build houses and inhabit them.
 They will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
 22 They will not build and another inhabit,
 nor plant and another eat.
 For like the days of a tree,
 so will be the days of My people,
 and My chosen ones will long enjoy
 the work of their hands.
 23 They will not labor in vain
 nor bear children for calamity.
 For they are the offspring of those blessed by *ADONAI*
 as well as descendants with them.
 24 "And it will come to pass that before they call,
 I will answer,
 and while they are still speaking,
 I will hear.
 25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together.
 The lion will eat straw like the ox,
 but dust will be the serpent's food.
 They will not hurt or destroy
 in all My holy mountain," says *ADONAI*.

Tremble at His Word

66 Thus says *ADONAI* :
 "Heaven is My throne,
 and the earth is My footstool. ††
 Where then is the House you would build for Me?
 Where is the place of My rest?
 2 For My hand has made all these things,
 so all these things came to be,"
 declares *ADONAI* .
 "But on this one will I look,
 one humble and of a contrite spirit,
 who trembles at My word."
 3 One who kills an ox
 is like one who kills a man;
 one who sacrifices a lamb
 is like one who breaks a dog's neck;
 one who offers a grain offering
 is like one who offers swine's blood;
 one who burns incense
 is like one who blesses an idol.
 They have chosen their own ways,
 so their soul delights in their abominations.
 4 So I will choose their punishments
 and bring on them what they dread.
 For when I called, no one answered;
 when I spoke, they did not listen.
 But they did what was evil in My eyes,
 and chose what I did not delight in.
 5 Hear the word of *ADONAI* ,
 you who tremble at His word:
 "Your brothers who hated you,
 excluding you for My Name's sake, have said,
 'Let *ADONAI* be glorified,
 that we may see your joy'—
 but they will be put to shame."
 6 A sound of uproar from the city,
 a sound from the Temple—
 the sound of *ADONAI*
 who fully repays His enemies.

A Nation Born in a Day

7 Before she was in labor,
 she gave birth.
 Before her pain came,
 she delivered a male child.
 8 Who has heard such a thing?
 Who has seen such things?
 Can a land be born in one day?
 Can a nation be brought forth at once?
 For as soon as Zion was in labor,
 she gave birth to her children.
 9 "Will I bring the moment of birth,
 and not give delivery?" says *ADONAI* .
 "Will I who cause delivery
 shut up the womb?" says your God.

† cf. 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1.

†† cf. Matt. 5:34-35; Acts 7:49-50.

¹⁰ Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her,
 all you who love her.
 Rejoice for joy with her
 all you who mourned over her.
¹¹ For you will nurse and be satisfied
 from her comforting breast.
 You will drink deeply and delight
 from her glorious abundance.
¹² For thus says *ADONAI* :
 "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river,
 and the glory of the nations like an overflowing
 stream.
 You will be nursed, carried on the hip,
 and bounced on her knees.
¹³ As one whom his mother comforts,
 so I will comfort you,
 so you will be comforted in Jerusalem.
¹⁴ You will see, your heart will rejoice,
 and your bones will flourish like grass.
 So the hand of *ADONAI* will be known to His servants,
 and His indignation to His enemies.
¹⁵ For behold, *ADONAI* will come in fire,
 and His chariots like the whirlwind,
 to render His anger with fury,
 and His rebuke with flames of fire.
¹⁶ For by fire and His sword
ADONAI will execute judgment on all flesh
 and those slain by *ADONAI* will be many.
¹⁷ Those who consecrate and purify themselves to
 enter the groves, following after one in the midst, who

eat swine's flesh, vermin, and mice, will come to an
 end altogether.

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* . ¹⁸ "For I know their
 works and their thoughts. It will come about that I will
 gather all nations and tongues, and they will come
 and see My glory. ¹⁹ Then I will set up a sign among
 them, and I will send survivors from them to the na-
 tions, to Tarshish, Pul and Lud (who pull the bow), to
 Tubal and Javan, to distant islands that have not heard
 My fame or seen My glory. Then they will declare My
 glory among the nations.

²⁰ "Then they will bring all your kinsmen from all the
 nations, as an offering to *ADONAI* , on horses and in
 chariots, and on litters, mules and camels, to My holy
 mountain Jerusalem," says *ADONAI* , "just as *Bnei-Yis-
 rael* bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the
 House of *ADONAI* . ²¹ I will also take some of them as
 priests and for Levites," says *ADONAI* .

²² "For just as the new heavens and the new earth,
 which I will make, will endure before Me"—it is a decla-
 ration of *ADONAI* —"so your descendants and your
 name will endure."

²³ "And it will come to pass,
 that from one New Moon to another,
 and from one *Shabbat* to another,
 all flesh will come to bow down before Me,"
 says *ADONAI* .

²⁴ "As they leave, they will look on the corpses of the
 people who rebelled against Me. For their worm will
 not die, and their fire will not be quenched, and they
 will be a horror to all flesh."

Jeremiah

Jeremiah Introduction

The Hebrew for Jeremiah is , which could mean: 1) " exalted" or " is exalted"; 2) " founded"; or 3) " cast, threw," but it is impossible to decide with certainty.

Jeremiah is the longest book in the entire Bible. It has a total of 21,673 words, as compared with 20,512 in Genesis, 19,479 in Psalms, and 19,123 in Ezekiel. It is named after the prophet who is responsible for the great bulk (or all) of the material of the book and who appears throughout it, both in first person and third person accounts. The name Jeremiah occurs 131 times in the book, compared to Isaiah, whose name is found just sixteen times in his book, or Hosea, mentioned by name just three times in his book, or Ezekiel, mentioned by name just twice in his book.

Jeremiah's active ministry spanned more than forty years, from 627 BCE to 586 BCE and beyond. He prophesied at a critical time in the history of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, preaching repentance, warning his people of coming judgment from "the north" (referring to the Babylonian incursion from the north), and exposing their idolatry and corruption. Tragically, he was always opposed by the religious establishment (the priests and prophets), the political establishment (all the kings, after Josiah, and the princes), and most of the common people, even in his hometown (Jer. 1:18, 11:18-23). Sadly, his warnings went unheeded. As a result, he witnessed God's judgment in the form of the sacking of the holy city Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, and the exile into Babylon of multiplied thousands of people.

But Jeremiah was not simply the "weeping prophet" (see, e.g., Jer. 13:17) who saw Josiah's valiant attempts at reformation fall short (see 2 Chron. 34-35; Josiah died in 608 BCE; for a critique of the Josianic reformation, see Jer. 3:6-10) and his beloved nation fall down before his teary eyes. He was also the prophet of the hopeful new covenant, speaking of a future time in which God would write His on the hearts and minds of His people and remember their sins no more (Jer. 31:31-34). This was part of a larger Messianic vision, one in which Jerusalem would be rebuilt after seventy years in exile (Jer. 30:18-22), the people would serve God with one heart and soul (Jer. 24:5-7), and the Messianic King would rule and reign in their midst (e.g., Jer. 23:5-8). Each of these prophecies has a historic, partial fulfillment, beginning in the 530s BCE, when the first wave of exiles returned home and when Jerusalem was initially rebuilt, continuing into the first century of this era, when inaugurated the Messianic age and instituted the new covenant with his small circle of Jewish disciples. Each of these promises has a future, ultimate fulfillment, which awaits realization in the end of the age.

Jeremiah Headings

- The Call of Jeremiah
- Judah Rebuked for Her Sins
- Unfaithful Judah and Unfaithful Israel
- Call to Backsliding Children
- Imminent Invasion from the North
- God's Just Judgment
- Jerusalem under Siege
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Judgment on Zedekiah and Jerusalem
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Prophecy against Egypt

Prophecy against the Philistines
 Prophecy against Moab
 Against Surrounding Nations
 Against Babylon
 Declaration of Restoration
 Doom of Babylon
 Apocalyptic Vengeance
 Creator of All, Judge of All
 Babylon Destroys Jerusalem
 Release of King Jehoiachin

The Call of Jeremiah

1 The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the *kohanim* who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin. **2** The word of *ADONAI* came to him during the days of King Josiah of Judah, son of Amon, in the thirteenth year of his reign. **3** It continued during the days of King Jehoiakim of Judah, son of Josiah, until the end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah of Judah, son of Josiah—until the exile from Jerusalem in the fifth month.

4 The word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying:

5 “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I set you apart—I appointed you prophet to the nations.”

6 Then I said, “Alas, *ADONAI Elohim*! Look, I don’t know how to speak! For I’m still a boy!”

7 But *ADONAI* answered me, “Do not say ‘I’m only a boy!’ For to everyone I send you, you will go, and all I command you, you will speak.

8 Do not be afraid of them! For I am with you to deliver you.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

9 Then *ADONAI* stretched out His hand and touched my mouth and *ADONAI* said to me, “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.

10 See, today I have appointed you over nations and over kingdoms:

to uproot and to tear down,
 to destroy and to overthrow,
 to build and to plant.”

11 Moreover, the word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying, “What do you see, Jeremiah?”

I answered, “I see an almond branch.”

12 Then *ADONAI* said to me, “You have seen correctly, for I am watching over [†] My word to perform it.”

13 The word of *ADONAI* came to me a second time, saying, “What do you see?”

I replied, “I see a boiling pot that is tilting away from the north.”

14 Then *ADONAI* said to me:

“From the north, disaster will be poured out

on all the inhabitants of the land.

15 Behold! I am calling all the families of the kingdoms of the north.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

“So they will come and each will set up his throne at the entry of the gates of Jerusalem, against all her surrounding walls and against all the cities of Judah.

16 I will pronounce My judgments on them for all their wickedness—

they have forsaken Me,
 offering incense to other gods,
 worshiping the works of their hands.

17 Now, you, gird up your loins!

Get up and tell them everything that I order you!

Do not be terrified by them,
 or else I will terrify you before them.

18 Look, today I have set you up as a fortified city—

an iron pillar and bronze walls—
 against the whole land,
 against the kings of Judah, its princes
 against its *kohanim*,
 and against the people of the land.

19 Though they will fight against you, they will not win,

for I am with you, to deliver you.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Judah Rebuked for Her Sins

2 Again the word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying:

2 “Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, thus says *ADONAI*:

“I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, and the way you followed Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown.

3 Israel was *kadosh* to *ADONAI*, the firstfruits of the harvest. ^{††} All who devoured him were held guilty. Catastrophe overtook them.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

4 Hear the word of *ADONAI*, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. **5** Thus says *ADONAI*:

[†] The Hebrew words for almond watching over

^{††} cf. Jacob 1:18.

“What fault did your fathers find in Me
that they strayed so far from Me?
They walked after worthless things,
becoming worthless themselves? †
6 They did not ask ‘Where is *ADONAI*,
who brought us up from the land of Egypt
and led us through the wilderness,
through a land of deserts and rifts,
through a land of drought and distress,
through a land where no one travels,
where no one lives?’
7 Yet I brought you into a fertile land,
to eat of its fruit and goodness.
When you came, you defiled My land.
You made My heritage an abomination.
8 The *kohanim* did not ask,
‘Where is *ADONAI*?’
The *Torah* experts did not know Me.
The shepherds rebelled against Me.
The prophets prophesied by Baal
and went after unprofitable things.
9 Therefore, I will plead with you again!”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
“I will contend with your children’s children.
10 Cross to the coasts of Kittim †† and see!
Send to Kedar, and observe carefully.
See if there has been anything like this.
11 Has a nation changed its gods—
even though they are not gods?
Yet My people have exchanged their glory
for worthless things.
12 Be appalled at this, O heavens!
Be utterly horrified and dumbfounded.”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
13 “My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me
—the spring of living water—
and they dug their own cisterns—
cracked cisterns that hold no water.
14 Is Israel a servant—a slave by birth?
Then why has he become plunder?
15 Young lions have roared at him
they have roared loudly.
They made his land a waste—
his cities are in ruins and uninhabited.
16 Even the sons of Noph and Tahpanhes
have grazed on the crown of your head.
17 Have you not brought this on yourself,
when He led you in the way?
18 But now, what is on the road to Egypt?
Drinking the waters of the Nile?
Or what is on the road to Assyria?
Drinking the waters of the Euphrates?
19 Your own wickedness will rebuke you
and your backslidings will chide you.
Know then and see
how bad and bitter it is for you

† cf. Rom. 1:21. †† *Cyprus* nearby coasts

to forsake *ADONAI* your God.
Nor is fear of Me in you.”
It is a declaration of the Lord *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot*.
20 “Indeed, long ago I broke your yoke
and tore off your bonds.
You said, ‘I will not serve!’
Instead, on every high hill
and under every green tree
you sprawled out as a prostitute.
21 Yet I had planted you as a choice vine
from completely faithful seed.
How then did you become to Me
a wandering wild vine?
22 Even though you wash with lye
and use an abundance of soap,
the stain of your iniquity is before Me.”
It is a declaration of the Lord *ADONAI*.
23 “How can you say, ‘I am not defiled—
I have not gone after the Baalim ‡?’
Look at your behavior in the Valley!
Recognize what you have done.
You are a swift young camel
galloping aimlessly,
24 a wild donkey used to the wilderness—
sniffing the wind in her passion—
in her heat, who can restrain her?
All males that pursue her will not tire themselves.
At mating time they will find her.
25 Do not run while your feet are bare
and your throat is thirsty.
But you said ‘There is no hope!
No! For I have loved foreign gods
and I will go after them.’
26 As a thief is shamed when caught,
so the house of Israel is shamed—
they, their kings, their princes,
their *kohanim*, and their prophets.
27 They say to wood, ‘You are my father’
and to a stone, ‘You birthed me.’
They have turned their back to Me
and not their face.
Yet when they are in trouble
they say, ‘Rise up and save us!’
28 Where are your gods that you made for yourself?
Let them come—if they can save you
when you are in trouble!
For you have as many gods
as you have cities, O Judah.
29 Why do you strive with Me?
You have all rebelled against Me.”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
30 “In vain I struck your children.
They took no correction.
Your sword devoured your prophets
like a ravaging lion.”
31 You, generation, heed *ADONAI*’s word!
“Have I been a wilderness to Israel

‡ Plural for Baal; gods

or a land of thick darkness?
 Why do My people say, 'We are free to roam.
 We won't come to You any more'?

³² Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
 or a bride her attire?
 Yet My people have forgotten Me,
 days without number.

³³ How clever are your ways of seeking love.
 Therefore, you even taught wicked women your
 ways.

³⁴ Moreover, on your skirts is found
 the blood of the innocent poor
 —you did not find them breaking in.
 Yet in spite of all these things,

³⁵ you say, 'I am innocent—
 surely His anger is turned away from me.'
 See, I will pass judgment on you,
 since you say: 'I haven't sinned!'

³⁶ Why do you make light of
 changing your way?
 You will be put to shame by Egypt
 as you were put to shame by Assyria.

³⁷ You will also go out from there
 with your hands on your head.
 For *ADONAI* has rejected those in whom you trust—
 you will not prosper by them."

Unfaithful Judah and Unfaithful Israel

3 "If a man divorces his wife
 and she leaves him to be with another man,
 will he return to her again?
 Would not such a land be totally polluted?
 You are a prostitute with many lovers.
 Now are you returning to Me?"

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

² "Lift your eyes to the barren hills and see!
 Where have you not been violated?
 By the wayside you sat waiting for them
 like a nomad in the desert.
 You have polluted the land
 with your prostitution and wickedness.

³ Therefore, showers have been withheld
 and there has been no spring rain.
 You have a harlot's brazen look;
 you refuse to be ashamed.

⁴ Did you not just now call to Me:
 ' *Avi!* You are a friend of my youth.

⁵ Would He keep a grudge forever?
 Would He keep it to the end?
 So you said—
 yet you have done
 all the evil things you could."

⁶ Then *ADONAI* said to me in the days of King Josiah:
 "Have you seen what backsliding Israel did? She went
 up on every high mountain and under every green
 tree, and there she committed adultery. ⁷ Yet I thought
 that after she had done all this she would return to
 Me. But she did not return. Even her unfaithful sister

Judah saw it. ⁸ I noted that when backsliding Israel
 committed adultery I sent her away and gave her a
 certificate of divorce. Yet, unfaithful Judah, her sister,
 did not fear. Instead she also went and committed
 adultery. ⁹ It happened that through her frivolous
 prostitution, she polluted the land and committed
 adultery with stones and with wood. ¹⁰ Yet after all this
 her unfaithful sister Judah did not return to Me with
 her whole heart, but only insincerely."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹¹ Then *ADONAI* said to me, "Backsliding Israel has
 proved herself more righteous than unfaithful Judah.

¹² Go! Proclaim these words toward the north, saying:
 "Return backsliding Israel," says *ADONAI* .

"I will no longer frown on you,

for I am merciful," says *ADONAI* .

"I will not keep a grudge forever.

¹³ Only acknowledge your iniquity.

For you sinned against *ADONAI* your God
 and scattered your favors to foreign gods
 under every green tree.

You have not obeyed My voice."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

Call to Backsliding Children

¹⁴ "Return, O backsliding children," declares *ADONAI* .

"For I am your Husband.

I will choose you—

one from a city and two from a clan—
 and will bring you to Zion.

¹⁵ I will give you shepherds after My own heart
 who will feed you knowledge and understanding.

¹⁶ It will be in those days when you multiply
 and become fruitful in the land."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

"They will no longer talk about the ark of the
 covenant of *ADONAI* , nor will it come to mind or be re-
 membered. Neither will it be missed or another one
 made again. ¹⁷ At that time they will call Jerusalem the
 throne of *ADONAI* and all the nations will gather into it,
 to Jerusalem, in the Name of *ADONAI* . No longer will
 they walk according to the stubbornness of their evil
 heart. ¹⁸ In those days the house of Judah will walk
 with the house of Israel. They will come together out
 of the land of the north to the land that I gave your fa-
 thers as an inheritance."

¹⁹ "Then I Myself said:

'How gladly would I make you sons
 and give you a pleasant land—
 the most beautiful inheritance of the nations!
 I thought you would call Me— *Avi!*—
 and would not turn from following Me.

²⁰ Yet as a woman betrays her lover,
 so have you betrayed Me, O house of Israel."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

²¹ A voice is heard on the barren hills
 —the weeping and supplication of the children of Is-
 rael—

because they perverted their way
and forgot *ADONAI* their God.

²² "Return, backsliding children!

I will heal your backsliding."

"Yes, we will come to You
for You are *ADONAI Eloheinu* .

²³ Surely help from the hills is a delusion—
the commotion of the mountains!

Surely in *ADONAI Eloheinu*
is the salvation of Israel.

²⁴ But the shame has consumed
the labor of our fathers since our youth—
their flocks and their herds,
their sons and their daughters.

²⁵ Let's lie down with our shame
and let our disgrace cover us!
For we have sinned against *ADONAI Eloheinu*
—both we and our fathers—
from our youth even to this day.
We have not paid attention to
the voice of *ADONAI Eloheinu* ."

4 "If you will return, O Israel,
return to Me," declares *ADONAI* .

"If you will put your detestable things out of My
sight.

Then you will not waver.

² You will swear, 'As *ADONAI* lives!'
in truth, in justice, and in righteousness.
The nations will bless themselves in Him
and in Him they will glory."

³ Thus says *ADONAI* to the people of Judah and to
Jerusalem

"Break up your unplowed ground
and do not sow among thorns.

⁴ Circumcise yourselves to *ADONAI*
and remove the foreskins of your heart,
men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem.
Else My wrath will break out like fire and blaze,
with no one to quench it,
because of your evil deeds!

Imminent Invasion from the North

⁵ "Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, say-
ing:

'Blow the *shofar* in the land!

Cry aloud and say,

'Assemble yourselves!

Let us go into the fortified cities.'

⁶ "Raise a banner toward Zion!

Take refuge! Do not delay!

For I bring calamity from the north,
even terrible destruction.

⁷ A lion has come up from his thicket—
a destroyer of nations has set out.

He has left his place

to make your land a wasteland.

Your cities will lie in ruins,
without inhabitant.

⁸ Therefore, put on sackcloth—
lament and wail!

For the fierce anger of *ADONAI*
has not turned away from us."

⁹ "It will happen in that day"

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —

"that the king's heart will fail,
as will the heart of the princes.

The *kohanim* will be appalled,
and the prophets will be stunned."

¹⁰ Then I said, "Alas, *ADONAI Elohim* ! How completely
You have deceived this people and Jerusalem saying,
'You will have *shalom* ,' until the sword touches the
soul!"

¹¹ At that time it will be said to this people and to
Jerusalem, "A scorching wind from the barren hills in
the wilderness blows toward My people, but not to
winnow or to sift— ¹² a wind too strong for these
things will come from Me. Now even I will pronounce
judgments against them."

¹³ See, he comes up like clouds,
and his chariots like whirlwinds.
His horses are swifter than eagles—
" *Oy!* We are ruined!"

¹⁴ O Jerusalem, purify your heart from wickedness, so
that you may be saved.

How long will your wicked thoughts lodge within
you?

¹⁵ A voice announces from Dan
and proclaims calamity from the hills of Ephraim,

¹⁶ "Remind the nations,
proclaim over Jerusalem!
Besiegers are soon coming from a far country,
raising their voice against the cities of Judah.

¹⁷ Like keepers of a field they surround her,
because she has been rebellious against Me."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹⁸ Your conduct and your deeds
have brought these things on you.

This is your calamity!

How bitter it is!

How it smites your heart!

¹⁹ My stomach, my stomach!

I writhe in anguish!

The pain of my heart!

My heart is pounding within me!

I cannot keep silent

because I have heard, O my soul,

the sound of the *shofar* ,

the battle cry of war.

²⁰ Disaster on disaster is reported.

So the whole land is ruined.

My tents are suddenly ravaged,
my curtains in an instant.

²¹ How long must I see the battle standard
and hear the sound of the *shofar* ?

²² "For My people are foolish.

They do not know Me.

They are senseless children,
and they have no understanding.
They are wise to do evil,
but to do good they do not know.”
23 I looked at the earth and behold,
it was deserted and desolate,
and at the heavens
and they had no light.
24 I looked at the mountains—
behold, they were shaking
and all the hills swaying to and fro.
25 I looked and behold, no people!
All the birds of the sky had fled.
26 I looked and behold, the fruitful field was a wilder-
ness
and all of its cities were in ruins
before *ADONAI*, before His fierce anger.
27 For thus says *ADONAI*,
“The whole land will be wasteland,
yet I will not totally destroy it.
28 Therefore, the earth will mourn
and the heavens above grow black.
For I have spoken, I have purposed,
nor will I relent, nor turn from it.
29 At the sound of horsemen and archers
the whole city flees.
They go into the thickets
and climb up on the rocks.
The whole city is deserted—
no one dwells in it.
30 And you, O desolate one, what will you do?
Though you dress in scarlet,
though you adorn yourself with gold ornaments
though you enlarge your eyes with paint—
in vain
you make yourself beautiful—
your lovers despise you,
they seek your life.
31 For I heard a cry like one in labor,
the anguish of one giving birth to her first child—
the cry of the Daughter of Zion gasping for breath,
stretching out her hands saying,
“Oy, now to me!
For my soul faints
before murderers.”

God's Just Judgment

5 “Roam the streets of Jerusalem,
look around and consider,
search through her squares!
If you can find a person,
if there is one who does justice,
who seeks truth,
then I will pardon the city.
2 Though they say, ‘As *ADONAI* lives!’
surely they swear falsely.”
3 *ADONAI*, do Your eyes not look for faithfulness?
You struck them, but they did not grieve.

You disciplined them, but they refused correction.
They made their faces harder than stone.
They refused to return.
4 Then I said:
These are only the poor.
They are foolish.
For they do not know the way of *ADONAI*,
the ordinance of their God.
5 I will go to the distinguished
and speak to them.
Surely they know the way of *ADONAI*,
the ordinance of their God.
But they too had broken the yoke
and torn off the bonds.
6 Therefore, a lion from the forest will kill them.
A desert wolf will ravage them.
A leopard watches over their cities.
Everyone who ventures out will be torn to pieces,
For their rebellion is great,
their backslidings frequent.
7 “Why therefore should I forgive you?
Your children have forsaken Me
and sworn by those who are not gods.
Even though I fed them well,
they committed adultery
and thronged to the prostitute houses.
8 They are well-fed, lustful stallions,
each neighing for his neighbor's wife.
9 For such, should I not punish them?”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
“On such a nation as this
should I not avenge Myself?
10 Go up into her vines and ravage them,
but do not completely destroy them.
Strip away her branches
for they are not *ADONAI*'s.
11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah
have been utterly unfaithful to Me.”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
12 They have lied about *ADONAI* saying:
“Not He! No harm will come to us.
Nor will we see sword or famine.
13 The prophets are but wind
and the word is not in them.
Let what they say be done to them!”
14 Therefore, thus says *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot*:
“Because you speak this word, behold,
I will make My words in your mouth fire
and this people wood—
and it will devour them.
15 See, I am bringing a nation against you
from afar, O house of Israel.”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
“It is an enduring nation,
an ancient nation,
a nation whose language you neither know
nor understand what they say.
16 Their quiver is 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 devour your vines and your fig trees.
They will demolish your fortified cities
—the ones in which you trust—
with the sword.

¹⁸ “Yet even in those days,” declares *ADONAI*, “I will not completely destroy you. ¹⁹ So it will come to pass that when you ask, ‘Why has *ADONAI Eloheinu* done all these things to us?’ you will tell them, ‘As you have forsaken Me and served foreign gods in your land, so will you serve strangers in a land that is not yours.’

²⁰ “Declare this in the house of Jacob
and proclaim it in Judah, saying:

²¹ ‘Hear this you foolish people
who have no understanding,
who have eyes but do not see,
who have ears but do not hear.

²² Do you not fear Me?’ says *ADONAI*.
‘Do you not tremble in My presence?’
For I made the sand a boundary of the sea,
an everlasting decree that cannot be broken.
Though the waves roll, they cannot prevail.
Though they roar, they cannot cross it.

²³ But this people have a stubborn and rebellious heart.

They have turned aside and gone away.

²⁴ They do not say in their heart,
‘Let us now fear *ADONAI Eloheinu*,
who gives rain in its season
—fall rain and spring rain—
who reserves for us the appointed weeks of harvest.’

²⁵ Your iniquities have turned these away,
your sins have deprived you of bounty.

²⁶ For among My people are wicked men,
watching like bait-layers lying in wait.
They set a trap—they catch men.

²⁷ As a cage is full of birds,
so are their houses full of deceit.
That is why they grew great and rich.

²⁸ They grew fat and sleek.
They also overlooked evil deeds.
They do not uphold a cause
—the cause of an orphan to prosper—
nor do they defend the right of the poor.

²⁹ Should I not punish them?” says *ADONAI*.
“On such a nation
should I not avenge Myself?

³⁰ An appalling and horrible thing
has happened in the land.

³¹ The prophets prophesy falsely,
the *kohanim* rule by their own authority,
and My people love it this way!
But what will you do in the end?”

Jerusalem under Siege

6 Flee for refuge, children of Benjamin,
from the midst of Jerusalem!

Blow the *shofar* in Tekoa
and raise a signal in Beth-Cherem!
For disaster looms from the north,
even terrible destruction.

² “The lovely, delicate Daughter of Zion
I will cut off.”

³ Shepherds with their flocks are coming against her.
All around her they pitch their tents,
each pasturing in his own place.

⁴ “Prepare for war against her.
Rise up! Let’s attack at noon.”
“Oy for us! For day is fading—
evening shadows are lengthening.”

⁵ “Rise up! Let’s attack at night
and destroy her palaces.”

⁶ For thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*:
“Chop down her trees!
Raise a siege ramp at Jerusalem.
This city must be punished—
in her midst is only oppression.

⁷ As a well gushes out its waters,
so she pours out her wickedness.
Violence and havoc are heard in her,
sickness and wounds ever before Me.

⁸ Be warned, O Jerusalem,
lest I abandon you,
lest I make you desolate—
an uninhabited land.”

⁹ Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*:
“Glean the remnant of Israel
thoroughly as a vine.
Pass your hand over the branches once more,
like a grape-gatherer.”

¹⁰ “To whom can I speak and warn
so they would hear?
See, their ears are uncircumcised,
unable to hear!

The word of *ADONAI* has become scorn to them.
They have no delight in it.

¹¹ So I am full of the wrath of *ADONAI*.
I am weary of holding it in!
Pour it out on a child in the street,
on young men gathered together.
For husband will be taken with wife,
the aged with the very old.

¹² Their homes will be turned over to others
—together with their fields and their wives.
For I will stretch out My hand
on the inhabitants of the land.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹³ “For from the least to the greatest,
all of them are greedy for gain,
and from prophet even to *kohen*,
everyone practices deceit.

¹⁴ They healed the wound of My people superficially, saying ' *Shalom* , *shalom* !' when there is no *shalom* ."

¹⁵ "Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown," says *ADONAI* .

¹⁶ Thus says *ADONAI* :
"Stand in the roads and look. Ask for the ancient paths—where the good way is—and walk in it. Then you will find rest for your souls. † But they said, 'We won't walk in it.'

¹⁷ So I set watchmen over you, saying 'Listen to the sound of the *shofar* !' But they said, 'We won't listen.'

¹⁸ Therefore hear, O nations and observe, O congregation, what is against them.

¹⁹ Hear, O earth!
See, I will bring disaster on this people—fruit of their schemes—for they did not listen to My words and rejected My *Torah* .

²⁰ Of what use to Me is frankincense coming from Sheba

or sweet cane from a distant country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor are your sacrifices pleasing to Me."

²¹ Therefore thus says *ADONAI* :

"Look, I am laying before this people stumbling blocks—
and against them they will stumble—
fathers and the sons together,
a neighbor and his friend,
and they will perish."

Destruction from the North

²² Thus says *ADONAI* :

"Look, a people coming from a northern land, a great nation roused from the ends of the earth!

²³ They are armed with bow and spear, cruel and with no compassion. They sound like the roaring sea—as they ride on horses as men in battle formation, against you, Daughter of Zion!

²⁴ "We have heard of their fame. Our hands hang limp; anguish has gripped us, pain like a woman in labor.

²⁵ Don't go out into the field or walk on the road. Since the enemy has a sword,

there's terror on every side!

²⁶ "Daughter of My people, put on sackcloth and roll in ashes. Mourn as for an only son with bitter lamentation. For suddenly the destroyer will come on us!

²⁷ "I have made you a metal-tester among My people—
so you may observe and test their way.

²⁸ They are all stubborn rebels spreading slander. They are bronze and iron, all of them are corrupt.

²⁹ The bellows blow fiercely, blasting away the lead with fire. The refining is completely in vain, for the wicked are not drawn off.

³⁰ They are called 'cast off silver'—for *ADONAI* has cast them off."

Mend Your Ways!

⁷ The word that came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI* , saying: ² Stand in the gate of *ADONAI* 's house and proclaim there this word and say: "Hear the word of *ADONAI* , all you of Judah that come through these gates to worship *ADONAI* . ³ Thus says *ADONAI* -*Tzva'ot* , the God of Israel; mend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you live in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in deceptive words and say 'The Temple of *ADONAI* , the Temple of *ADONAI* , the Temple of *ADONAI* !'

⁵ "No, if you truly mend your ways and your deeds—if you are doing justice between a man and his neighbor, ⁶ not oppressing the sojourner, orphan, and widow, nor shedding innocent blood in this place, nor going after other gods to your own ruin— ⁷ then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever. ⁸ Look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are empty. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and perjury, and offer incense to Baal and walk after other gods whom you have not known— ¹⁰ and then come and stand before Me in this house that bears My Name, saying, 'We are saved!'—so that you may keep doing all these abominations? ¹¹ Has this House, which bears My Name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? †† Look, even I have seen it!" It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹² "Indeed, go now to My place that was in Shiloh, where I first made My Name dwell. Now see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel.

¹³ While you were doing all these things," declares *ADONAI* , "I spoke to you early and often, but you did not listen, and I called you but you did not answer.

¹⁴ Therefore, I will do to the House that bears My Name—the one in which you trust, the one that I gave to you and to your fathers—as I have done to Shiloh.

† cf. Matt. 11:29.

†† cf. Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46.

¹⁵ And I will cast you out of My sight, just as I cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim.

¹⁶ “As for you, do not pray for this people. Do not offer any supplication or petition for them, nor entreat Me, because I will not hear you. ¹⁷ Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁸ The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough to make sacrificial cakes to the queen of heaven. Moreover, they pour out drink offerings to other gods in order to provoke Me to anger. ¹⁹ But am I the One they are provoking?” declares *ADONAI*. “Are they not vexing themselves to their own shame?”

²⁰ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “My anger and My wrath is about to be poured out on this place—on man and beast, and on the trees of the field and the fruit of the land—and it will burn and not be quenched.”

²¹ Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: “Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat the meat! ²² For on the day that I brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt I did not speak to them nor did I command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, ²³ but I explicitly commanded them: ‘Obey My voice and I will be your God to you and you will be My people. Walk in all the ways that I command you, that it may go well with you.’ ²⁴ But they did not listen or pay attention. Instead, they followed their own counsel, in the stubbornness of their evil heart. They have gone backward and not forward, ²⁵ from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today. Although I sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily and persistently, ²⁶ they did not listen to Me or pay attention. Rather, they stiffened their neck, doing more evil than their fathers.

²⁷ “When you tell them all these things, they will not listen to you. When you call to them, they will not answer you. ²⁸ So you will say to them, ‘This nation has not obeyed the voice of *ADONAI* their God or received correction. Truth has perished and is cut off from their mouth. ²⁹ Cut off your hair and throw it away and take up a lamentation on the barren hills. For *ADONAI* has spurned and cast off the generation of His wrath.”

Valley of Slaughter

³⁰ “The children of Judah have done what is evil in My sight”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —“They have set their detestable things in the House that bears My Name to defile it. ³¹ They have built the high places of Topheth in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire—which I did not command, nor did it even enter My mind. ³² Therefore, the days are soon coming,” declares *ADONAI*, “when it will no longer be called Topheth, nor the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. For they will bury in Topheth until there is no room. ³³ The carcasses of this people will be food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth, and no one will frighten them

away. ³⁴ Then I will bring an end, from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem, to the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. For the land will be desolate.”

8 “At that time”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —“the bones of the kings of Judah and the bones of his princes, the bones of the *kohanim* and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be brought out of their graves. ² They will spread them out to the sun, the moon, and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and served, and after which they have walked and sought, and which they have worshiped. They will not be gathered or buried, but will be like dung on the face of the ground. ³ So death will be chosen rather than life by all the remnant that remains of this evil family that remains in all the places to which I have driven them.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*.

Each Turns His Own Way

⁴ Moreover, you will say to them, thus says *ADONAI*: “Do men fall and not get up again? Does one turn away and not return?”

⁵ Why then has this people—Jerusalem—turned away in perpetual backsliding? They cling to deceit; they refuse to return.

⁶ I listened attentively, but they have not spoken what is right. No one repents of his wickedness, saying, ‘What have I done?’ Each one turns in his own direction, like a horse charging into battle.

⁷ Even the stork in the sky knows her appointed times, and the turtledove, swallow, and crane observe the time of their migration, but My people do not know the judgments of *ADONAI*.

⁸ How can you say, ‘We are wise! The *Torah* of *ADONAI* is with us?’ In fact, it is the lying pen of the scribes that have made it a lie.

⁹ The wise men will be put to shame—shattered, trapped.

Look! They have rejected *ADONAI*’s word, so what wisdom do they have?

¹⁰ Therefore, I will give their wives to others and their fields to new owners. For from the least to the greatest everyone is greedy for gain.

From the prophet even to the *kohen* everyone practices deceit.

¹¹ They heal the fracture of the daughter of My people by treating it superficially—saying, ‘*Shalom*, *shalom*,’ when there is no *shalom*.

¹² Were they ashamed of the abomination they committed?

No, not ashamed, not at all—
they do not know how to blush!
So they will fall among the fallen.
At the time of their punishment
they will be brought down.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹³ “I will utterly consume them,” says *ADONAI* .
“There will be no grapes on the vine,
and no figs on the fig tree,
and even the leaf will wither,
and what I gave them will pass away.”

¹⁴ “Why are we sitting here?

Assemble!

Let us flee to the fortified cities
and perish there!
For *ADONAI Eloheinu* has silenced us
and given us poisoned water to drink.
For we have sinned against *ADONAI* .

¹⁵ We hoped for *shalom* ,
but it is no good,
for a time of healing
—and suddenly, terror!”

¹⁶ From Dan is heard
the snorting of his horses.
At the sound of his stallions neighing,
the whole land quakes.
For they come and devour
the land and everything in it—
the city and all who live there.

¹⁷ “For I am about to send serpents on you,
vipers for which there is no charm,
and they will bite you.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

Weeping for Jerusalem

¹⁸ My joy is overcome by grief,
my heart is faint within me.

¹⁹ Listen, the sound of the cry of the daughter of my people

—a voice from a distant land—
“Is *ADONAI* no longer in Zion?
Is her King no longer in her?”

“Why have they provoked Me with their graven images,
with foreign idols?”

²⁰ “Harvest is past,
summer is over,
yet we are not saved.”

²¹ “Because of the brokenness of the daughter of my people,

I am brokenhearted.
I mourn—desolation grips me.

²² Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Then why has no healing gone up
for the daughter of my people?

²³ (9:1) If only my head were water
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
then I would weep day and night
for the slain of the daughter of my people!

9 (2) If only I had a traveler’s lodging place
in the wilderness,
then I might leave my people
and get away from them!
For they are all adulterers,
a bunch of traitors.

² (3) They bend their tongue like a bow.
Lies, not faithfulness,
prevail in the land.

“For they go from evil to evil
and do not know Me,” says *ADONAI* .

³ (4) Beware, everyone, of your neighbor!
Don’t even trust a brother.
For every brother grabs like Jacob
and every neighbor spreads slander.

⁴ (5) Everyone deceives his neighbor
and does not speak the truth.
They taught their tongue to speak lies.
They wear themselves out doing wrong.

⁵ (6) “You dwell in the midst of deceit.
In deceit they refuse to know Me.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

⁶ (7) Therefore, thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* :
“I am about to refine them and test them.
For what else can I do
for the daughter of My people?”

⁷ (8) Their tongue is a deadly arrow,
speaking deceit.

With his mouth
each says *shalom* to his neighbor,
while inwardly setting a trap for him.

⁸ (9) For such things shall I not punish them?”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

“Should I not avenge Myself
on such a nation as this?”

⁹ (10) For the mountains I lift up weeping and wailing,

a lament for the desert pastures.
For they are so scorched
that no one passes through—
the lowing of cattle is not heard.
The birds of the air have fled
and the animals are gone.

¹⁰ (11) “I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins,
a lair for jackals.

I will make the cities of Judah
a wasteland without inhabitant.

¹¹ (12) Who is the one wise enough to understand
this?

To whom has the mouth of *ADONAI* spoken
that he may explain it?

Why is the land ruined,
laid waste like a wilderness,
so that no one passes through?”

¹² (13) *ADONAI* said "It is because they have forsaken My *Torah* that I set before them. They have neither obeyed My voice nor walked according to it, ¹³ (14) but have walked after the stubbornness of their heart, and after the Baalim that their fathers taught them. ¹⁴ (15) Therefore, thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel, "Look, I will make this people eat wormwood and drink poisoned water. ¹⁵ (16) I will scatter them among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known. I will pursue them with the sword, until I have finished with them."

¹⁶ (17) Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*:
"Pay attention! Call the dirge singers and let them come.

Send for the most skillful wailers and let them come!"

¹⁷ (18) "Let them come quickly and lift up a wailing over us so our eyes may run down with tears and our eyelids gush with water."

¹⁸ (19) For a wailing voice is heard from Zion:
"How we are ruined!
We are utterly ashamed—
we have forsaken the land,
for they tore down our dwellings."

¹⁹ (20) Now, hear the word of *ADONAI*, O women, let your ear receive the word of His mouth.
Teach your daughters wailing
and everyone her neighbor a dirge.

²⁰ (21) For death has climbed through our windows.
It has entered into our palaces
to cut off children from the street
and young men from the squares."

²¹ (22) "Say this," declares *ADONAI*.
"The carcasses of men will lie
like dung on the open field,
like cut grain behind the reaper,
with no one gathering them."

Boast in Knowing *ADONAI*

²² (23) Thus says *ADONAI*:
"Let not the wise boast in his wisdom
nor the mighty boast in his might
nor the rich glory in his riches.

²³ (24) But let one who boasts boast in this:
that he understands and knows Me.
For I am *ADONAI* who exercises lovingkindness,
justice, and righteousness on earth.
For in these things I delight."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁴ (25) "Days are soon coming," declares *ADONAI*,
"when I will punish all who are circumcised and yet uncircumcised— ²⁵ (26) Egypt, Judah, Edom and Ammon's children and Moab, and all that have cut the corners of their hair—that dwell in the wilderness. For all the nations are uncircumcised but all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

Idols are Worthless Scarecrows

10 Hear the word that *ADONAI* speaks to you, house of Israel, ² Thus says *ADONAI*:
"Do not learn the way of the nations
or be frightened by signs of the heavens—
though the nations are terrified by them.
³ The customs of the peoples are useless:
it is just a tree cut from the forest,
the work of the hands of a craftsman with a chisel.
⁴ They decorate it with silver and gold,
and fasten it with hammer and nails
so it won't totter.
⁵ Like a scarecrow in a cucumber garden,
their idols cannot speak.
They must be carried
because they cannot walk! †
Do not fear them
for they can do no harm
—nor do any good."
⁶ There is none like You, *ADONAI*!
You are great
and great is Your Name in power.
⁷ Who should not fear You,
Ruler of the nations?
For it is your due!
For among all the wise of the nations
and in all their kingdoms,
there is none like You.
⁸ They are totally stupid and foolish.
Discipline is useless—it's wood!
⁹ Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish
and gold from Uphaz.
The work of the craftsman and of the goldsmith's
hands
is clothed in blue and purple—
all the work of skillful men.
¹⁰ But *ADONAI Elohim* is truth.
He is the living God and eternal King.
At His wrath the earth quakes
and the nations cannot endure His indignation.
¹¹ Thus you will say to them: "The gods—which did
not make the heavens and the earth—will perish from
the earth and from under the heavens.
¹² "He made the earth by His power,
established the world by His wisdom,
and stretched out heaven by His understanding.
¹³ When His voice thunders, waters in heaven roar.
He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain
and brings forth wind from His storehouses.
¹⁴ Everyone is stupid, ignorant.
Every goldsmith is put to shame by his idol!
His molten image is a fraud.
There is no breath in them.
¹⁵ They are futile, a work of mockery.
In the time of their punishment they will perish.

† cf. 1 Cor. 12:2.

¹⁶ Jacob's portion is not like these.
For He is the Maker of all things
and Israel, the tribe of His inheritance
— *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* is His Name."

Coming Pain of Exile

¹⁷ Pick up your bundle from the ground,
you who live under siege.
¹⁸ For thus says *ADONAI* :
"I am about to hurl
the inhabitants out of the land.
At this time I will press hard on them
so that they will be found out."
¹⁹ *Oy* to me because of my brokenness!
My wound is incurable.
Yet I said, "This is simply a sickness
and I must bear it."
²⁰ "My tent is destroyed
and all my ropes are snapped.
My children are gone from me
and are no more.
No one is left to stretch out my tent
or set up my tent curtains.
²¹ For the shepherds are stupid!
They have not sought *ADONAI* .
Therefore, they have not acted wisely
and all their flocks are scattered."
²² Listen! The sound of a report is coming—
a great commotion out of the land of the north—
to make the cities of Judah desolate,
a haunt of jackals.
²³ I know, *ADONAI* , that a man's way is not his own,
nor does man, as he walks, direct his steps.
²⁴ Chasten me, *ADONAI* , but with justice,
not in Your anger,
lest You reduce me to nothing.
²⁵ Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not ac-
knowledge You
and on the families that do not call on Your Name.
For they have devoured Jacob,
devoured and consumed him,
and destroyed his homeland.

Curse of the Covenant

11 The word that came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI* ,
saying: ² Hear the words of this covenant, and
speak to the people of Judah, and to the inhabitants of
Jerusalem. ³ Now say to them, Thus says *ADONAI* , the
God of Israel: "Cursed is the one who does not obey
the words of this covenant, ⁴ which I commanded your
forefathers in the day I brought them out of the land
of Egypt—out of the iron furnace—saying: 'Listen to
My voice, and do all that I command you. Then you
will be My people, and I will be your God. ¹⁵ Then I will
fulfill the oath which I swore to your fathers, to give

them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is to-
day."

In response I said, "Amen, *ADONAI* ."

⁶ Then *ADONAI* said to me: "Proclaim all these words
in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem,
saying: 'Hear the words of this covenant, and do them.'

⁷ For I earnestly forewarned your fathers in the day
that I brought them up out of the land of Egypt until
this day, forewarning early and often, saying 'Listen to
My voice!' ⁸ Yet they would not obey or incline their
ear, but each one walked in the stubbornness of his
evil heart. Therefore, I brought on them all the words
of this covenant—which I commanded them to do, but
they did not."

⁹ Then *ADONAI* said to me, "A conspiracy has been dis-
covered among the men of Judah and the inhabitants
of Jerusalem. ¹⁰ They have turned back to the iniquities
of their forefathers who refused to hear My words.
They have gone after other gods to serve them.

"The house of Israel and the house of Judah have
broken My covenant which I made with their fathers."

¹¹ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI* . "I will soon bring a
disaster on them that they will not be able to escape.
They will cry out to Me, yet I will not listen to them.

¹² Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of
Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom
they burn incense—but they will not save them at all
in the time of their trouble. ¹³ For as numerous as your
cities are your gods, O Judah, and as numerous as the
streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to
the shameful thing—altars to burn incense to Baal.

¹⁴ As for you, you are not to pray for this people or lift
up supplication or prayer for them, for I will not hear
them at the time they cry out to Me because of their
disaster. ††

Olive Tree with Broken Branches

¹⁵ "What is My beloved doing in My House
as she does evil schemes with many?
Can holy meat prevent your disaster?
So you may rejoice?"

¹⁶ *ADONAI* called your name—a leafy olive tree, †
beautiful with well-formed fruit.
With the noise of a great tumult
He has set it on fire,
and its branches are broken.

¹⁷ "For *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* , who planted you, has pro-
nounced evil against you because of the evil of the
house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they
have done to themselves, provoking Me by offering
sacrifices to Baal." ¹⁸ Moreover, *ADONAI* gave me knowl-
edge of it, and I knew it, then You showed me their
deeds.

¹⁹ But I was like a gentle lamb led to slaughter. I did
not know they had devised plots against me: "Let us
destroy the tree with its fruit. Let us cut him off from

† cf. Jer. 7:23; Heb. 8:10.

†† cf. Jer. 7:16; 1 John 5:16. ‡ cf. Rom. 11:17.

the land of the living, so that his name will be no more remembered."

²⁰ But *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, who judges righteously, who tests the mind and the heart, let me see your vengeance on them. For to You I have made my cause known.

²¹ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI* concerning the men of Anathoth who seek your life, saying, "You must not prophesy in the Name of *ADONAI*, so you would not die by our hand." ²² Therefore, thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*: "I am about to punish them! The young men will die by the sword; their sons and their daughters will die by famine. ²³ No remnant will be left to them, for I will bring calamity on the men of Anathoth—the year of their visitation.

Why do the Wicked Prosper?

- 12** Righteous are You, *ADONAI*,
when I plead my case with You.
Yet I speak with You about justice.
Why does the way of the wicked prosper?
Why do all the treacherous thrive?
² You planted them, so they have taken root.
They are growing, bearing fruit.
You are near in their mouth,
yet far from their mind.
³ But You have known me, *ADONAI*.
You see me, and examine my heart toward You.
Drag them off like sheep for slaughter.
Set them apart for the day of carnage. †
⁴ How long will the land mourn
and the grass of all the field wither?
Because those living in it are evil,
beasts and birds are swept away.
For they said, "He cannot see our end."
⁵ "If you raced with those on foot
and they wore you out,
how can you compete with horses?
If you are secure in a land of peace,
how will you do in Jordan's thickets?
⁶ For even your brothers—your father's house—
even they will betray you,
even they will shout out after you.
Have no confidence in them,
even if they say nice words to you.
⁷ "I have abandoned My House.
I have forsaken My inheritance.
I have given the beloved of My soul
Into the hand of her enemies.
⁸ My inheritance became to Me
like a lion in the forest—
her voice roared against Me!
Therefore I despised her.
⁹ Is My inheritance a speckled vulture?
Are vultures circling all around her?
Go, gather all the wild beasts,
bring them for devouring!

ADONAI's Vineyard in Ruins

¹⁰ "Many shepherds ruined My vineyard.
They trampled My property.
They made My pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

¹¹ They made it a wasteland.
It mourns before Me, desolate.
The whole land will be laid waste,
because no one takes it to heart."
¹² On all the bare hills in the wilderness
destroyers have come.
For the sword of *ADONAI* is devouring
from the one end of the land to the other end of
the land.

No flesh has *shalom*.

¹³ They sowed wheat but reaped thorns.
They wore themselves out, gaining nothing.
So be ashamed of your harvest,
because of *ADONAI*'s fierce anger.

¹⁴ Thus says *ADONAI*, "As for all My evil neighbors
who strike at the inheritance that I bequeathed to My
people Israel—I am about to uproot them from their
land and pluck the house of Judah from them. ¹⁵ Yet it
will come to pass, after I have uprooted them, that I
will again have compassion on them and I will bring
them back, each one to his inheritance and each one
to his land.

¹⁶ "So it will come to pass, if they will diligently learn
the ways of My people—to swear by My Name, 'As
ADONAI lives,' just as they taught My people to swear
by Baal—then they will be built up in the midst of My
people. ¹⁷ But if they will not obey, then I will uproot
that nation, plucking it up and destroying it." It is a de-
claration of *ADONAI*.

Linen Waistband and Wine Jugs

13 Thus *ADONAI* said to me: "Go, and buy yourself a
linen waistband and put it around your waist,
and do not put it in water."

² So I got a waistband in keeping with the word of
ADONAI, and put it on my waist. ³ Then the word of
ADONAI came to me a second time, saying: ⁴ "Take the
waistband that you bought, which is on your waist,
and get up, go to Perath, †† and hide it there in a cleft
of the rock."

⁵ So I went and hid it at Perath, as *ADONAI* command-
ed me. ⁶ Now it came to pass after many days that
ADONAI said to me: "Get up, go to Perath, and take the
waistband that I commanded you to hide there." ⁷ So I
went to Perath, dug it up and took the waistband from
the place where I had hidden it. But to my surprise,
the waistband was marred, worth nothing at all.

⁸ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying, ⁹ thus
says *ADONAI*: "Just so I will mar the pride of Judah and
the great pride of Jerusalem. ¹⁰ This wicked people,

† cf. *Jacob* 5:5.

†† Possibly *Euphrates River*

who refuse to hear My words, who walk in the stubbornness of their own heart, and go after other gods to serve them and worship them, will be just like this waistband—worth nothing at all. ¹¹ For just as the waistband clings to a man's waist, so I will make the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to Me," declares *ADONAI*, "to be to Me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory. But they would not obey.

¹² "Moreover, speak this word to them, thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: "Every jug should be filled with wine. When they say to you, 'Don't we know very well that every jug should be filled with wine?' ¹³ Then you will say to them, thus says *ADONAI*, 'I am about to fill all the inhabitants of this land—even the kings who sit on David's throne, the *kohanim*, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness.

¹⁴ And I will smash them against each other, even fathers and sons,' says *ADONAI*. 'I will show no pity, nor regret, nor compassion, to keep Me from destroying them.'"

Darkness and Downfall

¹⁵ Hear and give ear!

Do not be haughty!

For *ADONAI* has spoken.

¹⁶ Give glory to *ADONAI* your God,

before it grows dark,

and before your feet stumble

on mountains at dusk.

When you look for light,

He turns it into the shadow of death,

and turns it into deep darkness.

¹⁷ But if you will not listen,

my soul will sob in secret

before such pride,

and my eyes will weep bitterly

and overflow with tears,

for *ADONAI*'s flock will be taken captive.

¹⁸ Say to the king and the queen mother:

"Sit down low,

for your glorious crown

has fallen from your head."

¹⁹ The towns of the South will be shut up,

with no one to open them.

All Judah is taken into exile—

utterly swept into exile.

²⁰ Lift up your eyes and see

those coming from the north.

Where is the flock given to you,

Your beautiful sheep?

²¹ What will you say, when He sets up the allies

you cultivated for yourself, over you as head?

Will not labor pains seize you,

like a woman in travail?

²² Suppose you say in your heart,

"Why did these things happen to me?"

Because of your great iniquity,

your skirts are uncovered

and your heels suffer violence.

²³ Can the Ethiopian change his skin?

Or the leopard his spots?

So, could you do good,

that are accustomed to doing evil?

²⁴ "Therefore I will scatter them

like drifting straw in the desert wind.

²⁵ This is your lot, the portion

measured for you from Me."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

"For you have forgotten Me

and trusted in falsehood.

²⁶ Therefore I will also uncover your skirts over your face,

expose your shame.

²⁷ Your adulteries, your lustful neighings,

the lewdness of your prostitution—

on the hills in the field

I have seen your loathsome acts.

O you, Jerusalem! You are unclean!

How much longer?"

Physical and Spiritual Drought

14 The word of *ADONAI* that came to Jeremiah concerning the droughts:

² Judah will mourn, and her gates languish.

They will bow in black to the ground

And Jerusalem's wail will go up.

³ Their nobles will send their lads for water.

They come to the cisterns,

but find no water.

Their jars return empty.

They are ashamed and humiliated;

they cover their heads.

⁴ Because the ground is cracked,

since there has been no rain in the land,

the farmers are ashamed—

they cover their heads.

⁵ For even the doe in the field

abandons her newborn fawn,

because there is no grass.

⁶ Wild donkeys stand on the barren hills,

as they pant for air like jackals.

Their eyes fail,

since there is no foliage.

⁷ Though our iniquities testify against us,

ADONAI, act for Your Name's sake.

For our backslidings are many.

We have sinned against You.

⁸ O hope of Israel,

Savior in time of trouble,

why are You like a stranger in the land,

or like a traveler who stays for a night?

⁹ Why are You like a man overcome,

like a champion who cannot save?

Yet you, *ADONAI*, are in our midst,

and we are called by Your Name.

Do not forsake us!

¹⁰ Thus says *ADONAI* to this people:
 "How they loved to wander.
 They did not restrain their feet."
 So *ADONAI* does not accept them.
 Now will He remember their iniquity,
 and punish their sins.

¹¹ So *ADONAI* said to me: "Do not pray for the good of this people. ¹² If they fast, I will not hear their cry. If they offer burnt offering or grain offering, I will not accept them. Instead, I will consume them with sword, with famine, and with plague."

¹³ Then I said: "Oh my Lord, *ADONAI*! The prophets keep telling them: 'You will not see the sword nor famine, but I will give you true peace in this place.'"

¹⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to me: "The prophets prophesy lies in My Name! I did not send them, nor commanded them, nor did I speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, divination, futility, a delusion of their heart."

¹⁵ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI*: "About the prophets who prophesy in My Name, though I did not send them, yet keep saying, 'Sword and famine will never be in this land'—by sword and famine will those prophets be consumed. ¹⁶ Also the people to whom they prophesy will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword. They will have no one to bury them, their wives, their sons, or their daughters. For I will pour their disaster on them."

¹⁷ You will say this word to them:
 "Let my eyes overflow with tears.
 Night and day, may they never stop.
 For the virgin daughter of my people
 is crushed with a great blow,
 with a sorely infected wound."

Intercessory Confession

¹⁸ If I go out into the field,
 see, those slain by the sword!
 And if I enter into the city,
 see, the sick with famine!
 For both prophet and *kohen*
 will travel to a land they do not know.

¹⁹ Have You utterly rejected Judah?
 Has Your soul loathed Zion?
 Why have You smitten us,
 and there is no healing for us?
 We looked for *shalom*,
 but nothing good came,
 and for a time of healing,
 but suddenly, terror! †

²⁰ We acknowledge our wickedness, *ADONAI*,
 the iniquity of our fathers,
 for we have sinned against You.

²¹ Do not despise us, for Your Name's sake.
 Do not dishonor Your glorious throne.
 Remember Your covenant with us—

do not break it!
²² Can any of the idols of the nations bring rain?
 Or can the skies grant showers?
 Is it not You, *ADONAI* our God?
 Do we not wait for You?
 For You have done all these things.

Who Grieves for Jerusalem?

¹⁵ Then said *ADONAI* to me: "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My soul could not be toward this people. Cast them out of My presence, and let them go out! ² It will come to pass, when they say to you, 'Where should we go?' Then you will tell them, thus says *ADONAI*:

"Those for death—to death!
 Those for the sword—to the sword!
 Those for famine—to famine!
 Those for exile—to exile! ††

³ I have appointed over them four kinds"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the sky, and the beasts of the earth to devour and to destroy. ‡

⁴ "So I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem.

⁵ "Who will have pity on you, Jerusalem?
 Or who will grieve for you?
 Or who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?"

⁶ You have cast Me off"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "You keep going backward!
 So I stretch out My hand against you
 and will destroy you.

I am weary with relenting.

⁷ I will scatter them with a winnowing fork
 at the gates of the land.

I will bereave them of children and destroy My people,
 since they do not repent of their ways.

⁸ Their widows will increase before Me
 more than the sand of the seas,
 I will bring a destroyer at noonday
 against the mother of a young man.
 Suddenly I will bring down on her
 anguish and terrors.

⁹ She who bore seven languishes.
 She breathes out her soul.
 Her sun sets while it is yet day.
 She is shamed and humiliated.
 Their survivors I give to the sword
 before their enemies."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁰ Oy to me, my mother,
 that you gave birth to me—
 a man of strife and conflict to all the land!
 I did not lend or borrow,

† cf. 1 Thes. 5:3.

†† cf. Rev. 13:10. ‡ cf. Rev. 6:4-8.

yet everyone curses me.

¹¹ *ADONAI* said:

“Surely I will release you for good.

Surely I will make the enemy appeal to you
in a time of trouble, in a time of affliction.

¹² Can anyone smash iron—
iron and bronze from the north?

¹³ Your wealth and your treasures
I will give as plunder without cost,
for all your sins, in all your borders.

¹⁴ I will take you away with your enemies
into a land you do not know,
for a fire is kindled in My nostril,
which will burn against you.”

¹⁵ *ADONAI*, you know.

Remember me and think of me.
Avenge me against my persecutors.
Because of Your long-suffering,
do not take me away.

Know that for Your sake I endure scorn.

¹⁶ Your words were found, so I ate them.

Your words were a delight to me
and the joy of my heart.

For I am called by Your Name,
ADONAI -Elohei-Tzva'ot.

¹⁷ I never sat in the company of revelers
nor made merry.

Because of Your hand I sat alone,
for You filled me with indignation.

¹⁸ Why is my pain unending
and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?
Will You be to me like a mirage
of water that is undependable?

¹⁹ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI* :

“If you return, I will restore you,
you will stand before Me.

If you extract the precious from the worthless,
you will be as My mouth.

Let them turn to you,
but you must not turn to them.

²⁰ I will make you a fortified bronze wall to this people.

They will fight against you,
but will not prevail against you,
for I am with you to save you
and deliver you.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

²¹ “So I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,
and I will redeem you out of the grasp of the ruthless.”

Jeremiah's Way of Living

16 The word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying: ² “You will not take a wife for yourself or have sons or daughters in this place.” ³ For thus says *ADONAI* about the sons and daughters born in this place, and about their mothers who give birth to them, and about their fathers who father them in this land: ⁴ “They will die of

deadly diseases. They will not be lamented or buried, but will be like dung on the surface of the ground. They will be consumed by the sword and famine, and their carcasses will be food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth.”

⁵ For thus says *ADONAI* : “Do not enter a house of mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them. For I have taken away My *shalom* from this people”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —“as well as My mercy and compassion. ⁶ Both great and small will die in this land; they will not be buried; neither will anyone lament for them, or cut themselves or shave his head for them. ⁷ No one will break bread for them in mourning, to give comfort for the dead. Nor will anyone offer a cup of consolation to drink for anyone's father or for his mother.

⁸ “You must not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat and to drink” ⁹ For thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: “I am about to eliminate from this place, before your eyes and in your days, the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

¹⁰ “Now it will come to pass, when You will tell this people all these words, they will say to you: ‘Why has *ADONAI* pronounced all this great evil against us? So what is our iniquity? So what is our sin that we have committed against *ADONAI* our God?’ ¹¹ Then will You say to them: ‘Because your fathers have forsaken Me,’ says *ADONAI*, ‘and have walked after other gods, served them and worshiped them, and have forsaken Me and have not kept My *Torah*. ¹² Yes, you have done worse than your fathers. For here you are, each of you walking after the stubbornness of his evil heart, not listening to Me. ¹³ So I will cast you out of this land into a land that you have not known—neither you nor your fathers—and there you will serve other gods day and night. For I will give you no grace.’

Returning From All Lands

¹⁴ “Therefore, the days are quickly coming,” declares *ADONAI*, “when it will no longer be said, ‘As *ADONAI* lives, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.’ ¹⁵ Rather, ‘As *ADONAI* lives, who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had banished them.’ So I will bring them back into their land that I gave to their fathers.

¹⁶ “Behold, I will send for many fishers,” says *ADONAI*, “and they will fish for them. After that, I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them down from every mountain and from every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. ¹⁷ For My eyes are on all their ways. They are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes. ¹⁸ First, I will repay them double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have profaned My land, and they have filled My possession with the carcasses of their vile things and their abominations.”

¹⁹ *ADONAI*, my strength, my stronghold,
my refuge in the day of affliction,
to You will the nations come
from the ends of the earth and say:
“Our fathers have inherited nothing
but lies, futility, and useless things.”
²⁰ Will man make gods for himself?
Yet they are not gods.
²¹ “So I will surely make them know—
this time I will make them know
My hand and My might—
they will know that My Name is *ADONAI* .

Hearts Engraved with Sin

17 “Judah’s sin is written with an iron pen
and with a point of a diamond,
engraved on the tablet of their heart
and on the horns of your altars.
² So their children remember their altars
and their Asherah poles by leafy trees on the high
hills.
³ My mountain in the country,
your wealth and all your treasures
I will give away as plunder,
along with your high places
for sin within all your borders.
⁴ So you, on your own,
let go of your heritage that I gave you.
So I will make you serve your enemies
in a land that you do not know.
For you have kindled a fire in My nose
that will burn forever.”

Planted by the Water Without Fear

⁵ Thus says *ADONAI* :
“Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
and depends on flesh as his arm,
and whose heart turns from *ADONAI* .
⁶ For he will be like a bush in the desert.
He cannot see goodness when it comes,
but will dwell in parched places in the wilderness—
a salt land where no one lives.
⁷ Blessed is the one who trusts in *ADONAI* ,
whose confidence is in *ADONAI* .
⁸ For he will be like a tree planted by the waters,
spreading out its roots by a stream.
It has no fear when heat comes,
but its leaves will be green.
It does not worry in a year of drought,
nor depart from yielding fruit.

A Deceitful Heart is Incurable

⁹ “The heart is deceitful above all things,
and incurable—who can know it?
¹⁰ I *ADONAI* search the heart,
I try the mind,
to give every man according to his ways,

according to the fruit of his deeds.

¹¹ As a partridge that broods over young that she did
not lay,
so is one who gets wealth, unjustly.
In the middle of his days it will abandon him,
so at his end he will be a fool.” †
¹² Throne of glory on high from the beginning!
Place of our sanctuary,
¹³ *ADONAI* , You are the hope of Israel!
All who forsake You will be ashamed.
Those who depart from You
will be written in the dirt,
for they have forsaken *ADONAI* ,
the fountain of living waters.
¹⁴ Heal me, *ADONAI* , and I will be healed.
Save me, and I will be saved.
For You are my praise.
¹⁵ Look, they are saying to me,
“Where is the word of *ADONAI* ?
Let it come now!” ††
¹⁶ As for me, I have not run away from being a shep-
herd after You,
nor have I desired the woeful day.
What came out of my lips You know—it was before
You.
¹⁷ Be not a ruin to me—
You are my refuge in the evil day.
¹⁸ Let my persecutors be ashamed,
yet let me not be ashamed.
Let them be dismayed,
but let me not be dismayed.
Bring on them the evil day,
Destroy them with double destruction.

Carry No Burdens on *Shabbat*

¹⁹ Thus said *ADONAI* to me: “Go, stand in the gate of
the children of the people, through which the kings of
Judah come in and go out, and in all the gates of
Jerusalem, ²⁰ and say to them: ‘Hear the word of *ADONAI* ,
kings of Judah, and all Judah and all inhabitants of
Jerusalem who enter through these gates! ²¹ Thus says
ADONAI , “Guard your souls! Carry no burden on the
day of *Shabbat* or bring it in through the gates of
Jerusalem. ²² Nor should you carry a burden out of
your houses on *Yom Shabbat* or do any work, but keep
Yom Shabbat holy—as I commanded your fathers.”
²³ Yet they did not listen or incline their ear, but stiff-
ened their neck, not hearing or accepting correction.
²⁴ “However, if you listen attentively to Me,” says
ADONAI , “to bring in no burden through the gates of
this city on *Yom Shabbat* , but sanctify *Yom Shabbat*
and do no work on it, ²⁵ then there will enter in
through the gates of this city kings and princes sitting
on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on hors-
es—with their princes, the people of Judah, and those
dwelling in Jerusalem—and this city will be inhabited
forever. ²⁶ They will come from the cities of Judah and

† cf. Luke 12:20. †† cf. 2 Pet. 3:4.

from all around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, from the lowland, from the hill country, and from the South, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings, frankincense, and sacrifices of thanksgiving to the House of *ADONAI*.

²⁷ "But if you do not listen to Me to keep *Yom Shabbat* holy, by not bearing a burden or entering through the gates of Jerusalem on *Yom Shabbat*, then I will set its gates on fire, and it will consume the citadels of Jerusalem, and not be quenched."

The Potter's House

18 The word came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, saying: ² "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words."

³ So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was making a work on the wheels. ⁴ Whenever the pot that he was making from the clay became flawed in the hand of the potter, he remade it into another pot, as it pleased the potter to make.

⁵ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying: ⁶ "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?" declares *ADONAI*. "Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel. ⁷ At one moment I may speak about a nation or about a kingdom, to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it. ⁸ But if that nation turns from their evil, because of what I have spoken against it, I will relent concerning the calamity that I planned to do to it. ⁹ Or at another time I may speak about a nation or about a kingdom, to build up or to plant it. ¹⁰ But if it does evil in My sight, not listening to My voice, then I will relent of the good that I had said I would do to it.

¹¹ "So now, speak to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, thus says *ADONAI*: 'I am about to bring calamity against you, and devise disaster against you. Turn back now—everyone from his evil way—and amend your ways and your doings.'

¹² "But they say: 'It's hopeless! So we will walk after our own plans, and each of us will act in the stubbornness of his evil heart.'"

¹³ Therefore thus says *ADONAI*: "Ask now among the nations, whoever has heard such things? The virgin of Israel has done a most terrible thing.

¹⁴ Does the snow of Lebanon abandon the rock of the field? Or is the cold water flowing from afar pulled back?

¹⁵ Yet My people have forgotten Me. They burn incense to a delusion and stumble in their ways—off the ancient paths—to walk on sidetracks, rather than a built-up highway.

¹⁶ Their land will become a horror, a perpetual hissing—

every one passing by will be stunned and shake his head.

¹⁷ Like an east wind, I will scatter them before the enemy. I will see their back, not their face, in the day of their calamity."

Plots Against Jeremiah

¹⁸ Then they said: "Come, let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely *Torah* from the *kohen* will not be lost, nor will counsel from the wise, nor will the word from the prophet. Come, let's strike at him with the tongue and pay no attention to any of his words."

¹⁹ Be attentive to me, *ADONAI*! Listen to the voice of my opponents.

²⁰ Will good be repaid for evil?

For they dug a pit for my soul. Remember how I stood before You to speak good on their behalf, to turn Your wrath from them.

²¹ Therefore, give their children to famine and pour out the power of the sword. Let their wives be bereaved of children and widows, and let their men be slain to death, and their young men struck down by the sword in battle.

²² Let a cry be heard from their houses when suddenly You bring a troop on them. For they dug a pit to capture me, and hid snares for my feet.

²³ Yet You know their whole plot, *ADONAI*, against me to slay me. Do not forgive their iniquity or blot out their sin before You. But make them stumble before You. Act against them in the time of Your anger.

Shattering a Clay Jar

19 Thus said *ADONAI*: "Go, buy a potter's clay jar, take some elders of the people, some elders of the *kohanim*, ² and go out to the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, near the entrance of the Potsherd Gate. Proclaim there the words that I will tell you, ³ and say, "Hear the word of *ADONAI*, kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: 'I am about to bring such a catastrophe on this place that whoever hears about it, his ears will tingle. ⁴ For they have forsaken Me and have alienated this place, by burning sacrifices in it to other gods, which neither they nor their forefathers, nor the kings of Judah have known. They have also filled this place with the blood of innocents. ⁵ They have built high places for Baal, in order to burn their children in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal—something I never commanded, nor mentioned, nor did it ever come into My mind.'"

⁶“Therefore behold, the days are coming”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“when this place will no longer be called Topheth or The Valley of Ben-Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. ⁷ So I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place. I will have them fall by the sword before their enemies, by the hand of them that seek their life. I will give their carcasses as food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth. ⁸ And I will make this city a horror and a hissing—every one passing by will be stunned and hiss because of all her wounds. ⁹ And I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and their daughters, and everyone will eat his companion’s flesh during the siege and distress, which their enemies and those who seek their life will inflict on them.

¹⁰“Then you will shatter the jar in the presence of the people who accompany you, ¹¹ and say to them, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*: ‘Even so I will shatter this people and this city, as one shatters a potter’s jar, which can never be made whole again. So they will be burying in Topheth, for there will be no other place to bury.’”

¹²“Thus I will do to this place”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“and to its inhabitants, making this city as Topheth. ¹³ The houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be as defiled as the place Topheth—all the houses on whose roofs they burned incense to the whole heavenly host and poured out drink offerings to other gods.”

¹⁴Then Jeremiah came from Topheth, where *ADONAI* had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the court of *ADONAI*’s House, and said to all the people, ¹⁵ thus says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel: “I am about to bring on this city and on all her towns the whole disaster that I pronounced against it, because they stiffened their neck, rather than hearing My words.”

Confronting a False Prophet

20 When Pashhur son of Immer the *kohen*, who was chief officer in the House of *ADONAI*, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things, ² Pashhur had Jeremiah the prophet beaten and put in the stocks [†] at the Upper Benjamin Gate by the House of *ADONAI*. ³ The following morning, Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks.

Then Jeremiah said to him, “*ADONAI* no longer calls your name Pashhur, but Magormissabib ^{††}. ⁴ For thus says *ADONAI*: ‘Behold, I will make you a terror both to yourself and to everyone you love. They will fall by the sword of their enemies, while your eyes look on. So I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will carry them captive to Babylon and will slay them with the sword.

⁵“Moreover, I will give away all the wealth of this city, and all its produce and its precious things, even all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will give over to the hand of their enemies, who will plunder them, take them away, and bring them to Babylon.

⁶“As for you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house, you will go into captivity, and you will go to Babylon. So there you will die, and there you will be buried—you and all your friends—to whom you have prophesied falsely.”

Fire Burning in My Bones

⁷ *ADONAI*, You enticed me, so I was enticed. You overpowered me, and prevailed. I am a laughingstock all day long. Everyone mocks me.

⁸ For whenever I speak, I cry out, I proclaim, “Violence and ruin!” For the word of *ADONAI* is scorn and ridicule to me all day long.

⁹ But if I say: “I won’t mention Him, or speak any more in His Name,” then it is like fire burning in my heart—shut up in my bones—I weary myself holding it in, but I cannot.

¹⁰ For I heard the whispering of many: “Terror on every side?

Denounce him! Let’s denounce him!”

Even all my close friends are watching for my fall:

“Perhaps he may be deceived, so we’ll get the better of him, and we’ll get our revenge on him.”

¹¹ But *ADONAI* is with me like a dreadful warrior. Therefore my persecutors will stumble and will not prevail.

Since they are not insightful and not wise, they will be utterly shamed—an everlasting disgrace, never to be forgotten.

¹² Yet, *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*—testing the righteous, seeing the mind and the heart, let me see Your vengeance on them!

For to You have I presented my case.

¹³ Sing to *ADONAI*, praise *ADONAI*!

For He has delivered the soul of the needy one from the hand of evildoers.

¹⁴ Cursed be the day I was born!

The day that my mother bore me—may it never be blessed!

¹⁵ Cursed be the one who brought the news to my father,

saying, “A baby boy is born to you!” making him so glad.

¹⁶ Now let that one be like the cities which *ADONAI* overturned, with no relenting—let him hear a cry in the morning and a shout of alarm at noon,

¹⁷ since he did not kill me in the womb, so my mother might have been my grave—her womb filled forever.

¹⁸ Why did I ever come forth out of the womb to see trouble and sorrow,

[†] cf. Acts 16:23-24. ^{††} Meaning Terror on Every Side

and my days end in shame?

Warning to King Zedekiah and Judah

21 The word which came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malchiah and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the *kohen*, saying: ²“Please inquire of *ADONAI* for us, since Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon is making war against us. Perhaps *ADONAI* would deal with us according to all His wondrous miracles—so that he would withdraw from us?”

³Then said Jeremiah to them, “Thus will you say to Zedekiah, ⁴thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: ‘I will soon turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, which you use to fight against the king of Babylon and against the Chaldeans, who are besieging you outside the walls—I will assemble them in the center of this city. ⁵I myself will fight against you, with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even with anger, fury, and in great wrath. ⁶I will also strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast—they will die of a great pestilence.”

⁷“Then afterward,” declares *ADONAI*, “I will deliver King Zedekiah of Judah and his servants, as well as the people—those surviving in this city from the pestilence, the sword and the famine—into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, into the hand of their foes, yes, into the hand of those who seek their life. So he will smite them with the edge of the sword; he will not spare them, nor have pity or compassion.”

⁸Now to this people you will say, thus says *ADONAI*: “Look, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. ⁹He who remains in this city will die by the sword, by the famine, or by the pestilence. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you, he will live, and he will have his life as prize.”

¹⁰“For I have set My face against this city for evil, not for good.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. “It will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire.”

¹¹Also to the house of the king of Judah, hear the word of *ADONAI*, ¹²O house of David, thus says *ADONAI*: “Render justice by morning, and rescue the one who is robbed out of the hand of the oppressor. Otherwise My fury will go forth like fire and burn so none can extinguish it, because of their evil deeds.”

¹³“Here I am, against you, situated in the valley, a rocky plateau,”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“you are saying, ‘Who would come down against us? Who would enter into our lairs?’ ¹⁴I will punish you according to the fruit of your deeds.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

“Also, I will set fire to her forest, and it will consume all around her.”

Warning to David's Heirs

22 Thus said *ADONAI*: “Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and speak this word:

²“Hear the word of *ADONAI*, O king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David—you, your servants, and your people who enter by these gates.’ ³Thus says *ADONAI*: ‘Execute justice and righteousness. Rescue the one who is robbed out of the hand of the oppressor. Do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow. Do not shed innocent blood in this place. ⁴For if you really carry out this word, then through the gates of this palace will enter kings sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses—himself, his servants, and his people. ⁵But if you will not obey these words, I swear by Myself,’ declares *ADONAI*, ‘that this palace will become a ruin.”

⁶For thus says *ADONAI* concerning the house of the king of Judah:

“You are Gilead to Me—the summit of Lebanon, yet I will surely make you into a wilderness, uninhabited cities.

⁷I will consecrate destroyers against you, each with his own weapons.

They will cut down your choice cedars and cast them into the fire.

⁸Many nations will pass by this city, and they will say, each to his neighbor, ‘Why has *ADONAI* done such a thing to this great city?’ ⁹Then they will answer: ‘Because they abandoned the covenant of *ADONAI* their God, and worshiped other gods and served them.”

¹⁰Weep not for the dead or bemoan him.

Weep bitterly for him who departs,

for he will never return,

or see his native country again.

¹¹For thus says *ADONAI* to Shallum, son of King Josiah of Judah, who became king in place of his father Josiah: “He who went forth from this place will never return there. ¹²Instead, in the place where they led him captive, there will he die—he will see this land no more.”

¹³Oy to him who builds his house by unrighteousness,

and his roof-chambers by injustice,

that makes his neighbor work without pay,

never giving him his wages,

¹⁴who says: “I will build myself a big house with spacious rooms

and cut out my windows for it,

and panel it with cedar,

and paint it with vermilion!

¹⁵Did you become king

just to be striving with cedar?

Did your father not eat and drink,

and do justice and righteousness?

Then it went well with him.

¹⁶He pled the case of the poor and weak,

so it went well.

Is not this knowledge of Me?"

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁷ "But your eyes and your heart are only on your unjust gain, and on shedding innocent blood, and committing extortion and fraud."

¹⁸ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI* about Jehoiakim son of King Josiah of Judah:

"They will not lament for him,

'Oy, my brother!' or 'Oy, sister!'

They will not lament for him,

'Oy, master!' or 'Oy, his majesty!'

¹⁹ With a donkey's burial will he be buried, dragged off and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem.

²⁰ Go up to Lebanon and cry out, and lift up your voice in Bashan, and cry from Abarim—

for all your lovers are broken.

²¹ I spoke to you in your prosperity, but you said, 'I won't listen!'

This has been your way since your youth— for you never listened to My voice.

²² The wind will shepherd away all of your shepherds, and your lovers will go into exile.

Surely then you will be ashamed and humbled by all your wickedness.

²³ O inhabitant of Lebanon, nestled in the cedars, how you will groan when pangs come on you, pain like a woman in travail!

²⁴ "As I live," declares *ADONAI*, "even if Coniah son of King Jehoiakim of Judah were a signet ring on My right hand, yet I would pull you off, ²⁵ and give you over into the hand of those seeking your life, yes, into the hand of those whom you dread, even into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. ²⁶ So I will cast you out, with your mother who bore you, into another country where you were not born—and there will you die. ²⁷ But as for the land where they long to return, they will never return there."

²⁸ Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered pot—a jar with no delight in it?

Why are he and his seed cast out into the land they do not know?

²⁹ O land, land, land, hear the word of *ADONAI*!

³⁰ Thus says *ADONAI*:

"Write this man childless, a man who will not prosper in his days. For no man of his seed will prosper, sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah."

Gathering His Flock

23 "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!" It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

² Therefore, thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, about the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and have not taken care of them. I will soon visit on you the evil of your deeds." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³ "I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and will bring them back to their folds, and they will be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will raise up shepherds over them who will feed them. They will no longer be afraid or dismayed, nor will any be missing." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

The Righteous Branch

⁵ "Behold, days are coming"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—

"when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and He will reign as king wisely †, and execute justice and righteousness in the land.

⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell in safety; and this is His Name by which He will be called: *ADONAI* our righteousness.

⁷ "Therefore, behold, days are coming," says *ADONAI*, "when they will no longer say: 'As *ADONAI* lives, who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.' ⁸ Rather, 'As *ADONAI* lives, who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and from all the lands where He had banished them.' So they will dwell in their own soil.

Avoid Ungodly Prophets

⁹ "As for the prophets: My heart within me is broken, all my bones shake.

I am like a drunken man, like a man overcome by wine because of *ADONAI*, because of His holy words.

¹⁰ For the land is full of adulterers. The land mourns because of a curse. Pastures of the wilderness are dry.

Their running is evil, and their might is not right.

¹¹ For both prophet and *kohen* are ungodly. Even in My House I found their evil." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹² "Therefore, their way will be for them like slippery places in the gloom.

They will be driven away and fall there, for I will bring calamity on them, even the year of their visitation."

† Or and prosper

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹³ “Moreover, I have seen unseemliness in the prophets of Samaria: they prophesied by Baal, and led My people Israel astray.

¹⁴ But in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: committing adultery and walking in lies. They strengthen the hands of evildoers. No one turns back from his evil. They are all like Sodom to Me and her inhabitants like Gomorrah.”

¹⁵ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot* concerning the prophets:

“I myself will feed them wormwood and make them drink poisoned water. For from the prophets of Jerusalem pollution has spread into all the land.”

¹⁶ Thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot* :
“Do not listen to the words of prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into illusion, speaking a vision of their own heart and not out of the mouth of *ADONAI* .

¹⁷ They keep saying to those who despise Me, ‘*ADONAI* has said, you will have *shalom* .’ To everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart they say:

‘No evil will come on you.’”

¹⁸ For who has stood in the council of *ADONAI* , that he should see and hear His word? Who has heard to His word and obeyed?

¹⁹ Look, a storm of *ADONAI* goes out in fury, yes, a whirling tempest will swirl down on the head of the wicked.

²⁰ The anger of *ADONAI* will not turn until He has executed and fulfilled the purposes of His heart. In the last days you will discern it clearly.

²¹ “I did not send those prophets, yet they ran.

I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

²² If they have stood in My council, then they would have announced My words to My people,

and turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.

²³ Am I God only when near”
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
“and not God when far off?

²⁴ Can anyone hide himself in places so secret that I will not see him?

Do I not fill heaven and earth?”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

²⁵ “I have heard what the prophets said, who prophesy lies in My Name, saying: ‘I had a dream, I had a dream!’ ²⁶ How long will this continue? Is there any-

thing in the heart of such prophets prophesying lies? These prophets have deception in their heart.

²⁷ Through their dreams that they each tell to his companion, that intend to make My people forget My Name—just as their fathers forgot My Name because of Baal.

²⁸ “The prophet who has a dream may recount a dream, but let the one who has My word speak My word in truth.

For what is straw compared with wheat?”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

²⁹ “Is not My word like fire?” says *ADONAI* ,
“or like a hammer that shatters rock?

³⁰ “Therefore here I am against the prophets”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —“who steal My words from each other. ³¹ Indeed, I am against the prophets,” declares *ADONAI* , “who use their tongues to utter a prophecy, ‘It is a declaration!’ ³² Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams,” declares *ADONAI* , “and tell them, and so lead My people astray with their lies and with their reckless boasts. Yet I never sent them or commanded them. Nor do they benefit this people at all.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

³³ “Now when this people or a prophet or a *kohen* is asking you: ‘What is the burden † of *ADONAI* ?’ then you are to say to them, ‘What burden? I will cast you off!’” It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

³⁴ “As for the prophet or *kohen* or people who keep saying, ‘The burden of *ADONAI* !’—I will punish that man and his household. ³⁵ Thus each of you may say to his companion and each one to his brother, ‘What has *ADONAI* answered?’ or ‘What has *ADONAI* spoken?’ ³⁶ But *you* should no longer remember ‘the burden of *ADONAI* ’—for to each one, his own word is becoming ‘the burden!’ So you have perverted the words of the living God, of *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot* our God.

³⁷ “So you are to say to such a prophet, ‘What has *ADONAI* answered you?’ and ‘What has *ADONAI* spoken?’

³⁸ But if you say, ‘The burden of *ADONAI* ,’ then surely *ADONAI* says, ‘because you keep saying this word: “The burden of *ADONAI* ,” when I sent this word to you, you are not to say “The burden of *ADONAI* ”— ³⁹ therefore, I will surely forget you when I will cast you off, along with the city that I gave to you and to your fathers, away from My presence. ⁴⁰ Then I will bring everlasting disgrace on you and everlasting shame that will not be forgotten.’”

Parable of the Baskets of Figs

24 *ADONAI* showed me, all of a sudden, there were two baskets of figs set before the Temple of *ADONAI* . It was after King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon had taken away into exile Jeconiah son of King Jehoiakim of Judah and the princes of Judah, along with the craftsmen and smiths from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

† Or *weighty oracle*

² One basket had very good figs, like the figs that are first ripe, but the other basket had very bad figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. ³ Then *ADONAI* said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?"

So I said, "Figs—the good figs are very good, but the bad are very bad, and cannot be eaten, they are so bad."

⁴ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying, ⁵ thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: "Like these good figs, so will I regard the exiles of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place to the land of the Chaldeans, as good.

⁶ I will set My eyes on them as good. I will bring them back to this land, and I will build them up and not pull them down; I will plant them and not uproot them.

⁷ Then I will give them a heart to know Me—for I am *ADONAI*—and they will be My people, and I will be their God. † For they will return to Me with their whole heart.

⁸ "Now as for the bad figs, which cannot be eaten they are so bad"—surely thus says *ADONAI*—"so I will give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, his princes and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, as well as those dwelling in the land of Egypt. ⁹ I will even give them as a horror, as an evil thing, among all the kingdoms of the earth—as a disgrace and a proverb, a taunt and a curse—in all places where I will drive them. ¹⁰ I will also send the sword, famine, and pestilence among them, until they be consumed from off the land that I gave to them and to their fathers."

Unheard Voice of the Prophets

25 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon). ² Jeremiah the prophet spoke it to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: ³ "From the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, until this day—these 23 years—the word of *ADONAI* has come to me. So I have spoken to you, speaking early and often, but you have not listened. ⁴ Moreover, *ADONAI* has sent to you all His servants the prophets, sending them early and often—but you have not listened or inclined your ear to hear— ⁵ saying: 'Turn, now, everyone from his evil way, and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell in the land that *ADONAI* has given to you and to your fathers forever and ever. ⁶ Do not go after other gods to serve them, to worship them, and so do not provoke Me with the work of your hands, so I would do you no harm.'

⁷ "Yet you have not listened to Me," declares *ADONAI*. "So you are provoking Me with the work of your hands, to your own hurt."

⁸ Therefore, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*: "Since you have not heard My words, ⁹ I will soon send for and bring all the families of the north"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"and I will send for King Nebuchadrezzar

of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, and against its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about, and I will utterly destroy them, and make them a horror, and a hissing, an enduring desolation.

¹⁰ "Moreover, I will silence among them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, †† the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.

Seventy Years of Desolation

¹¹ "So this whole land will be a desolate ruin, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for 70 years. ¹² Then it will come to pass, when 70 years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation," declares *ADONAI*, "the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, and I will make it ruins forever. ¹³ I will bring on that land all My words which I pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. ¹⁴ For many nations and great kings will make slaves of them also. So I will repay them according to their deeds and according to the work of their own hands."

Cup of Fury and Reeling

¹⁵ For thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, to me: "Take this cup of the wine of fury from My hand, and make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. ¹⁶ They will drink, and reel to and fro, and be like madmen, because of the sword that I will send among them. ¹⁷ Then I took the cup from *ADONAI*'s hand, and made all the nations drink, to whom *ADONAI* had sent me: ¹⁸ Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with its kings and its princes—to make them an appalling horror and hissing, a curse as it is this day; ¹⁹ Pharaoh king of Egypt, with his servants, his princes, and all his people; ²⁰ and all the mingled people, all the kings of the land of Uz, all the kings of the land of the Philistines, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; ²¹ Edom, Moab, and Ammon's children; ²² all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the coastland across the sea; ²³ Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who shave the corners ‡; ²⁴ all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the mixed people dwelling in the wilderness; ²⁵ all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media; ²⁶ all the kings of the north, either far or close to another; and all the kingdoms of the world which are on the face of the earth. And the king of Sheshach †† will drink after them."

²⁷ And you will say to them, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "Drink, be drunken, vomit, fall down, and rise no more, because of the sword that I will send among you." ²⁸ And if they refuse to take the cup at your hand to drink, then here is what you will

† cf. Heb. 8:10.

†† cf. Rev. 18:23. ‡ Or who live in distant places †† Cryptic name for Babylon

say to them: "Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, you will surely drink! ²⁹ See, I am beginning to bring evil on the city where My name is called, and should you go completely unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth." It is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.

³⁰ Therefore you are to prophesy against them all these words, and say to them:

"*ADONAI* is roaring from on high,
giving voice from His holy dwelling.
He roars mightily over His sheepfold.
He shouts like those who tread grapes,
against all who dwell on the earth.

³¹ A noise has come to the end of the earth,
for *ADONAI* has a dispute with the nations.
He is passing judgment on all flesh.

As for the wicked, He has given them over to the sword."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³² Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*: "Evil will soon go forth from nation to nation. A great storm is being stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. ³³ Those slain by *ADONAI* on that day will be from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth. They will not be lamented, gathered, or buried; they will be dung on the surface of the ground."

³⁴ Wail, you shepherds, and cry!

Wallow in the dust, you leaders of the flock!
For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions
are full.

You will fall like a precious vase.

³⁵ For the shepherds will have no way to flee,
nor the leaders of the flock to escape.

³⁶ Hark! The outcry of the shepherds,
the wailing of the leaders of the flock!
For *ADONAI* is ravaging their pasture.

³⁷ The peace of the pasture is stifled
because of the fierce anger of *ADONAI*.

³⁸ He has left His lair, like a lion.
For their land has become a waste,
because of the fury of the oppressor
and because of His fierce anger.

Surviving a Death Sentence

26 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from *ADONAI*, saying, ² thus says *ADONAI*: "Stand in the court of *ADONAI*'s House, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in *ADONAI*'s House all the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not omit a word! ³ Perhaps they will listen, and turn every man from his evil way, so I may relent of the calamity which I am planning to do to them because of the evil of their deeds."

⁴ Then you will say to them, thus says *ADONAI*: "If you will not listen to Me, by walking in My *Torah*, which I have set before you, ⁵ and by listening to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I have been sending

to you, early and often—but you have not listened—
⁶ then I will make this House like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth."

⁷ So the *kohanim*, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the House of *ADONAI*.

⁸ Now when Jeremiah finished speaking all that *ADONAI* had commanded him to speak to all the people, the *kohanim* and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying: "You will surely die! ⁹ Why have you prophesied in the Name of *ADONAI*, saying, 'This House will be like Shiloh, and this city will be an uninhabited ruin?'" Then all the people gathered against Jeremiah in the House of *ADONAI*.

¹⁰ When the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's palace to the House of *ADONAI*, and sat in the entrance of the New Gate of *ADONAI*'s House. ¹¹ The *kohanim* and the prophets spoke to the princes and to all the people, saying: "A death sentence for this man! For he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."

¹² Then Jeremiah spoke to all the princes and to all the people, saying: "*ADONAI* sent me to prophesy all the words you have heard against this House and against this city. ¹³ So now, mend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of *ADONAI* your God; so *ADONAI* will relent of the calamity that He has pronounced against you.

¹⁴ "But as for me, here I am in your hand; do with me as is good and right in your eyes. ¹⁵ Only know for certain that, if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood on yourselves, on this city, and on its inhabitants. For in truth *ADONAI* has sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

¹⁶ Then said the princes and all the people to the *kohanim* and to the prophets: "No death sentence for this man! For he has spoken to us in the Name of *ADONAI* our God."

¹⁷ Then some of the elders of the land rose up and addressed all the assembly of the people, saying: ¹⁸ "Micah the Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*:
"Zion will be plowed as a field,
and Jerusalem will become ruins,
and the mountain of the House
as the high places of a forest."

¹⁹ "Did King Hezekiah of Judah and all Judah put him to death? Didn't he fear *ADONAI* and plead for the favor of *ADONAI*, and then *ADONAI* relented of the calamity that He had pronounced against them? So we may be committing great evil against our own souls."

²⁰ Now there was a man who had prophesied in the Name of *ADONAI*, Uriah son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-Jearim. He prophesied against this city and against this land words like all those of Jeremiah. ²¹ When king Jehoiakim with all his mighty men and all the princes heard his words, the king sought to put him to death.

But when Uriah heard it, he was afraid and fled, and went to Egypt. ²² So king Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt—Elnathan son of Achbor and some others with him— ²³ and they brought Uriah back from Egypt, and led him to King Jehoiakim, who slew him with the sword, and threw his corpse into the burial place of the common people.

²⁴ Nevertheless, the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so that they did not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

Jeremiah Wears a Yoke

27 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, saying— ² thus says *ADONAI* to me—“Make straps and yoke-bars, and put them on your neck. ³ Then send such to the king of Edom, to the king of Moab, to the king of Ammon’s children, to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of messengers that come to Jerusalem to King Zedekiah of Judah. ⁴ Charge them to their masters, saying, thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, thus will you say to your masters: ⁵ ‘I have made the earth, mankind and beast which are on the face of the earth, by My great power and by My outstretched arm—and I give it to whom it seems right to Me. ⁶ So now I have given all these lands into the hand of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, My servant. I have even given the beasts of the field to serve him. ⁷ All the nations will serve him—and his son, and his grandson—until the time of his own land comes, and then many nations and great kings will make him their slave.’

⁸ “Now it will be, that the nation or the kingdom which will not serve the same king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will punish with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence,” declares *ADONAI*, “until I have destroyed it by his hand. ⁹ But as for you, do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreams, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, ‘You will not serve the king of Babylon.’ ¹⁰ For they prophesy a lie to you, in order to remove you far from your land, so that I would drive you out and you would perish.

¹¹ “But the nation that will bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, that nation I will let remain in its land, and they will till it and dwell in it.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹² Then I spoke to king Zedekiah of Judah with all these same words, saying: “Put your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, serve him and his people—and live. ¹³ Why should you die—you and your people—by the sword, by famine, or by pestilence, as *ADONAI* has spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? ¹⁴ Do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, ‘You will not serve the king of Babylon,’ for they prophesy a lie to you.

¹⁵ “For I have not sent them,” says *ADONAI*, “and they prophesy falsely in My Name, with the result that I will drive you out, and that you will perish—you and the prophets that prophesy to you.”

¹⁶ Then I spoke to the *kohanim* and to all this people, saying, thus says *ADONAI*: “Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying: ‘See, the vessels of *ADONAI*’s House will now shortly be brought back from Babylon’—for they prophesy a lie to you. ¹⁷ Do not listen to them. Serve the king of Babylon, and live. Why should this city become a ruin?

¹⁸ But if they are prophets, and if the word of *ADONAI* is with them, let them now make intercession to *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, that the vessels that are left in the House of *ADONAI*, in the palace of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem, would not go to Babylon.”

¹⁹ For thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* concerning the pillars, the sea, the bases, and the rest of the vessels that remain in this city, ²⁰ which king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has not taken, when he carried away captive Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, along with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem, ²¹ yes, thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the House of *ADONAI*, in the house of the king of Judah and at Jerusalem: ²² “They will be brought to Babylon, and there will they be until the day that I take note of them”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“and bring them up and restore them to this place.”

A False Prophecy, Too Soon

28 Now it was the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah son of Azzur the prophet from Gibeon spoke to me in the House of *ADONAI*, in the presence of the *kohanim* and of all the people, saying, ² thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, saying: “I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon! ³ Within two full years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of *ADONAI*’s House that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place and brought to Babylon. ⁴ I will also bring Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, back to this place with all the captives of Judah that went to Babylon”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.”

⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the *kohanim* and in the presence of all the people that stood in *ADONAI*’s House. ⁶ So the prophet Jeremiah said: “Amen! May *ADONAI* do so! May *ADONAI* fulfill your words that you have prophesied, bringing back the vessels of *ADONAI*’s House and all those who are taken away captive, from Babylon to this place! ⁷ Yet hear now this word that I am speaking in your ears and in the ears of all the people. ⁸ The prophets who have been before me and before you of ancient times prophesied against many countries and against great kingdoms—of war,

catastrophe and plague. ⁹ The prophet who prophesies *shalom*—when the word of the prophet has come to pass, then will the prophet be known as one that *ADONAI* has truly sent.”

¹⁰ Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke-bar from off the prophet Jeremiah’s neck and broke it.

¹¹ Hananiah proclaimed in the presence of all the people, saying, thus says *ADONAI*: “Just so I will break the yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon from off the neck of all the nations within two full years.” So the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

¹² Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke-bar from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying: ¹³ “Go, tell Hananiah, saying, thus says *ADONAI*: ‘You have broken the yoke-bars of wood—but in its place you will make yoke-bars of iron.’” ¹⁴ For thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel: “I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, so that they may serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. They will serve him, and I have also given him the beasts of the field.”

¹⁵ Then said the prophet Jeremiah to the prophet Hananiah: “Hear now, Hananiah! *ADONAI* has not sent you, yet you have caused this people to trust in a lie. ¹⁶ Therefore thus says *ADONAI*: ‘I am about to send you away from off the face of the earth. This year you will die, since you have spoken apostasy against *ADONAI*.’”

¹⁷ So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

After Seventy Years, a Future Hope

29 Now these are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the elders remaining in exile, as well as to the *kohanim*, the prophets, and to all the people Nebuchadnezzar had carried off captive from Jerusalem to Babylon ² (after Jeconiah the king, the queen-mother, the officers, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen and the smiths, had to leave Jerusalem). The letter was sent ³ by the hand of Elasah son of Shaphan, and Gemariah son of Hilkiyah, whom king Zedekiah of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying, ⁴ thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, to all those in captivity, whom I removed as captives into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

⁵ “Build houses and live in them; also plant gardens and eat their fruit; ⁶ take wives and have sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷ Also seek the *shalom* of the city where I took you as captives in exile, and pray to *ADONAI* for it—for in its *shalom* will you have *shalom*.”

⁸ For thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: “Do not let your prophets who are among you or your diviners beguile you, and pay no attention to the dreams which you make them keep dreaming. ⁹ For they prophesy

falsely to you in My Name; I have not sent them.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁰ For thus says *ADONAI*: “After 70 years for Babylon are complete, I will visit you, and fulfill My good word toward you—to bring you back to this place. ¹¹ For I know the plans that I have in mind for you,” declares *ADONAI*, “plans for *shalom* and not calamity—to give you a future and a hope.

¹² “Then you will call on Me, and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek Me and find Me, † when you will search for Me with all your heart.

¹⁴ Then I will be found by you,” says *ADONAI*, “and I will return you from exile, and gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,” says *ADONAI*, “and I will bring you back to the place from which I removed you as captives into exile.”

¹⁵ For you have said: “*ADONAI* has raised up prophets for us in Babylon.” ¹⁶ For thus says *ADONAI* about the king who sits on the throne of David and about all the people who dwell in this city, your kinsmen who did not go with you into captivity, ¹⁷ thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*: “I am about to send on them the sword, famine, and pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. ¹⁸ I will pursue them with the sword, famine, and pestilence, and will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth—a curse and an astonishment, a hissing and a disgrace—among all the nations where I have driven them, ¹⁹ because they have not listened to My words,” declares *ADONAI*, “which I sent to them by My servants the prophets, sending them early and often, but you would not hear.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁰ “But you, hear the word of *ADONAI*, all you of the exile whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon,” ²¹ thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, “concerning Ahab son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who prophesy a lie to you in My name: I will soon deliver them into the hand of king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—and he will slay them before your eyes. ²² So a curse will be taken up by everyone in exile from Judah who are in Babylon, saying: ‘May *ADONAI* make you like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire’—²³ because they have been disgraceful in Israel, committing adultery with their neighbors’ wives and speaking words in My Name falsely, which I did not command them. But I am the One who knows and I am witness.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁴ Now concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite you will surely say, ²⁵ thus declares *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, saying: “Because you have sent letters in your own name to all the people who are at Jerusalem, to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the *kohen*, and to all the *kohanim*, saying: ²⁶ ‘*ADONAI* has made you *kohen* instead of Jehoiada the *kohen*, so that there should be officers in the House of *ADONAI* for every madman prophesying and so that you will put him in the stocks

† cf. Matt. 7:7.

and iron collar. ²⁷ So now, why haven't you rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, who makes himself out to be a prophet to you? ²⁸ For he has sent word to us in Babylon, saying: "The exile will be long—build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their fruit."''''

²⁹ So Zephaniah the *kohen* read this letter in the ears of the prophet Jeremiah. ³⁰ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah, saying: ³¹ "Send word to all of the captivity, saying, thus says *ADONAI* concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: 'Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, though I did not send him, and he has caused you to trust in a lie,' ³² therefore thus says *ADONAI*, 'I will indeed punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his offspring. There will be none living among this people, and he will not see the good that I will do to My people,' declares *ADONAI*, 'because he has spoken rebellion against *ADONAI*.'"''

Return from Exile

30 The word came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, saying: ² thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: "Write all the words that I have spoken to you in a scroll. ³ For behold, the days are coming," declares *ADONAI*, "when I will return My people Israel and Judah from exile," declares *ADONAI*. "I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they will possess it."

Dread of Jacob's Trouble

⁴ Now these are the words that *ADONAI* spoke to Israel and to Judah. ⁵ For thus says *ADONAI*: "We heard a sound of trembling, of dread—there is no *shalom*. ⁶ Ask now, and see whether a man can give birth. Why do I see every man with his hands on his loins, like a woman giving birth? Why have all faces turned pale? ⁷ Oy! For that day is monumental. There will be none like it—a time of trouble for Jacob! Yet out of it he will be saved."

A Davidic King Brings Healing

⁸ "It will be in that day" —it is a declaration of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* — "that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and will tear off your bonds. Foreigners will no longer enslave him. ⁹ Instead they will serve *ADONAI* their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. ¹⁰ So now, do not fear, Jacob My servant," says *ADONAI*, "nor be dismayed, O Israel, for behold, I will save you from afar, your seed from the land of their exile. Jacob will again be quiet and at ease, and no one will make him afraid."

¹¹ For I am with you," declares *ADONAI*, "to save you, for I will make a full end of all the nations where I scatter you.

But, I will not make a full end of you. For I will discipline you justly, but will not leave you unpunished."

¹² For thus says *ADONAI*:

"Your hurt is incurable, and your wound is severe.

¹³ No one pleads your cause, for there is no remedy for your wound, no healing for you.

¹⁴ All your lovers have forgotten you.

They are not looking for you.

For I wounded you as an enemy— with cruel punishment— because your iniquity is vast, your sins innumerable.

¹⁵ Why cry about your fracture?

Your pain has no cure.

Because your iniquity is vast, your sins innumerable, I did these things to you.

¹⁶ Yet all who devour you will be devoured, and all your foes—all of them— will go into captivity.

Those plundering you will be plundered, and all preying on you I give as prey.

¹⁷ For I will restore health to you and will heal you of your wounds."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

"For they called you an outcast: 'Zion—no one cares about her.'"

¹⁸ Thus says *ADONAI*, "Indeed, I will return Jacob's tents from exile, and have compassion on his dwellings.

The city will be rebuilt on her mound †. The citadel will stand in its rightful place.

¹⁹ Out of them will come thanksgiving and the sound of celebration.

I will multiply them, so they will not decrease.

I will also honor them, so they will not be insignificant.

²⁰ His children also will be as formerly —his community set up before Me— and I will punish all his oppressors.

²¹ His noble one will be one of His own.

His ruler will come forth from among His own. I will bring Him near, and He will approach Me.

For who is he who will pledge his heart to approach Me?"

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²² "So you will be My people, and I will be your God."

²³ Look! A storm of *ADONAI*!

† Hebrew *tel*

Fury has burst out as a churning storm,
whirling about the head of the wicked.
24 *ADONAI*'s fierce anger will not turn back
until He has done it,
until He fulfills the purposes of His heart.
In the last days you will understand it.

Saving the Remnant

31 "At that time," declares *ADONAI*,
"I will be God to all families of Israel,
and they will be My people."
2 Thus says *ADONAI*:
"The people surviving the sword
found grace in the wilderness—
where I gave Israel rest." †
3 From afar *ADONAI* appeared to me.
"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love.
Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
4 Again I will build you,
so you will be rebuilt, virgin Israel!
Again you will take up your tambourines as orna-
ments,
and go out to dances of merrymakers.
5 Again you will plant vineyards on the hills of
Samaria—
planters will plant and use them.
6 For there will be a day when watchmen will call out
in the hill country of Ephraim,
'Arise, let us go up to Zion,
to *ADONAI* our God."
7 For thus says *ADONAI*:
"Sing aloud with joy for Jacob!
Shout with the chief of the nations!
Proclaim, give praise, and say:
'*ADONAI*, save your people,
the remnant of Israel!' ††
8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country,
and I will gather them from the ends of the earth—
among them the blind and the lame,
the pregnant together with she who is in labor with
child.
A great throng will return here.
9 With weeping and supplications they will come.
I will bring them,
leading them to walk by streams of water
on a straight path where they will not stumble.
For I am Israel's father,
and Ephraim is My firstborn.
10 Hear the word of *ADONAI*, O nations,
and declare it in the distant islands,
and say: 'He who scattered Israel will gather
and watch over him, as a shepherd does his flock.'
11 For *ADONAI* has ransomed Jacob.
He redeemed him from the hand of one stronger
than he.
12 They will come and sing on Zion's height,
radiant over the bounty of *ADONAI* —

over the grain, the wine, the oil,
and the young of the flock.
Their life will be like a watered garden,
and they will never languish again.
13 Then will the virgin rejoice in the dance,
both young men and old men together.
For I will turn their mourning into joy,
and I will comfort them, and make them rejoice out
of their sorrow.
14 I will fill the soul of the *kohanim* with fatness
and My people will be satisfied with My goodness."
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Grief Turned to Joy

15 Thus says *ADONAI*:
"A voice is heard in Ramah
—lamentation and bitter weeping—
Rachel weeping for her children,
refusing to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more." ‡
16 Thus says *ADONAI*:
"Restrain your voice from weeping
and your eyes from tears.
For your work will be rewarded"
—it is declaration of *ADONAI* —
"when they will return from the land of the enemy.
17 So there is hope for your future"
—it is declaration of *ADONAI* —
"when your children will return to their own territory.
18 I indeed heard Ephraim grieving:
'You have disciplined me—
I was disciplined like an untrained calf.
Restore me, and I will return,
for you are *ADONAI* my God.
19 For after I returned, I repented,
and after that I was instructed,
I struck my thigh—
I was ashamed and also humiliated,
for I bore the disgrace of my youth.'
20 "Is Ephraim a precious son to Me?
Is he a delightful child?
For as often as I spoke against him,
I still certainly remember him.
Therefore My heart yearns for him.
I will surely have compassion on him."
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
21 Erect road markers,
set up signposts!
Set your heart toward the highway,
the way by which you traveled!
Return, O virgin Israel,
return to your cities.
22 How long will you waver,
O backsliding daughter?
For *ADONAI* has created a new thing on earth:
a woman surrounds a man.

† cf. Matt. 11:28. †† cf. Matt. 1:21.

‡ cf. Matt. 2:18.

²³ Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "Yet again will they use this expression in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I will return them from exile:

"*ADONAI* bless you,
O dwelling of righteousness,
O mountain of holiness."

²⁴ "Judah and all its cities will dwell there together—the farmer and those who go about with flocks.

²⁵ For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul will refresh."

²⁶ At this point I awoke, and looked around, and my sleep was sweet to me.

²⁷ "Behold, days are coming"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. ²⁸ Now just as I have watched over them to uproot and to pull down, to overthrow, to destroy, and to bring disaster, then I will watch over them to build and to plant," says *ADONAI*. ²⁹ "In those days they will no longer say:

'The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
and the children's teeth are blunted.'

³⁰ Rather each will die for his own iniquity:
if anyone eats the sour grapes,
his own teeth will be blunted."

New Covenant Foretold

³¹ "Behold, days are coming"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"when I will make a new covenant †
with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah—

³² not like the covenant
I made with their fathers
in the day I took them by the hand
to bring them out of the land of Egypt.
For they broke My covenant,
though I was a husband to them."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³³ "But, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days"

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"I will put My *Torah* within them.
Yes, I will write it on their heart. ††
I will be their God
and they will be My people.

³⁴ No longer will each teach his neighbor
or each his brother, saying: 'Know *ADONAI*,'
for they will all know Me,
from the least of them to the greatest."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

"For I will forgive their iniquity,
their sin I will remember no more." ‡

³⁵ Thus says *ADONAI*,
who gives the sun as a light by day
and the fixed order of the moon

and the stars as a light by night,
who stirs up the sea so its waves roar,
ADONAI -Tzva'ot is His Name:

³⁶ "Only if this fixed order departs from before Me"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"then also might Israel's offspring cease
from being a nation
before Me—for all time."

³⁷ Thus says *ADONAI*:

"Only if heaven above can be measured
and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,
then also I will cast off the offspring of Israel

—for all they have done." ††

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³⁸ "Behold, days are coming"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"when the city will be rebuilt for *ADONAI*, from the tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. ³⁹ The measuring line will go out farther, straight to the Gareb Hill, then turn to Goah. ⁴⁰ Then the whole valley—the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the fields up to the Kidron Valley to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east—will be holy to *ADONAI*. It will never be uprooted or thrown down again—forever."

Why Jeremiah Bought Property

32 The word that came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, in the tenth year of king Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

² Now at the time the king of Babylon's army was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard, which was in the palace of the king of Judah. ³ For king Zedekiah of Judah had shut him up, saying: "Why do you prophesy and say, thus says *ADONAI*: 'I will soon give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will take it; ⁴ and king Zedekiah of Judah will not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but will surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and will speak with him mouth to mouth and his eyes will behold his eyes; ⁵ and he will lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there will he remain until I take note of him,' says *ADONAI* —though you fight with the Chaldeans, you will not succeed?"

⁶ So Jeremiah said: "The word of *ADONAI* came to me, saying: ⁷ 'Hanamel, son of Shallum your uncle, will soon come to you saying: "Buy for yourself my field in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is yours to buy it.'"⁸ So my uncle's son Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard as was the word of *ADONAI*, and said to me: "Buy my field, please, which is in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance is yours and the redemption is yours; buy it for yourself." Then I knew that this was the word of *ADONAI*. ⁹ So I bought the field that was in Anathoth from the son of my uncle Hanamel, and weighed him the money—17 shekels of silver. ¹⁰ I signed and sealed the deed, called

† cf. Luke 22:20; Heb. 8:8-12; 10:16-17. †† cf. 2 Cor. 3:3; Heb. 10:16. ‡ cf. John 6:45; Rom. 11:27; Heb. 10:17.

†† cf. Rom. 11:1-5.

in witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales.

¹¹ Then I took the purchase deed, both the sealed copy, containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy, ¹² and I gave the purchase deed to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my uncle's son Hanamel and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the purchase deed, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the guard. ¹³ Then I charged Baruch before them, saying, ¹⁴ thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel, "Take these deeds—this purchase deed, both the sealed copy and the open copy—and put them in a clay jar, so they may last many days." ¹⁵ For thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "Houses and fields and vineyards will yet again be bought in this land."

¹⁶ After I had given the purchase deed to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to *ADONAI*, saying: ¹⁷ "Ah, my Lord *ADONAI*! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm—nothing is too hard for You! ¹⁸ You are the One doing mercy to thousands, but repaying the iniquity of the fathers into the lap of their children after them. Great, mighty God, *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* is His Name!

¹⁹ Great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the children of men, to give each one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds. ²⁰ You set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and even to this day in Israel and among mankind, and made Yourself a Name, as to this day. ²¹ You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror. ²² You gave them this land, which you swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. ²³ They came in and possessed it. But they did not obey your voice nor walk in your *Torah*. They have done nothing of all you commanded them to do. Therefore you caused all this evil to fall on them.

²⁴ Look, the siege ramps have just come up to the city to take it. The city has been handed over to the Chaldeans fighting against it, because of the sword, the famine, and the pestilence. What You have spoken has happened. Here it is, You see it. ²⁵ Yet You said to me, my Lord *ADONAI*: 'Buy for yourself the field for money and call in witnesses'—even as the city is handed over to the Chaldeans."

²⁶ Then came the word of *ADONAI* to Jeremiah, saying: ²⁷ "Behold, I am *ADONAI*, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for Me?" ²⁸ Therefore thus says *ADONAI*: "I am about to give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans and Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he will take it. ²⁹ Then the Chaldeans fighting against this city will come and set this city on fire and burn it, with the houses—where they burned incense to Baal on their roofs and poured out drink-offerings to other gods, to provoke Me. ³⁰ For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have done nothing but

evil in My sight from their youth; indeed, the children of Israel have done nothing but provoke Me with the work of their hands," declares *ADONAI*.

³¹ "Indeed this city has caused My anger and of My fury from the day that they built it up to this day, ³² so that I will remove it from before My face, because of all the evil the children of Israel and the children of Judah have done to provoke Me—they, their kings, their princes, their *kohanim*, their prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

³³ "They have turned their back to Me and not their face. Though I taught them early and often, they have not listened to receive instruction. ³⁴ Instead they set up their abominations in the House where My Name is called, to defile it. ³⁵ They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, to make their sons and their daughters pass through fire to Molech—something I never commanded them, nor did it enter My mind that they would do this loathsome thing, causing Judah to sin."

³⁶ Now therefore thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, concerning this city, about which you say, "It is handed over to the king of Babylon by the sword, famine, and pestilence.

³⁷ "See, I will gather them out of all the countries, where I have driven them in My anger, My fury, and great wrath, and I will bring them back to this place and cause them to dwell securely. ³⁸ They will be My people, and I will be their God. ³⁹ I will give them one heart ⁴⁰ and one way, so they may fear Me forever; for their good and for their children after them.

⁴⁰ "I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never turn away from doing good for them. I will put My fear in their hearts, so that they will not depart from Me.

⁴¹ "Yes, I will delight in doing good for them, and with all My heart and all My soul I will in truth plant them in this land."

⁴² For thus says *ADONAI*: "Just as I have brought all this great evil on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them. ⁴³ So fields will be bought in this land, about which you are saying: 'It will be a desolation, without man or beast; it is handed over to the Chaldeans.' ⁴⁴ Men will buy fields for money and sign and seal the deeds and call witnesses in the land of Benjamin and in the areas around Jerusalem, and in the towns of Judah, in the towns of the hill-country, in the towns of the foothills, and in the cities of the South—because I will bring them back from exile." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

The Secret of Redemption

33 Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still confined in the guard's courtyard, saying:

² Thus says *ADONAI* the Maker, *ADONAI* who formed it to make it firm

† cf. Matt. 19:26. †† cf. Matt. 16:27; John 5:29.

‡ cf. Matt. 23:37. †† cf. 2 Cor. 6:16.

— *ADONAI* is His Name.

³ “Call to Me, and I will answer you—

I will tell you great and hidden things, which you do not know.” †

⁴ For thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: “Concerning the houses of this city and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are torn down against the siege ramps and against the sword, ⁵ they are coming to fight with the Chaldeans, but they are about to fill them with the dead bodies of the people whom I will slay in My anger and in My fury. I have hidden My face from this city because of all their wickedness.

⁶ “Indeed, I will bring it health and healing, and I will surely heal them. I will reveal to them an abundance of *shalom* and truth. ⁷ I will restore Judah from exile and Israel from exile, and will rebuild them, as in former times. ⁸ I will also cleanse them from all their iniquity †† in which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their wrongs in which they have sinned against Me and in which they have rebelled against Me.

⁹ “Then this city will be to Me for a name of joy, praise, and glory before all the nations of the earth, which will hear all the good that I do for them, so they will fear and tremble because of all the good and for all the *shalom* that I do for it.”

Voice of the Bridegroom

¹⁰ Thus says *ADONAI*: “Yet again in this place—which you are saying is a waste without man or beast, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem the desolate, without man, without inhabitant, and without beast—there will be heard ¹¹ the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them who say:

“Give thanks to *ADONAI* -*Tzva’ot*,
for *ADONAI* is good,
for His love endures forever!”

“as they bring offerings of thanksgiving into the House of *ADONAI*. For I will restore the land from the exile as it was at first,” declares *ADONAI*.

¹² Thus says *ADONAI* -*Tzva’ot*: “Yet again will there be in this place, which is waste, without man and without beast, and in all its cities, a pasture of shepherds making their flocks lie down. ¹³ In the towns of the hill country, in the towns of the foothills, in the towns of the South, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem and in the towns of Judah, will the flocks again pass under the hands of one who counts them,” declares *ADONAI*.

Righteous Branch of David

¹⁴ “Behold, days are coming”

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —

“when I will fulfill the good word I spoke concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah.

¹⁵ In those days and at that time,

I will cause a Branch of Righteousness to spring up for David,

and He will execute justice and righteousness in the land.

¹⁶ In those days will Judah be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely.

And this is the Name by which He will be called: *ADONAI* our Righteousness.”

¹⁷ For thus says *ADONAI*: “For David, there will not be cut off a man sitting on the throne of the house of Israel, ¹⁸ nor will the Levitical *kohanim* ever lack a man before Me to offer burnt offering, to burn grain offerings, and to make sacrifices continually.”

¹⁹ And the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah, saying, ²⁰ thus says *ADONAI*: “If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that day and night would not be at in their appointed time, ²¹ only then may My covenant be broken with My servant David, that he would not have a son to reign on his throne, and the Levitical *kohanim* would not be My ministers. ²² As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David My servant, and the Levites who minister to Me.”

²³ The word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah, saying: ²⁴ “Have you not noticed what this people have spoken, saying: ‘The two families which *ADONAI* did choose, He has rejected them?’ Thus they despise My people—no longer a nation before them.” ²⁵ Thus says *ADONAI*: “If I have not made My covenant of day and night firm, and the fixed patterns ordering the heavens and earth, ²⁶ only then would I reject the offspring of Jacob, ‡ and of My servant David so that I would not take from his offspring rulers over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore them from their exile, and have compassion on them.”

Warning to Zedekiah

34 The word which came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion and all the peoples were warring against Jerusalem and its towns, saying, ² thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: “Go, speak to King Zedekiah of Judah and tell him, thus says *ADONAI*: ‘I am about to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire, ³ and you will not escape out of his hand, but will surely be captured and given into his hand. Your eyes will behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he will speak with you mouth to mouth, and you will go to Babylon.’”

⁴ Yet hear the word of *ADONAI*, O Zedekiah king of Judah, thus says *ADONAI* concerning you: “You will not

† cf. 1 Cor 2:7. †† cf. Heb. 9:12.

‡ cf. Rom. 11:1-2.

die by the sword; ⁵ you will die in peace. As there were burning ceremonies for your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they will burn spices for you, and they will lament for you: 'Oy, lord!' For it is a word I have spoken," declares *ADONAI*.

Covenant Breaking with Slaves

⁶ Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke all these words to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem, ⁷ when the army of the king of Babylon was warring against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left—against Lachish and against Azekah, for these alone remained of the cities of Judah as fortified cities. ⁸ The word that came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people that were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty to them, ⁹ so that everyone should let his manservant and his maidservant—Hebrew man or Hebrew woman—go free, so that no one should make a slave of a Jew, his brother. ¹⁰ So all the princes and all the people obeyed, who had entered into the covenant, that everyone would free his manservant and his maidservant and not make them slaves any more—they obeyed, and freed them. ¹¹ But afterward they turned around and made the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, return, and brought them back into subjection as servants and as handmaids."

¹² So the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, saying, ¹³ thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel: "I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying: ¹⁴ 'At the end of seven years you are to set free every man his brother that is a Hebrew who has been sold to you and has served you six years; you are let him go free from you.' But your fathers did not obey Me, nor inclined their ear. ¹⁵ Now you had repented, and had done that which is right in My eyes, by proclaiming liberty everyone to his neighbor. You even had made a covenant before Me in the House where My Name is called. ¹⁶ But you turned around and profaned My Name, and made everyone his servant and his handmaid, whom you had let go free at their will, return, and you brought them back into subjection, to be your servants and handmaids."

¹⁷ Therefore thus says *ADONAI*: "You have not obeyed Me, to proclaim liberty, everyone to his brother and everyone to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim for you a liberty," declares *ADONAI*, "to the sword, to plague, and to famine! So I will make you a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ¹⁸ I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between its parts ¹⁹—the princes of Judah and the princes of Jerusalem, the officers, the *kohanim*, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf— ²⁰ I will even give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of them who seek their life,

and their dead bodies will be for food to the birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth. ²¹ King Zedekiah of Judah and his princes I will give into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of them who seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, who were withdrawing from you. ²² Indeed, I will command," declares *ADONAI*, "and cause them to return to this city. They will fight against it, capture it, and burn it down with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a wasteland, with no one living."

Obedience of Rechabites

35 The word that came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI* in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying: ² "Go to the house of the Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into one of the chambers of the House of *ADONAI*, and give them wine to drink."

³ So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah, son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, ⁴ and I brought them into the House of *ADONAI* to the chamber of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah the man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah son of Shallum, the doorkeeper. ⁵ I set jars full of wine and cups before the sons of the house of the Rechabites, and said to them: "Drink wine!"

⁶ But they said: "We drink no wine, for Jonadab son of Rechab our father commanded us: 'You will drink no wine, not you nor your sons, forever. ⁷ Also you are not to build a house, or sow seed, or plant a vineyard or own one. Instead, all your days you are to dwell in tents, so that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.' ⁸ So we obeyed the voice of Jonadab son of Rechab our father in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters, ⁹ nor to build houses for us to dwell in, nor to own a vineyard, field or seed, ¹⁰ and we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. ¹¹ But when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up against the land, we said: 'Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and for fear of the army of the Arameans.' So we are dwelling in Jerusalem."

¹² Then came the word of *ADONAI* to Jeremiah, saying, ¹³ thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "Go, say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, 'Will you not receive instruction by listening to My words?'" says *ADONAI*. ¹⁴ "The words of Jonadab son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are observed, and to this day they drink none, for they listen to their father's commandment. Yet I have spoken to you, early and often, and you have not obeyed Me.

¹⁵ "I have sent also to you all My servants the prophets, sending them early and often, saying: 'Return you now every man from his evil way, and amend

your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and you will dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers; but you have not inclined your ear, nor listened to Me. ¹⁶ For the sons of Jonadab son of Rechab have kept the commandment of their father which he commanded them, but this people have not obeyed Me.”

¹⁷ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel: “I am about to bring on Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them, because I spoke to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.”

¹⁸ Now Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel: “Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he commanded you,” ¹⁹ therefore thus says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel: “There will never be cut off for Jonadab son of Rechab a man to stand before Me forever.”

Baruch Reads Jeremiah’s Scroll

36 Now it happened in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of King Josiah of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, saying: ² “Take a *megillah* scroll, and write in it all the words that I have spoken to you about Israel, about Judah, and about all the nations from the day I spoke to you—from the days of Josiah until this day. ³ Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity that I am planning to do to them, in order that they may turn, each one from his evil way. Then I would forgive their iniquity and their sin.”

⁴ So Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote from Jeremiah’s mouth, all the words that *ADONAI* had spoken to him, into a *megillah* scroll. ⁵ Then Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying: “I am detained; I cannot go into the House of *ADONAI*. ⁶ So you go and read in the *megillah*—which you have written from my mouth, the words of *ADONAI*—in the ears of the people, in the House of *ADONAI*, on a fast day. You should also read them in the ears of all Judah coming from their towns. ⁷ Perhaps they will present their supplication before *ADONAI*, and each one will turn from his wicked way. For great is the anger and fury that *ADONAI* has pronounced against this people.”

⁸ So Baruch son of Neriah did according to all that the prophet Jeremiah commanded him, reading from the book the words of *ADONAI* in the House of *ADONAI*.

⁹ Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim son of King Josiah of Judah, in the ninth month, that they proclaimed a fast before *ADONAI*—all the people in Jerusalem and all the people that came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem. ¹⁰ Then Baruch read from the scroll the words of Jeremiah in the House of *ADONAI*, in the chamber of Gemariah son of the scribe Shaphan, in the upper court at the entry of the New

Gate of the House of *ADONAI*, in the ears of all the people.

¹¹ Now when Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan, had heard from the scroll all the words of *ADONAI*, ¹² he went down to the scribe’s chamber of the king’s palace. All the officials sat there—the scribe Elishama, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the officials. ¹³ Then Micaiah reported to them all the words that he had heard Baruch reading out of the scroll in the ears of the people.

¹⁴ All the officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah son of Shelemiah son of Cush, to Baruch, saying: “Bring in your hand the *megillah* which you read in the ears of the people and come.”

So Baruch son of Neriah brought the *megillah* in his hand and went to them. ¹⁵ Then they said to him: “Sit down now, and read it in our ears.” So Baruch read it in their ears.

¹⁶ After they had heard all the words, they turned to each other in fear, then said to Baruch: “We will surely report all these words to the king.” ¹⁷ They also asked Baruch, saying: “Tell us now, how did you write all these words? At his dictation?”

¹⁸ Then Baruch answered them: “He pronounced all these words to me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink into the scroll.”

¹⁹ Then the officials said to Baruch: “Go, hide yourself—you and Jeremiah—and let no one know where you are.”

²⁰ Then they went to the king in the courtyard, after they had deposited the *megillah* in the chamber of the scribe Elishama. They reported all the words in the ears of the king.

²¹ So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the *megillah*, and he brought it out of the chamber of the scribe Elishama. Jehudi read it in the ears of the king and all the officials who were standing by the king.

²² Since it was the ninth month, the king was residing in the winter house, with a fireplace burning before him. ²³ Now as soon as Jehudi had read three or four columns, he cut it with the scribe’s knife and tossed it into the fire that was in the fireplace, until the whole *megillah* was consumed in the fire in the fireplace.

²⁴ Yet neither the king, nor any of his servants who heard all these words were afraid, nor tore their clothes. ²⁵ Moreover Elnatan, Delaiah, and Gemariah entreated the king not to burn the *megillah*, but he would not listen to them.

²⁶ Then the king commanded Jerahmeel the king’s son, along with Seraiah son of Azriel and Shelemiah son of Abdeel, to seize the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah—but *ADONAI* hid them.

²⁷ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah, after the king had burned the *megillah* with the words that Baruch had written at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying: ²⁸ “Take yet another *megillah*, and write in it all the original words that were in the first roll, which Je-

hoiakim the king of Judah burned up. ²⁹ About King Jehoiakim of Judah you will say, thus says *ADONAI*: ‘You have burned this *megillah*, saying, “Why have you written in it, saying the king of Babylon will surely come and destroy this land and will bring an end to both man and beast from it?”’

³⁰ Therefore thus says *ADONAI* about King Jehoiakim of Judah: “He will have no one to sit on the throne of David. Moreover, his dead body will be tossed out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night. ³¹ I will also punish him and his offspring and his servants for their iniquity, and I will bring on them, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the people of Judah all the calamity that I have pronounced against them—but they did not listen.”

³² Then Jeremiah took another *megillah* and gave it to the scribe Baruch son of Neriah, who wrote in it from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the scroll which King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned up in the fire—and added to them many similar words.

Imprisoned for the Word

37 Now Zedekiah son of Josiah reigned as king, instead of Coniah son of Jehoiakim, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. ² But neither he nor his servants, nor the people of the land, paid attention to the words of *ADONAI* which He spoke by the prophet Jeremiah.

³ Yet King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying: “Pray now to *ADONAI* our God for us.”

⁴ Now Jeremiah was coming in and going out among the people, for they had not put him into prison.

⁵ Meanwhile Pharaoh’s army had set out of Egypt, and when the Chaldeans besieging Jerusalem heard the report about them, they lifted the siege from Jerusalem.

⁶ Then came the word of *ADONAI* to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, ⁷ “Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, ‘thus will you say to the king of Judah, who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: “Now, Pharaoh’s army, which is come forth to help you, will return to Egypt into their own land. ⁸ The Chaldeans will return and fight against this city. Then they will capture it and burn it with fire.”’

⁹ Thus says *ADONAI*: “Do not deceive yourselves, saying: ‘The Chaldeans will surely depart from us’—for they will not depart. ¹⁰ For even if you had struck down the entire Chaldean army fighting against you, and there were left among them only wounded men, each in his tent, they would get up and burn this city down with fire.”

¹¹ So it came to pass, when the army of the Chaldeans went up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh’s army, ¹² that Jeremiah went out of Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to claim his property there among the people. ¹³ But when he was at the Benjamin Gate, a captain of the guard was there,

whose name was Irijah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah, who arrested the prophet Jeremiah, saying: “You are deserting to the Chaldeans!”

¹⁴ But Jeremiah said, “That’s a lie! I am not deserting to the Chaldeans!” But Irijah would not listen to him, but arrested Jeremiah and brought him to the officials.

¹⁵ The officials were angry with Jeremiah, had him beaten, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe, for they had made that the prison.

¹⁶ For Jeremiah went into a vaulted cell in the dungeon pit, and Jeremiah remained there many days.

¹⁷ Then King Zedekiah sent for him and received him in his palace secretly, and the king asked him: “Is there any word from *ADONAI*?”

“There is,” Jeremiah said, and he also said, “You shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon.”

¹⁸ Moreover Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah: “How have I sinned against you or against your servants or against this people, that you have put me in prison?

¹⁹ Where now are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying: ‘The king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land?’ ²⁰ So now please listen, my lord the king! Please let my petition come before you and do not make me return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, so I will not die there.”

²¹ Then Zedekiah the king gave a command, and they committed Jeremiah into the courtyard of the guard. They gave him a loaf of bread from the bakers’ street daily, until all the bread in the city was spent. So Jeremiah stayed in the guard’s courtyard.

In a Miry Cistern-Pit

38 Now Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah spoke to all the people, saying, ² thus says *ADONAI*: “He that remains in this city will die by the sword, by famine, and by plague, but anyone who goes out to the Chaldeans will live—so he will keep his life like the spoils of war, and will live.” ³ Thus says *ADONAI*: “This city will surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.”

⁴ Then the officials said to the king: “This man should now be put to death, since he demoralizes the men of war remaining in this city as well as all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the *shalom* of this people, but calamity.”

⁵ Then King Zedekiah said: “Here he is in your hand. For the king cannot do anything against you.”

⁶ So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern-pit of Malchiah the king’s son, which was in the courtyard of the guard, lowering Jeremiah down with ropes. Now in the pit there was no water, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank into the mud.

⁷ Now Ebed-Melech †—an Ethiopian official in the king’s palace—heard they had put Jeremiah in the pit. While the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate,

† Or, a servant of the king

⁸ Ebed-Melech went out from the king's palace and spoke to the king, saying: ⁹ "My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they cast into the pit. He is likely to die right where he is from hunger, for there is no more bread in the city."

¹⁰ Then the king commanded Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying: "Take 30 men from here with you, and bring the prophet Jeremiah up out of the cistern, before he dies."

¹¹ So Ebed-Melech took the men with him and went into the king's palace under the storehouse; from there he took worn-out clothes and worn-out rags, and lowered them by ropes into the cistern-pit to Jeremiah. ¹² And Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah: "Now put these worn-out clothes and rags under your armpits under the ropes."

Jeremiah did so. ¹³ Then they pulled Jeremiah up with the ropes, and lifted him up out of the pit. But Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard.

¹⁴ Then Zedekiah the king sent for the prophet Jeremiah and received him at the third entrance in the House of *ADONAI*. The king said to Jeremiah: "I am going to ask you something—hide nothing from me."

¹⁵ Jeremiah said to Zedekiah: "If I tell you, won't you surely put me to death? Besides, if I give you counsel, you won't listen to me."

¹⁶ So Zedekiah the king swore secretly to Jeremiah, saying: "As *ADONAI* lives, that gave us life, I will not put you to death, nor will I give you into the hand of these men seeking your life."

¹⁷ Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah: Thus says *ADONAI*, *Elohei-Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "If you will go out to the officers of the king of Babylon, then your soul will live, this city will not be burned with fire; and you and your household will survive. ¹⁸ But if you do not go out to the officers of the king of Babylon, then this city will be handed over to the Chaldeans; they will burn it with fire, and you will not escape out of their hand."

¹⁹ Zedekiah the king said to Jeremiah: "I am afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, lest they hand me over to them and they abuse me."

²⁰ But Jeremiah said: "They will not hand you over. Please, obey the voice of *ADONAI*, in what I am speaking to you, so it will go well for you, and your soul will live! ²¹ But if you keep refusing to go out, this is the word that *ADONAI* has shown me: ²² 'Soon, all the women who are left in the palace of the king of Judah will be brought out to the officers of the king of Babylon, and those women will say:

""Your close friends have misled you, and prevailed over you.

Your feet are sunk in the mire, and they deserted you.""

²³ "Then they will bring out all your wives and your children to the Chaldeans, and you shall not escape out of their hand, but shall be seized by the hand of

the king of Babylon, and this city will be burned down with fire."

²⁴ Then said Zedekiah to Jeremiah: "Let no one know of these words, and you will not die.

²⁵ "But if the officials hear that I have talked with you, and they come to you and say to you: 'Tell us now what you have said to the king—hide nothing from us and we will not put you to death. And what did the king say to you?' ²⁶ Then you will tell them, 'I was presenting my petition before the king, not to make me return to Jonathan's house to die there.'"

²⁷ When all the officials came to Jeremiah and questioned him, he told them with just these words that the king had commanded. So they stopped speaking with him, since the matter was not overheard.

²⁸ Then Jeremiah stayed in the guard's courtyard until the day that Jerusalem was captured.

Judgment on Zedekiah and Jerusalem

39 Now when Jerusalem was captured, in the ninth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the tenth month, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and all his army advanced against Jerusalem, and besieged it.

² On the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the city wall was broken through.

³ Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-Sarezer, Samgar-Nebo, Sarsechim the Rab-Saris, Nergal-Sarezer the Rab-Mag, and all the rest of the officials of Babylon's king.

⁴ Now when King Zedekiah of Judah and all the men of war saw them, they fled. They went out of the city at night, by way of the king's garden, through the gate between the two walls, heading out toward the way of the Arabah. ⁵ But the Chaldean army pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. When they captured him, they brought him up to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he passed judgment on him. ⁶ The king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes. Moreover, the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. ⁷ Then he blinded Zedekiah's eyes, and he bound him in shackles to carry him off to Babylon.

⁸ Then the Chaldeans burned the king's palace and the houses of the people with fire, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. ⁹ Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away into exile the rest of the people—those who remained in the city and also the deserters who had defected to him, and the rest of the people remaining. ¹⁰ But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the people, who had nothing, behind in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields in that day.

Vindication of Jeremiah

¹¹ Now King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon gave orders about Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying: ¹² “Take him, and look after him, and do no harm to him; rather, do to him just as he tells you.”

¹³ So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent word, so Nebushazban the Rab-Saris, Nergal-Sarezer the Rab-Mag, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon ¹⁴ sent and brought Jeremiah out of the guard’s courtyard, and gave him to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, to take him home. So he dwelt among the people.

¹⁵ Now the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the guard’s courtyard, saying, ¹⁶ “Go, speak to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel: ‘Listen, I will bring about My words on this city for evil and not for good. They will happen before you in that day. ¹⁷ But I will deliver you in that day—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—and you will not be given into the hand of the men whom you dread.

¹⁸ “For I will surely rescue you, so you will not fall by the sword. But you will keep your life as spoils, because you put your trust in Me.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Jeremiah Returns to Judah

40 The word which came to Jeremiah from *ADONAI*, after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had released him from Ramah. He had taken him bound in chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, who were being exiled to Babylon. ² Now the captain of the guard had taken Jeremiah and said to him: “*ADONAI* your God pronounced this evil against this place, ³ and *ADONAI* brought it about and did just as He said. Because you have sinned against *ADONAI* and have not listened to His voice, this thing has happened to you. ⁴ But now behold, I am freeing you this day from the chains that are on your hand. If it is good in your eyes to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. But if it is evil in your eyes to come with me to Babylon, stop. Look, the whole land is before you—wherever it seems good and right to you to go, there go.”

⁵ But he would not turn back. “Go back then to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people; or go anywhere it seems right in your eyes to go.”

Then the captain of the guard gave him a ration and a gift, and let him go. ⁶ So Jeremiah went to the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

Gedaliah Appointed Governor

⁷ Now all the commanders of the forces that were in the field—they and their men—heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam over the land, and had put him in charge of the men, and women and children, the poorest of the land who were not carried away captive to Babylon. ⁸ So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—including Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah son of the Maacathite—they and their men. ⁹ Then Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan swore to them and to their men, saying: “Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well for you. ¹⁰ As for me, look, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand before the Chaldeans who come to us. But as for you, gather wine, summer fruit and oil, and put them in your jars, and dwell in your cities that you have taken over.”

¹¹ Also when all the Jews who were in Moab, among Ammon’s children, in Edom, and in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had appointed over them Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, ¹² then all the Jews returned out of all places where they had been driven, and came back to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruit in great abundance.

¹³ Then Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were in the field came to Gedaliah to Mizpah ¹⁴ and said to him, “Are you aware that Baalis the king of Ammon’s children has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to take your life?” But Gedaliah son of Ahikam did not believe them.

¹⁵ Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah at Mizpah, saying, “Let me go now, and I will slay Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and no one will know it. Why should he take your life, so that all the Jews that are gathered to you would be scattered, and the remnant of Judah perish?”

¹⁶ But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Don’t do this thing! For what you are saying about Ishmael is a lie.”

Gedaliah Assassinated

41 Now it was in the seventh month, that Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama—of royal descent and one of the chief officers of the king, along with ten men—came to Gedaliah son of Ahikam to Mizpah. While they were eating bread there together in Mizpah, ² Ishmael son of Nethaniah rose up with the ten men that were with him and struck down Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan with the sword—putting to death the one whom the king of Babylon had appointed over the land. ³ Ishmael also

† cf. Rom. 2:5; 6:23; Jacob 1:15.

slew all the Jews who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, as well as the Chaldean soldiers who were found there.

⁴ Now it was the next day after he had slain Gedaliah, when no one knew about it, ⁵ that 80 men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, with their beards shaved off, their clothes rent, and having gashed themselves, with grain offerings and frankincense in their hand to bring to the House of *ADONAI*. ⁶ So Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went, and as he came to meet them, he said to them: "Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam."

⁷ Yet it was that as soon as they came within the city that Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men with him slaughtered them within the cistern-pit. ⁸ However ten men were found among them that said to Ishmael: "Don't kill us! For we have hidden stores in the field—wheat, barley, oil, and honey!" So he held off and did not kill them along with their companions.

⁹ Now the cistern where Ishmael cast all the corpses of the men whom he killed, because they were on Gedaliah's side, was the one which King Asa had made for fear of King Baasa of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with the slain.

¹⁰ Then Ishmael carried away captive all the rest of the people that were in Mizpah, including the king's daughters—all the people who were left in Mizpah over whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had put under the charge of Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and set off to cross over to Ammon's children.

¹¹ But Johanan son of Kareah, and all the commanders of the forces that were with him heard about all the evil that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had done. ¹² So they took all the men and went to fight with Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great pool in Gibeon.

¹³ Now when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were with him, they were glad. ¹⁴ So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went over to Johanan son of Kareah. ¹⁵ But Ishmael son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men and went to Ammon's children. ¹⁶ Then Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were with him took all the remnant of the people whom he had rescued from Ishmael son of Nethaniah from Mizpah, after he had murdered Gedaliah son of Ahikam—the men, the soldiers, women, children, and court officials whom he had brought back from Gibeon—¹⁷ and they left and stayed at Chimham's lodge, which is near Beth-Lehem, in order to go on to enter Egypt, ¹⁸ away from the Chaldeans. For they were afraid of them, since Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed over the land.

Warning against Flight to Egypt

42 Then all the commanders of the forces, Johanan son of Kareah, Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least to the greatest, approached ² and said to the prophet Jeremiah, "Please, let our petition be presented before you, and pray to *ADONAI* your God on our behalf, [†] for all this remnant—for we who are left are but a few out of many, as you are seeing with your own eyes—³ that *ADONAI* your God may tell us the way we should go and what we should do."

⁴ Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them: "I have heard you. Agreed: I will pray to *ADONAI* your God according to your words, and it will be that every word *ADONAI* will answer you, I will declare it to you—I will not keep a word from you."

⁵ Then they said to Jeremiah: "Let *ADONAI* be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act in accord with every word that *ADONAI* your God sends you to us. ⁶ Whether it be good or evil, we will obey the voice of *ADONAI* our God, to whom we are sending you, so that it may go well with us, when we obey the voice of *ADONAI* our God."

⁷ Now it was at the end of ten days that the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah. ⁸ Then he called Johanan son of Kareah, and all the commanders of the forces that were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest, ⁹ and said to them, "Thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your supplication before Him: ¹⁰ 'If you will still stay in this land, then will I build you up and not tear you down, and I will plant you and not uproot you. For I will relent concerning the calamity that I have done to you. ¹¹ Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you dread—do not be afraid of him'—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—'for I am with you to save you, and deliver you from his hand. ¹² I will also show you compassion and he will have compassion on you, and restore you to your own soil. ¹³ But if you say, 'We will not stay in this land,' so that you do not obey the voice of *ADONAI* your God, ¹⁴ saying: 'No, instead we'll go into the land of Egypt, where we will see no war or hear the sound of a *shofar* or hunger for food, and live there.' ¹⁵ Now therefore hear the word of *ADONAI*, O remnant of Judah, thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: If you really set your faces to enter Egypt, and go to sojourn there, ¹⁶ then it will come to pass that the sword, which you fear will overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine about which you are anxious will follow hard after you there in Egypt—and there you will die. ¹⁷ So will it be for all the people who set their faces to enter Egypt to sojourn there—they will die by the sword, by famine and by plague. So none of them will remain or escape from the calamity that I will bring on them.'"

¹⁸ For thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "As My anger and My fury were poured out on the in-

[†] cf. Acts 8:24; Jacob 5:16.

habitants of Jerusalem, so will My fury be poured out on you, if you will enter Egypt. You will be an execration, a horror, a curse, and a disgrace, and you will never see this place again."

¹⁹ *ADONAI* has spoken concerning you, O remnant of Judah: "Do not go to Egypt. Know for sure that I have forewarned you this day! ²⁰ For you have led your own souls in error, since it was you who sent me to *ADONAI* your God, saying: 'Pray to *ADONAI* our God on our behalf, and in accord with all that *ADONAI* our God will say, so declare to us, and we will do it.' ²¹ So I have this day declared it to you, but you will not obey the voice of *ADONAI* your God in anything for which He has sent me to you. ²² Now therefore know for sure that you will die by the sword, by famine, and by plague, in the place whither you desired to go to sojourn there."

Chaldeans Invade Egypt

43 But when Jeremiah had made an end of telling all the people all the words of *ADONAI* their God—all these words for which *ADONAI* their God had sent him to them— ² then Azariah son of Hoshaiah, Johanan son of Kareah, and all the insolent men responded, saying to Jeremiah: "You are telling a lie! *ADONAI* our God has not sent you to say. 'You must not go to Egypt to sojourn there.' ³ Rather, Baruch son of Neriah is inciting you against us, to give us over into the hand of the Chaldeans, so they may put us to death or carry us away as captives to Babylon!"

⁴ So Johanan son of Kareah, all the commanders of the forces, and all the people, did not obey the voice of *ADONAI*, to stay in the land of Judah. ⁵ But Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took the entire remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations where they had been driven to dwell in the land of Judah— ⁶ the men, the women, the children, the king's daughters, everyone that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, as well as Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch son of Neriah— ⁷ and they went to the land of Egypt. For they did not obey the voice of *ADONAI*.

When they arrived at Tahpanhes ⁸ the word of *ADONAI* came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, ⁹ "Take some large stones in your hand and hide them in the mortar in the brickwork at the entrance of Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah.

¹⁰ "Then say to them, thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: 'I am about to send for and bring King Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and I will set his throne over these stones where I have hid, and he will spread his royal pavilion over them. ¹¹ Yes, he will come, and will strike the land of Egypt.

"Those for death—to death!

Those for exile—to exile!

Those for the sword—to the sword!

¹² "I will also set fire to the houses of Egypt's gods. He will burn them and carry them off. He will wrap

himself up with the land of Egypt as a shepherd wraps himself up with his garment. Then he will depart from there victoriously.

¹³ "He will also shatter the pillars of the temple of the sun [†] in the land of Egypt, while houses of the gods of Egypt He will burn with fire."

Calamity in Egypt

44 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews dwelling in the land of Egypt—at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Noph, and in the region of Pathros, ^{††} saying, ² thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "You have seen all the calamity that I brought on Jerusalem and on all the cities of Judah. Behold, today they are a ruin, and no one lives in them, ³ because of their wickedness which they committed to provoke Me, by continuing to burn sacrifices for and serve other gods, whom they had not known—not they, nor you, nor your fathers. ⁴ Yet I sent you all My servants the prophets, sending them early and often, saying: 'Oh, do not do this loathsome thing that I hate.' ⁵ But they did not listen or incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, to stop making offering to other gods.

⁶ "Therefore My fury and Mine anger was poured out and blazed in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. So they are waste and a ruin, as it is today. ⁷ So now, thus says *ADONAI*, *Elohim* - *Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: Why are you committing this great evil against your own souls? You cut off from yourselves man and woman, infant and nursing child, from the midst of Judah, to leave yourself without a remnant. ⁸ You are provoking Me with the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, where you have come to dwell, so that you will be cut off and become a curse and a disgrace among all the nations of the earth. ⁹ Have you forgotten the evils of your fathers, the evils of the kings of Judah, the evils of their wives, and your own evils and the evils of your wives, which were committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁰ They have not become contrite even to this day, nor have they feared nor walked in My *Torah*, My statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers."

¹¹ Therefore thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel: "I will soon set My face against you for calamity, to cut off all Judah. ¹² I will take the remnant of Judah who set their faces to enter the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they will all be consumed, falling in the land of Egypt by the sword and by famine. They will die, from the least to the greatest, by the sword and by famine, and they will be an execration, and a horror, a curse, and a disgrace.

¹³ "So I will punish those dwelling in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by famine, and by plague. ¹⁴ So none of the remnant of

[†] Hebrew *Beit-Shemesh* Heliopolis ^{††} In Upper or Southern Egypt; the other places were in Lower or Northern Egypt.

Judah entering the land of Egypt to sojourn there will escape or remain, to return to the land of Judah, when they are longing with their soul to return to live there; for none will return except as refugees.”

¹⁵ Then all the men who knew that their wives were burning incense to other gods, along with all the women that stood by—a large assembly—with all the people dwelling in Pathros in the land of Egypt, responded to Jeremiah, saying: ¹⁶ “As for the word that you spoke to us in the Name of *ADONAI*, we are not going to listen to you! ¹⁷ Instead, we will definitely do every word as went out of our mouth—burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, just as we did, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem—for then we had plenty of food, were well off, and saw no calamity. ¹⁸ But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine. ¹⁹ Moreover, when we were burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, when we made cakes for her in her image and poured out drink offerings to her, were we without our husbands?”

²⁰ Then Jeremiah said to all the people, to the men and the women, to all the people that were giving him such an answer, saying: ²¹ “The incense-burning that you offered in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem—you and your fathers, your kings, your officials, and the people of the land— *ADONAI* did remember them, they did come into His heart. ²² Then *ADONAI* could no longer endure it, because of the evil of your deeds, because of the abominations that you committed! So your land has become a wasteland, a desolation, and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is this day. ²³ Because you have burned incense, because you have sinned against *ADONAI* and have not listened to the voice of *ADONAI*, nor walked in His *Torah*, nor in His statutes, nor in His testimonies—that is why this calamity has befallen you, as it is this day.”

²⁴ Moreover, Jeremiah said to all the people and to all the women: “Hear the word of *ADONAI*, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt. ²⁵ Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel, saying: ‘You and your wives have both spoken with your mouths and fulfilled it with your hands, saying: “We will definitely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and to pour out drink-offerings to her.” You surely will confirm your vows and surely will perform your vows!’”

²⁶ Therefore hear the word of *ADONAI*, all Judah dwelling in the land of Egypt: “Behold, I have sworn by My great Name,” † declares *ADONAI*, “never more will My Name be invoked in the mouth of anyone of Judah in all the land of Egypt saying: ‘As my Lord *ADONAI* lives.’ ²⁷ Here I am, watching over them for evil, and

not for good. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end of them. ²⁸ Those escaping the sword will return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah only few in number. Then the remnant of Judah who entered the land of Egypt to sojourn there, will know whose word stands up—Mine or theirs!” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁹ “Moreover, this will be the sign to you: I will visit punishment on you in this place, so that you may know that My words will surely stand against you as calamity.”

³⁰ Thus says *ADONAI*: “Soon, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them who seek his life, just as I gave King Zedekiah of Judah into the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, his enemy who was seeking his life.”

Message for Baruch

45 The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a scroll from the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, ² thus says *ADONAI*, the God of Israel, concerning you, Baruch: “You said: ³ ‘Oy to me now! For *ADONAI* has added sorrow to my pain. I am worn out with my groaning, and I find no rest.’”

⁴ Thus shall you say to him, thus says *ADONAI*: “Behold, what I have built I will tear down, and what I have planted I will uproot—the whole land. ⁵ But you, are you expecting great things for yourself? Seek no more! For I am about to bring calamity on all flesh”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —“but I will grant you your soul as spoil in all places where you may go.”

Prophecy against Egypt

46 The word of *ADONAI* that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the nations.

² For Egypt: concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah.

³ “Arrange breastplate and shield!

Advance to battle!

⁴ Harness the horses

and mount, O horsemen!

Take your position,

with helmets!

Polish the spears!

Put on armor!

⁵ Why have I seen them?

They are shattered, retreating,

their warriors beaten,

fleeing for cover, no turning back,

terror on every side!”

† cf. Heb. 6:13.

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

⁶ “The swift cannot flee,
nor the warrior escape.
In the north by the river Euphrates
they stumbled and fell.

⁷ Who is this, rising like the Nile,
like the rivers whose waters churn?

⁸ Egypt rises like the Nile,
like the rivers whose waters churn.

He says: ‘I will rise up,
I will cover the earth,
I will destroy the city
and its inhabitants!’

⁹ Prance, you horses,
and rush madly, you chariots.

Let the warriors go out—
Cush and Put grasping the shield,
Lydians grasping and bending the bow!

¹⁰ For that day belongs to my Lord *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*,
as a day of vengeance, to avenge Himself against His
foes.

The sword will devour and be satisfied
and will drink its fill of their blood.
For it will be a sacrifice for my Lord *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*,
in the northern land by the river Euphrates.

¹¹ Go up into Gilead and get balm,
O virgin daughter of Egypt.

In vain you use many medicines—
there is no cure for you.

¹² Nations have heard of your shame,
and your outcry fills the earth.

For warrior stumbles over warrior—
both fall down together.”

¹³ The word that *ADONAI* spoke to Jeremiah the
prophet about the coming of King Nebuchadnezzar of
Babylon to strike the land of Egypt:

¹⁴ “Declare it in Egypt, proclaim in Migdol,
and announce in Noph and Tahpanhes.
Say: ‘Stand up and get ready!
For the sword has devoured all around you.’

¹⁵ Why are your strong ones swept away?
They did not stand up,
because *ADONAI* thrust him down.

¹⁶ They keep stumbling,
yes, falling over each other.

Then they said: ‘Get up!
Let’s return to our own people,
to the land of our birth,
away from the oppressor’s sword.’

¹⁷ They cried there:
‘Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise!
He let the opportune time pass.’

¹⁸ As I live,” declares the King
—whose Name is *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* —
“like Tabor among the mountains,
or like Carmel by the sea,
so surely he will come.

¹⁹ O daughter dwelling in Egypt,

get your bags ready for exile!
For Noph will become a ruin
laid waste, uninhabited.

²⁰ Egypt is a beautiful heifer—
but a biting fly is coming—
from the north it is coming!

²¹ Even her mercenaries among her
are like stall-fed calves,
for they also will turn back—
they will flee away together,
they will not stand up—
for the day of their calamity has come upon them,
the time of their visitation.

²² Its sound will hiss like a snake,
as they march with an army,
and come against her as woodcutters with axes.

²³ They cut down her forest”
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
“though it was impenetrable,
for they are worse than the locust
—they are without number.

²⁴ The daughter of Egypt is disgraced,
handed over to people of the north.”

²⁵ *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*, the God of Israel, says: “Behold, I
will punish Amon of No, Pharaoh, Egypt, with her gods
and her kings—even Pharaoh, and them that trust in
him. ²⁶ I will hand them over to those seeking their
lives, into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Baby-
lon and his servants. Yet afterwards it will be inhabit-
ed, as in the days of old.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁷ “But you, fear not, Jacob My servant,
nor be dismayed, O Israel.
For behold, I will save you from afar,
your offspring from the land of their exile.
And Jacob will return and be at peace and secure,
no one frightening him.

²⁸ Fear not, Jacob My servant”
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
“for I am with you.

I will make a full end of all the nations
where I have driven you,
but I will not make a full end of you.
I will discipline you with justice,
but will not utterly destroy you.”

Prophecy against the Philistines

47 The word of *ADONAI* that came to the prophet
Jeremiah concerning the Philistines, before
Pharaoh struck Gaza. ² Thus says *ADONAI*:

“Look, waters rising from the north
will become an overflowing torrent,
and overflow the land and all in it,
the city and those dwelling in it
and the men will cry,
and every inhabitant of the land wail.

³ The noise—
the stomping hooves of his stallions,
the rumbling of his chariots,

the reverberation of his wheels!
 Fathers will not turn back for their children
 because of their limp hands.
⁴ For the day is coming
 to devastate all the Philistines,
 to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every remaining ally.
 For *ADONAI* will destroy the Philistines,
 the rest of the island of Caphtor.
⁵ Baldness has come upon Gaza,
 Ashkelon is ruined.
 O remnant of their valley,
 how long will you gash yourself?
⁶ O sword of *ADONAI*,
 how long until you are quiet?
 Go back into your sheath,
 rest and be still.
⁷ How can you be quiet
 when *ADONAI* has commanded?
 He has assigned it against Ashkelon
 and against the coast of the sea."

Prophecy against Moab

48 Concerning Moab, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*,
 the God of Israel:
 "Oy to Nebo! For it will be ravaged.
 Kiriathaim will be disgraced and captured.
 The fortress will be shamed, shattered.
² There is no more praise for Moab.
 In Heshbon they plotted evil against her:
 'Come, let's cut her off as a nation.'
 You too, Madmen, will be silenced—
 the sword will chase you.
³ The sound of outcry from Horonaim,
 devastation and great destruction!
⁴ Moab is shattered—
 her little ones have raised a cry to be heard.
⁵ For at the ascent of Luhith
 they go up with continual weeping.
 For on the descent to Horonaim
 they heard the foe's shattering cry.
⁶ Flee! Escape with your lives!
 Be like a tamarisk in the wilderness.
⁷ For because of your trust in your works and your
 treasures,
 you will be captured, too.
 Chemosh will go into exile,
 together with his priests and princes.
⁸ The destroyer will come to every town.
 No town will escape.
 The valley will perish
 and the plain will be destroyed,
 as *ADONAI* has said.
⁹ Give wings to Moab,
 for she must fly and get away.
 Her cities will become a wasteland,
 with no one living in them.
¹⁰ Cursed is the one who does the work of *ADONAI*
 with slackness,

and cursed is the one who withholds his sword from
 blood.

¹¹ Moab has been at ease since his youth.
 He has settled like wine on its dregs.
 He has not been emptied from jar to jar,
 nor gone into exile.
 Therefore he retains his flavor,
 and his aroma has not changed.
¹² Therefore behold, days are coming"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "when I will send to him those who will tip him up
 and over,
 and they will empty his vessels,
 and smash his jars in pieces.
¹³ So Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh
 just as the house of Israel was ashamed
 of Beth-El their confidence.
¹⁴ How can you say: 'We are warriors
 and men valiant for battle?'
¹⁵ Moab is ravaged, its towns entered,
 its choice young men gone down to slaughter."
 —It is a declaration of the King, whose Name is *ADON-*
AI - Tzva'ot .

¹⁶ "Moab's calamity will come soon,
 and his downfall hastens swiftly.
¹⁷ Mourn for him,
 all who are around him,
 all who know his name.
 Say: 'How the mighty scepter,
 the splendid rod, is broken!'
¹⁸ O daughter dwelling in Dibon
 come down from your glory
 and sit in thirst!
 For Moab's destroyer has come to you.
 He has devastated your strongholds.
¹⁹ O inhabitant of Aroer,
 stand by the road and watch—
 ask him fleeing and her escaping,
 'What has happened?'
²⁰ Moab is disgraced, indeed shattered.
 Wail and shriek!
 Declare by the Arnon, Moab is ruined!
²¹ Judgment has come on the tableland
 —on Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath,
²² on Dibon, Nebo, Beth-Diblathaim,
²³ on Kiriathaim, Beth-Gamul, Beth-Meon,
²⁴ on Keriioth, Bozrah,
 and all the towns of the land of Moab, far and near.
²⁵ The horn of Moab is cut off
 and his arm is broken!"
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .
²⁶ "Make him drunk,
 for he exalted himself against *ADONAI* .
 So Moab will wallow in his vomit
 and also become a laughingstock.
²⁷ After all, Israel is a laughingstock to you.
 Was he ever found among thieves,
 that whenever you speak of him,

you should wag the head?
²⁸ Inhabitants of Moab, leave the towns and dwell in crags—
 like a dove nesting in a cave's mouth.
²⁹ We have heard of the pride of Moab—
 —very proud he is—his haughtiness,
 his arrogance, his insolence,
 and his self-exalted heart.
³⁰ I know his arrogance," says *ADONAI*,
 "but it is dishonest—
 his boasts really accomplish nothing.
³¹ Therefore I wail for Moab!
 Yes, I cry out for all Moab,
 for the men of Kir-Heres I moan.
³² More than weeping of Jazer
 will I weep for you, vine of Sibmah!
 Your branches spread to the sea,
 reached as far as the sea of Jazer.
 On your summer fruits and your vintage
 the destroyer has fallen.
³³ So joy and gladness are taken away
 from the fruitful field and from the land of Moab.
 I stopped wine from the winepresses.
 No one will tread with shouting—
 any shouting is not a shout of joy.
³⁴ "From the outcry of Heshbon to Elealeh, as far as
 Jahaz they will raise their voice—from Zoar to Horon-
 aim and a three-year-old heifer †—for the Waters of
 Nimrim also will be waste. ³⁵ Moreover I will make an
 end in Moab"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"of the
 one offering on the high place and the one burning in-
 cense to his gods.
³⁶ "That is why my heart is moaning like funeral flutes
 for Moab,
 and my heart moans like flutes
 for the people of Kir-heres.
 Thus the wealth he made is lost.
³⁷ For every head is bald,
 every beard clipped,
 on all the hands are gashes,
 and around the waist sackcloth.
³⁸ On all the housetops of Moab
 and in its squares—
 lamentation everywhere!
 For I have broken Moab like a jar
 In which no one delights."
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
³⁹ "How shattered it is!" they wailed!
 'How Moab turned his back in shame!
 So Moab will become a laughingstock
 and a horror to all around him."
⁴⁰ For thus says *ADONAI*: "Behold,
 he will swoop down like a vulture
 and spread out his wings against Moab.
⁴¹ The towns are captured,
 the strongholds seized.
 The hearts of Moab's warriors in that day

will be like the heart of a woman in labor.
⁴² Moab will be destroyed as a people,
 because he boasted against *ADONAI*.
⁴³ Panic, pit, and trap, are upon you,
 inhabitant of Moab," declares *ADONAI*.
⁴⁴ "The one who flees from panic
 will fall into the pit,
 and one who climbs out of the pit
 will be caught in the trap.
 For I will bring on Moab
 the year of their visitation."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
⁴⁵ "In the shadow of Heshbon
 the fugitives stop, exhausted,
 for fire breaks out of Heshbon,
 flame from within Sihon,
 and it singes the foreheads
 and the scalps of Moab's noisy sons.
⁴⁶ Oy to you, Moab!
 The people of Chemosh have perished!
 For your sons are taken away captive
 and your daughters into exile.
⁴⁷ Yet I will restore Moab from exile
 in the end of days."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
 "Until then this is the judgment of Moab."

Against Surrounding Nations

49 About Ammon's children, thus says *ADONAI*:
 "Has Israel no sons?
 Has he no heir?
 Why then did Malcam dispossess Gad
 and his people settled in its towns?
² Therefore behold, days are coming"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "when I will sound an alarm of war
 heard against Rabbah of Ammon!
 It will become a mound of ruins.
 Her villages will be burned with fire.
 Then Israel will dispossess those
 who dispossessed him."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
³ "Wail, Heshbon, for Ai is devastated!
 Cry, daughters of Rabbah!
 Wear sackcloth, lament,
 and run to and fro within the walls,
 for Malcam will go into captivity
 together with his priests and princes.
⁴ Why do you brag about valleys—
 your flowing valley, faithless daughter?
 Trusting in your treasures:
 'Who will come against me?'
⁵ I am about to bring terror on you"
 —a declaration of my Lord *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* —
 "from all those around you.
 Each of you will be banished headlong,
 with no one to gather the fugitives.

† Hebrew *Eglat-shlishiyah*

⁶ Yet afterward I will restore Ammon's children from exile."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

⁷ About Edom, thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*:

"Is there no longer wisdom in Teman?

Is counsel lost to the prudent?

Has their wisdom vanished?

⁸ Flee! Turn back!

Stay low, inhabitants of Dedan,
for I will bring Esau's calamity on him
at the time that I punish him.

⁹ If grape gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?

If thieves came at night,
would they not destroy only enough for themselves?

¹⁰ But I will strip Esau bare.

I will uncover his hiding places,
so he will not be able to hide himself.

His offspring has been destroyed with his kinsmen
and neighbors.

So he is nothing.

¹¹ Leave your orphans—I will keep them alive,
and let your widows trust in Me."

¹² For thus says *ADONAI*:

"Behold, if those who do not deserve to drink the cup
must surely drink,

can you go utterly unpunished?

You will not go unpunished,

for you shall surely drink!

¹³ For I have sworn by Myself"

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —

"that Bozrah will become a horror,
a disgrace, a waste and a curse.

All its towns will be ruins forever."

¹⁴ I heard a message from *ADONAI*.

An ambassador is sent to the nations:

"Gather together, come against her,
and rise up for war!

¹⁵ For see, I made you least among nations,
despised among men.

¹⁶ Your terrorism has deceived you,
so that your heart is arrogant.

You who live in the clefts of the rock,
who occupy the height of the hill.

Though you make your nest as high as an eagle's,
I will bring you down from there."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁷ "Edom will become a desolation.

Everyone passing by will be appalled
and hiss at all its plagues.

¹⁸ Like the overthrow of Sodom, Gomorrah
and their neighbors," says *ADONAI*,

"no one will live there,
nor any son of man dwell there.

¹⁹ Look, it is like a lion coming up from the thickets of
the Jordan

to a secure pasture—

for abruptly I will make him run away from it.

I appoint over it whomever I choose.

For who is like Me?

Who will summon me to court?

What shepherd stands up to Me?"

²⁰ Therefore hear the plan that *ADONAI* has drawn up
against Edom,

and His strategies that He designed against the in-
habitants of Teman.

Surely the least of the flock will be dragged away,
Surely He will make their pasture desolate because of
them.

²¹ The earth will tremble at the noise of their down-
fall.

The sound of their outcry will be heard at the Sea of
Reeds.

²² Behold, He will mount up and swoop down like an
eagle,

and spread out His wings against Bozrah.

The hearts of Edom's warriors in that day
will be like a woman's heart in her pangs.

²³ About Damascus: "Hamath and Arpad are
ashamed,

for they heard bad news,

They melt away;

in the sea there is trouble that cannot be quiet.

²⁴ Damascus has become feeble.

She turns away to flee,

panic grips her,

anguish and pangs have seized her,

like a woman in travail.

²⁵ How is the city of praise deserted—

the city of my joy?

²⁶ Therefore her young men will fall in her squares—
all the warriors will be silenced in that day."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot*.

²⁷ "I will set fire to the wall of Damascus—

it will devour Ben-Hadad's palaces."

²⁸ About Kedar and of the kingdoms of Hazor, which
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon struck. Thus says

ADONAI:

"Arise, go up against Kedar

and devastate the children of the east.

²⁹ They will take away their tents and their flocks.

They will carry away their curtains,

all their gear and their camels.

They will cry out against them,

'Terror on every side!'

³⁰ Flee! Scatter far!

Stay low, inhabitants of Hazor!"

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

"For King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has taken
counsel against you,

and devised a plan against you.

³¹ Arise, go up against a nation at ease,

dwelling securely," says *ADONAI*.

"They have no gates or bars;

they dwell alone.

³² Their camels will become plunder,

their many cattle a spoil.
I will scatter to all the winds those who shave the edges.

I bring their calamity from every side."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³³ "Hazor will be a lair of jackals,
a desolation forever—
no one will abide there,
nor any son of man dwell there."

³⁴ The word of *ADONAI* that came to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, saying, ³⁵ thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* :

"Behold, I will break Elam's bow—
the source of their might.

³⁶ I will bring upon Elam the four winds
from the four quarters of heaven,
and will scatter them to all those winds.
There will be no nation
where the dispersed of Elam will not go.

³⁷ I will shatter Elam before their enemies
and before those seeking their soul.
I will bring calamity on them—
My burning anger!"

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

"I will send the sword after them
until I have consumed them.

³⁸ Then I will put My throne in Elam
and destroy from it king and princes."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³⁹ "Yet it will be in the end of days,
that I will restore Elam from exile."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Against Babylon

50 The word that *ADONAI* spoke about Babylon,
about the land of the Chaldeans, through Jeremiah the prophet:

² "Declare it among the nations and proclaim!
Raise a banner, announce, hide nothing!
Say: 'Babylon will be captured,
Bel put to shame,
Merodach dismayed,
her images disgraced,
her idols shattered!'"

³ For a nation comes up against her
out of the land of the north
—it will desolate her land.
No one will dwell there—
they have fled, gone, both man and beast."

Declaration of Restoration

⁴ "In those days and at that time"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"the children of Israel will come,
together with the children of Judah,
weeping as they come,

and will seek *ADONAI* their God.

⁵ They will ask about Zion, the way—
here are their faces! Come!

They will join themselves to *ADONAI*
in an everlasting covenant
that will never be forgotten. †

⁶ My people have been lost sheep. ††
Their shepherds led them astray.
Turning around in the mountains,
they went from mountain to hill,
and forgot their resting place.

⁷ Everyone finding them devoured them.
Their foes said: 'We're not guilty!'

Instead, they sinned against *ADONAI*,
the habitation of justice—
ADONAI, the hope of their fathers."

Doom of Babylon

⁸ "Flee from within Babylon, †
get out of the land of the Chaldeans,
and be like he-goats before the flock.

⁹ For I will soon stir up and bring against Babylon
an alliance of great nations from the north.
They will form battle lines against her,
from there she will be captured.

Their arrows will be like a warrior who bereaves,
not returning empty.

¹⁰ Chaldea will be a spoil—
all who plunder her will be satisfied."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹¹ "Because you rejoice, because you exult—
you who plunder My inheritance—
because you frolic like a trampling heifer
and neigh like stallions,

¹² your mother will be utterly ashamed,
she who bore you will be humiliated.
Behold, the least of the nations will be a wilderness,
a dry land, a desert."

¹³ Because of *ADONAI*'s wrath,
it will be uninhabited, all waste.
Everyone who passes by Babylon will be appalled,
hissing at all her wounds.

¹⁴ Array against Babylon all around,
all you who bend the bow.
Shoot at her! Spare no arrows—
for she has sinned against *ADONAI*.

¹⁵ Raise a war cry against her all around!
She has thrown up her hands,
her bulwarks are fallen,
her walls thrown down.

For it is *ADONAI*'s vengeance:
take vengeance on her,
as she has done, do to her! ††

¹⁶ Cut off the sower from Babylon
and the one who wields a sickle in the time of harvest.

† cf. Luke 22:20; Heb. 8:6-10. †† cf. Matt. 9:36; 10:6. ‡ cf. Rev. 18:4. †† cf. Rom. 12:19; Rev. 18:6.

Before the sword of the oppressor
they will each turn to his people,
each will flee to his own land.
17 Israel is a scattered flock—
lions have driven them away.
First, Assyria's king devoured him.
This last one who broke his bones
was King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.
18 Therefore thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* ,
the God of Israel:
"Indeed, I will punish Babylon's king and his land,
just as I punished Assyria's king.
19 I will bring Israel back to his pasture.
He will feed on Carmel and Bashan,
and his soul will be satisfied on the hills of Ephraim
and Gilead.
20 In those days and in that time"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"Israel's guilt will be sought,
but there will be none,
also for the sins of Judah,
but they will not be found.
For I will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant.
21 Go up against the land of Merathaim,
against the inhabitants of Pekod.
Put them to the sword
and utterly destroy them"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"and do all that I commanded you."
22 The noise of battle is in the land
and great crashing.
23 How the hammer of the whole earth
has been cut down and smashed!
How Babylon has become a horror
among the nations!
24 I set a snare for you, so you were caught,
O Babylon, when you were unaware.
You were found and also caught,
because you challenged *ADONAI* .
25 *ADONAI* has opened His armory
and brought out the weapons of His indignation.
For it is a work that my Lord *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* has to do
in the land of Chaldea.
26 Come against her from afar,
open her granaries,
pile her up like heaps
and utterly destroy her!
Let nothing be left to her.
27 To the sword with all her bulls,
going down to the slaughter!
Oy to them! Their day has come—
the time of their visitation.
28 The sound of fugitives, escaping out of the land of
Babylon—
declaring in Zion the vengeance of *ADONAI* our God,
vengeance for His Temple.
29 Summon archers to Babylon,
all who bend the bow.

Encamp against her all around,
let no one there escape.
Repay her for her deed.
As all she has done, do to her. †
For she was arrogant against *ADONAI* ,
against the Holy One of Israel.
30 Therefore her young men will fall in her squares,
all her warriors silenced in that day."
It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .
31 "Look, I am against you, arrogant one"
—declares my Lord *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* —
"for your day has come,
the time when I will punish you.
32 The arrogant will stumble and fall,
and no one will lift him up.
I will kindle fire in his cities,
and it will devour all who are round about him."
33 Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* :
"The children of Israel and the children of Judah
are oppressed together.
All their captors hold them fast.
They refused to let them go.
34 Their Redeemer is strong
— *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* is His Name—
He will vigorously plead their case,
so He may give rest to the earth,
but trembling to the Babylonians.
35 "A sword is on the Chaldeans"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"and on Babylon's inhabitants,
and her officials and wise men.
36 A sword on the diviners—fools!
A sword on her warriors—shattered!
37 A sword on their horses, their chariots,
on all the mixed people within her,
so they will become like women!
A sword on her treasures—
so they may be plundered.
38 A drought is on her waters,
so they will be dried up.
For it is a land of idols—
they are mad about horrible things.
39 So wildcats and hyenas will live there
and ostriches settle there.
It will never again be inhabited
or dwelt in from generation to generation. ††
40 As when *Elohim* overthrew Sodom, Gomorrah,
and their neighbor towns"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"so no man will live there,
nor any son of man dwell in it. ‡
41 Look! A people coming from the north,
a great nation and many kings
will rise up from the ends of the earth.
42 They grasp bow and javelin.
They are cruel, with no compassion.
Their voice roars like the sea,

† cf. Rev. 18:6. †† cf. Rev. 18:2. ‡ cf. Matt. 10:15; Jude 7.

as they ride on horses,
 arranged as warriors for battle,
 against you, daughter of Babylon.
⁴³ Babylon's king heard news of them.
 His hands droop;
 anguish grabs him,
 agony like a woman in labor.
⁴⁴ Look, it is like a lion coming up from the thickets of
 the Jordan
 to a secure pasture—
 for abruptly I will make him run away from it.
 I appoint over it whomever I choose.
 For who is like Me?
 Who will summon Me to court?
 What shepherd stands up to Me?"
⁴⁵ Therefore hear the plan that *ADONAI* has drawn up
 against Babylon,
 and His strategies that He designed against the land
 of the Chaldeans.
 Surely the least of the flock will be dragged away,
 Surely He will make their pasture desolate because of
 them.
⁴⁶ The earth will tremble at the noise of Babylon's cap-
 ture.
 The sound of their outcry will be heard among the
 nations.

Apocalyptic Vengeance

51 Thus says *ADONAI* :
 "Look!
 Stirring up against Babylon and those living in Leb-
 Kamai,
 a spirit of destruction.
² I will send strangers to Babylon
 to scatter her and empty her land.
 For in the day of trouble
 they will be against her all around.
³ Let the archer bend his bow at her.
 Let him rise up at her in his armor.
 Do not spare her young men.
 Destroy her whole army.
⁴ They will fall down slain in the land of Chaldea,
 thrust through in her streets.
⁵ For neither Israel nor Judah will be widowed
 by his God, *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* ,
 though their land is full of guilt
 before the Holy One of Israel.
⁶ Flee from within Babylon!
 Each one, escape with his soul!
 Be not silenced in her iniquity!
 For it is a time of vengeance for *ADONAI* .
 He will repay her recompense. †
⁷ Babylon has been a golden cup in *ADONAI* 's hand,
 intoxicating the whole earth.
 The nations drunk her wine—
 so the nations are going crazy.
⁸ Suddenly Babylon is fallen! ††

Shattered! Howl over her!
 Bring balm for her wound.
 Perhaps she may be healed?
⁹ We would have healed Babylon,
 but she cannot be healed.
 Abandon her!
 Let's go, each one to his own country,
 for her judgment has reached up to the heavens ‡
 and has risen beyond the skies.
¹⁰ *ADONAI* has brought forth our vindication!
 Come, let us declare in Zion
 the work of *ADONAI Eloheinu* !
¹¹ Sharpen the arrows.
 Fill the quivers!
ADONAI has roused the spirit of the kings of the
 Medes.
 For His plan is against Babylon, to destroy it.
 For it is *ADONAI* 's vengeance, vengeance for His Tem-
 ple.
¹² Raise a banner at Babylon's walls!
 Strengthen the guard.
 Station watchmen.
 Prepare ambushes.
 For *ADONAI* has both planned and accomplished what
 He spoke about the Babylonians.
¹³ You dwelling by many waters,
 rich in treasures, your end has come,
 the measure of your covetousness.
¹⁴ *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has sworn by Himself:
 "Surely I will fill you with men like a locust swarm,
 and they will shout cheers over you."

Creator of All, Judge of All

¹⁵ One made the earth by His power,
 set up the world by His wisdom,
 and spread out the heavens by His knowledge. ††
¹⁶ At His giving voice—
 tumult of waters in the skies!
 He causes clouds to rise from the ends of the earth.
 He makes lightning for the rain
 and brings forth wind from His storehouses.
¹⁷ All mankind is stupid, ignorant.
 Every goldsmith is disgraced by an idol,
 for his molten image is a lie—
 there is no breath in them.
¹⁸ They are futile, a work of delusion.
 In the time of their visitation they will perish.
¹⁹ Jacob's Portion is not like these,
 for He is the former of all things,
 including the tribe of His heritage
 — *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* is His Name.
²⁰ "You are My club, a war weapon—
 with you I shatter nations,
 with you I destroy kingdoms.
²¹ With you I wreck horse and rider,
 with you I wreck chariot and rider,
²² with you I break man and woman,

† cf. Rev. 18:4. †† cf. Rev. 1:8; 18:2.

‡ cf. Rev. 18:5. †† cf. Rom. 1:20.

with you I break elder and youth,
 with you I break young man and maid,
²³ with you I scatter shepherd and flock,
 with you I scatter plowman and ox-team,
 with you I scatter governors and officials.
²⁴ I will repay Babylon and all living in Chaldea
 for all their evil that they did in Zion,
 before your eyes."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

²⁵ "Beware! I am against you,
 destroyer of the Mount!"

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —

"Destroyer of all the land—
 I will stretch out My hand at you,
 roll you down from the cliffs,
 and make you a burning hill.

²⁶ They will not even take from you
 a cornerstone or foundation stone,
 for you will be desolate forever."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

²⁷ Raise a banner in the land!

Blow a *shofar* among the nations!
 Consecrate the nations against her.
 Summon against her the kingdoms—
 Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz.

Appoint a marshal against her.
 Bring horses up like rough locusts.

²⁸ Consecrate the nations against her,
 the kings of the Medes,
 its governors and all its deputies,
 and all the land of his dominion.

²⁹ Now the land shakes and writhes,
 for *ADONAI* 's plans against Babylon arise—
 to make the land of Babylon
 a desolation without inhabitant.

³⁰ Babylon's warriors ceased fighting.
 They stay in their strongholds.
 Their might is exhausted.
 They have become like women.
 Her dwellings are set ablaze,
 her gate-bars are broken.

³¹ One runner runs to meet another,
 and one messenger to meet another,
 to tell Babylon's king that his city
 has been taken from end to end.

³² The fords have also been seized
 and the marshes burned with fire,
 so the warriors are in panic.

³³ For thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, the God of Israel:
 "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor
 at treading time.

A little longer,
 and the time of harvest for her will come."

³⁴ "Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon has devoured
 me,
 crushed me, set me aside like an empty dish,
 swallowed me up like a dragon,
 filled his belly with my delicacies,

rinsed me away."

³⁵ The one dwelling in Zion says:

"Let the violence done to me and my flesh be upon
 Babylon!"

Jerusalem says:

"My blood be on the Chaldeans!"

³⁶ Therefore thus says *ADONAI* :

"Yes, I will uphold your cause
 and take vengeance for you.

I will dry up her sea,
 and make her fountain dry.

³⁷ Babylon will become heaps,
 a dwelling for jackals,
 a horror and a hissing, uninhabited.

³⁸ They roar together like young lions,
 growl like lions cubs.

³⁹ When they become hot,
 I will set out a banquet for them
 and will make them so drunk

that they become merry—
 and then sleep a perpetual sleep and never awake."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

⁴⁰ "I will drag them down
 like lambs to the slaughter,
 like rams with he-goats.

⁴¹ How has Sheshach † been taken,
 the praise of the whole earth seized?

How has Babylon become
 a horror among the nations!

⁴² The sea has risen over Babylon—
 she is covered with its roaring waves.

⁴³ Her cities became desolation,
 a dry land, desert, uninhabited land,
 through which no son of man passes.

⁴⁴ I will punish Bel in Babylon—
 What he swallowed I will make him disgorge out of
 his mouth.

Nations will no longer stream to him.
 Yes, the wall of Babylon has fallen!

⁴⁵ Come out of her, My people!

Each of you,
 save your soul from the fierce anger of *ADONAI* .

⁴⁶ Do not be faint-hearted,
 or be intimidated by the rumor heard in the land—

one year one rumor comes,
 next year, another rumor.

Yet violence will be in the land,
 with ruler against ruler.

⁴⁷ Therefore behold, days are coming
 when I will punish Babylon's idols.

Her entire land will be disgraced
 and all her slain will fall in her midst.

⁴⁸ Then heaven and the earth
 and all that is in them

will sing for joy over Babylon, ††

for the destroyers from the north will come to her."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

† Another name for Babylon †† cf. Rev. 18:20.

⁴⁹ Yes, Babylon is to fall for the slain of Israel, even as the slain of all the earth fell to Babylon.

⁵⁰ Escapees from the sword, go!

Do not stand still!

Remember *ADONAI* from afar—
and make *aliyah* to Jerusalem in your heart.

⁵¹ “We were shamed
when we heard reproach.

Disgrace has covered our faces,
for foreigners entered
the holy places of *ADONAI*’s House.”

⁵² “Therefore behold, days are coming”

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —

“when I will punish her idols,
and the wounded will groan
throughout all her land.

⁵³ Even if Babylon went up to heaven
and even if she fortified the height of her stronghold,
from Me destroyers will come to her.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

⁵⁴ The sound of an outcry from Babylon!
Great ruin from the land of Chaldea!

⁵⁵ For *ADONAI* is devastating Babylon,
and will silence her loud voice.

Their waves will roar like many waters.

The noise of their voices will resound.

⁵⁶ For a destroyer is coming against her, against Baby-
lon,

and her warriors will be captured,
their bows broken.

For *ADONAI* is a God of restitution,
He will fully repay.

⁵⁷ “I will intoxicate her officials and sages,
her governors, deputies, and warriors,
and they will sleep a perpetual sleep,
and not awake.”

It is a declaration of the King,
whose Name is *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot* .

⁵⁸ Thus says *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot* :

“Babylon’s thick wall will be totally razed
and her high gates burned with fire.

So the peoples are toiling for nothing,
and nations weary themselves for fire.”

⁵⁹ The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded
Seraiah son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, when he went
with King Zedekiah of Judah to Babylon in the fourth
year of his reign. Now Seraiah was quartermaster.

⁶⁰ And Jeremiah wrote in a single scroll all the evil that
would come upon Babylon, including all these words
that were written about Babylon.

⁶¹ Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah: “When you arrive in
Babylon, then see that you read all these words, ⁶² and
say: ‘*ADONAI*, you have spoken concerning this place,
to cut it off, that nothing will dwell there, neither man
nor beast, but that it will be desolate forever.’

⁶³ “Now when you have finished reading this scroll,
you will tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of
the Euphrates. ⁶⁴ Then you will say: ‘Thus will Babylon

sink, and not rise again, because of the calamity that I
will bring on her. So they will weary themselves.”

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

Babylon Destroys Jerusalem

52 Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became
king and he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. His
mother’s name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah
of Libnah. ² And he did what was evil in *ADONAI*’s eyes,
just like all Jehoiakim had done. ³ Because of *ADONAI*’s
anger it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that
He had them cast out of His presence.

So Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ⁴ It
came to pass in the ninth year of his reign in the tenth
month, the tenth day of the month, that King Neb-
uchadrezzar of Babylon came—he and all his
army—against Jerusalem, and besieged it. They built a
siege wall all around it. ⁵ So the city was besieged until
the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

⁶ In the fourth month, the ninth day of the month,
the famine was so severe in the city, that there was no
food for the people of the land. ⁷ Then the city was
broken into, and all the men of war fled, going out of
the city by night by the way of the gate between the
two walls, which was near the king’s garden—even
though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They
were heading along the way of the Arabah.

⁸ But the Chaldean army pursued the king and over-
took Zedekiah in the desert plains of Jericho. Then all
his army was scattered from him. ⁹ Then they took the
king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Ri-
blah in the land of Hamath. He passed judgment on
him.

¹⁰ At Riblah, the king of Babylon slaughtered Zede-
kiah’s sons before his eyes, and also all the Judean lead-
ers. ¹¹ Then he put out Zedekiah’s eyes. Then the king
of Babylon bound him in bronze chains, and brought
him to Babylon, where he put him in prison until the
day of his death.

¹² Now in the fifth month, the tenth day of the
month—which was the nineteenth year of King Neb-
uchadrezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan the cap-
tain of the guard came into Jerusalem to represent the
king of Babylon. ¹³ Then he burned the House of *ADONAI*,
the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem.
He burned every large house with fire. ¹⁴ Then all the
Chaldean army, which was with the captain of the
guard, broke down all the walls of Jerusalem all
around.

¹⁵ Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard car-
ried into exile some of the poorest of the people, the
rest of the people who were left in the city, the desert-
ers who had defected to the king of Babylon, and what
remained of the craftsmen. ¹⁶ But Nebuzaradan the
captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the
land to be vinedressers and plowmen.

¹⁷ The Chaldeans smashed the bronze pillars of the
House of *ADONAI*, the stands and the bronze sea that

were in the House of *ADONAI*, and carried all the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁸ The pots, the shovels, the wick trimmers, the basins, the pans, and all the bronze articles for Temple service, they also took away. ¹⁹ The cups, the fire-pans, the basins, the pots, the *menorot*, the pans, and the drink offering bowls—whatever was gold or silver—the captain of the guard took away.

²⁰ As for the 12 pillars, one sea, and 12 bronze bulls that were under the stands that King Solomon had made for the House of *ADONAI*—all these articles had bronze beyond weighing. ²¹ The height of one pillar was 18 cubits and it was 12 cubits in circumference and four fingers in its thickness—it was hollow.

²² There was a bronze capital on it—the height of one capital was 5 cubits, with latticework and pomegranates upon the capital all around, all of bronze. The second pillar was the same, with pomegranates. ²³ There were 96 pomegranates on the outside; including all the pomegranates around the lattice, there were 100.

²⁴ Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the *kohen gadol*, and Zephaniah the second *kohen*, and the three doorkeepers. ²⁵ From the city he took an officer who had been appointed over the men of war as well as seven men who saw the king's face, who were found in the city, the scribe of the commander of the army, who enlisted people of the land, and 60 men of the people of the land who were found within the city.

²⁶ Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah.

²⁷ The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Then Judah was led away into exile from its land.

²⁸ These are the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year 3,023 Jews; ²⁹ in Nebuchadrezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem; ³⁰ in the Nebuchadrezzar's twenty-third year, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard exiled 745 of the Jews—all together 4,600 people.

Release of King Jehoiachin

³¹ Now it came to pass on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month of the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Judah's King Jehoiachin, that king Evil-Merodach of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, lifted up the head of Judah's king Jehoiachin, and released him out of prison. ³² He spoke kindly to him and gave him a throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babylon. ³³ Then he changed out of his prison garments, and dined regularly before him all the days of his life. ³⁴ As for his allowance, a regular allowance was given to him by the king of Babylon, a portion for each day until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

Lamentations

Lamentations Introduction

The Hebrew name for Lamentations is Eychah, אֵיךָ כְּהָאֵיךָ, the first word of the book (Lam. 1:1). It means 'alas! how!' as an indication of mourning and is used to begin a funeral dirge (see Isa. 1:21 and Jer. 48:17). The English name comes from the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate, which get it from the Hebrew אֵיךָ, meaning Lamentations. In classical Judaism, the prophet Jeremiah, יְרֵמְיָהוּ, is traditionally attributed as the author (Bava Batra 15a). We know that he did give lamentations on other occasions (2 Chron. 35:25 and Jer. 7:29). The graphic and heart-wrenching language of mourning the Temple's destruction support the book's writing in the land shortly after the destruction in 586 BC, but no later than 575 BC.

The five chapters provide five laments of twenty two verses each (except the third one, which has sixty six verses). Chapters 1-4 are an alphabetic acrostic. In chapters 1, 2 and 4, each of the 22 verses begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew א-ת; while in chapter 3, there are three verses for each successive Hebrew letter. Chapters 2-4 though reverse the normal order of the Hebrew letters and in the א-ת. This indicates to the Hebrew reader that something is not right and adds to the disruption and mourning over the destruction expressed in the book. The book was written to the Jewish people to express mourning over the destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple (Lam. 2:5-9), those of all ages who suffered (Lam. 2:6, 9-11, 4:4-5, 9-10), those who lost their lives (Lam. 1:19-20), and those who were taken into captivity (Lam. 1:18). was righteous (Lam. 1:18) in this judgment (Lam. 1:12-15, 2:1-8, 17, 4:11) through the Babylonians due to the peoples' many sins (Lam. 1:5, 8-9, 18, 4:6). lovingkindness and compassion nevertheless offered hope (Lam. 3:21-66) that He would not reject Israel forever (Lam. 3:31). will be just and also judge Judah's enemies who rejoiced in her destruction (Lam. 1:21-22, 3:63-66, 4:21-22). The people needed to repent of their sins and return to (Lam. 3:39-40), then there would be hope for their restoration (Lam. 5:21-22). Thankfully, due to His lovingkindness and forgiveness, there is always hope for restoration in א-ת.

In the midst of this somber book, Lamentations 3:21-26 (especially, Lam. 3:22-23) shine like a bright light of hope expressing some of magnificent attributes. א-ת, loving kindness, and compassion indeed never fail and are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness! Also Lamentations 5:21 is a wonderful prayer for restoration and is part of the beautiful Jewish liturgy, א-ת, meaning "Tree of Life." We do well to consider that He who gave His life on a tree is the ultimate symbol of God's lovingkindness, thus Himself a worthy object of our reverence and devotion.

Lamentations Headings
 Song of Jerusalem's Groaning
 Lament for Zion
 Our Hope—His Faithfulness
 Intercession for Justice
 Devastation of Jerusalem
 Remember Us!
 (Restore Us)

Song of Jerusalem's Groaning

1 How lonely sits the city,
 once so full of people!
 She who was once great among the nations
 has become like a widow.
 The princess among the provinces
 has become a forced laborer.

² Bitterly she weeps in the night,
 her tears are on her cheeks.
 Among all her lovers,
 there is no one to comfort her.
 All her friends have betrayed her.
 They have become her enemies!
³ Judah is gone into exile
 under affliction and great servitude.
 She dwells among the nations.

She finds no resting place.
 All her pursuers have overtaken her
 in the midst of her distress.
⁴The roads to Zion mourn
 for no one comes to her *moadim* .
 All her gates are desolate.
 Her *kohanim* groan,
 her maidens [†] grieve—
 she is in bitter anguish.
⁵Her foes have become her masters.
 Her enemies are at ease.
 For *ADONAI* has afflicted her,
 because of her many transgressions.
 Her children have gone away
 as captives before the adversary.
⁶All her splendor has departed,
 from the daughter of Zion.
 Her princes are like stags
 that find no pasture.
 They have fled without strength
 before the pursuer.
⁷In the days of her affliction
 and her wandering,
 Jerusalem remembers all the treasures
 that were hers from the days of old.
 When her people fell into enemy hands,
 there was no one to help her.
 Her enemies saw her
 and mocked at her destruction.
⁸Jerusalem has greatly sinned—
 therefore, she has become *niddah* .
 All who honored her despise her,
 for they have seen her nakedness.
 She herself groans,
 and turns away.
⁹Her uncleanness was in her skirts.
 She did not consider her future.
 Her demise was astonishing,
 there was no one to comfort her.
 “*ADONAI* , see my affliction,
 for the enemy has triumphed!”
¹⁰The enemy has stretched his hand
 over all her treasures.
 She even saw nations
 enter her sanctuary—
 those You had commanded
 not to enter Your congregation.
¹¹All her people groan,
 as they seek bread.
 They traded their treasures for food
 to keep themselves alive.
 “Look, *ADONAI* , and see!
 For I have become despised!”
¹²“Is it nothing to you,
 all you who pass by on the road?
 Look and see!
 Is any suffering like my suffering

that was brought on me,
 that *ADONAI* has inflicted
 in the day of His fierce anger?
¹³From on high He sent fire into my bones
 and it overcame them.
 He spread out a net for my feet;
 He turned me back.
 He made me desolate,
 faint all the day long.
¹⁴My transgressions are bound into a yoke,
 woven together by His hand.
 They have come upon my neck
 and He has sapped my strength.
 The Lord delivered me over
 to those I cannot withstand.
¹⁵The Lord has rejected
 all the mighty ones in my midst.
 He has summoned an assembly against me
 to crush my young men.
 In a winepress the Lord has trampled ^{††}
 the virgin daughter of Judah.
¹⁶Over these things I weep.
 My eyes overflow with water.
 For far from me is a comforter,
 who might refresh my soul.
 My children are desolate,
 because the enemy has prevailed.”
¹⁷Zion spreads out her hands—
 there is no one to comfort her.
ADONAI has decreed against Jacob.
 Those surrounding him have become his foes;
 Jerusalem has become
niddah in their eyes.
¹⁸“ *ADONAI* is righteous,
 for I have rebelled against His word.
 Hear now, all peoples—
 look at my suffering!
 My maidens and my young men
 have gone into captivity.
¹⁹I called to my lovers—
 they deceived me!
 My *kohanim* and my elders
 perished in the city
 when they sought food
 to keep themselves alive.
²⁰Look, *ADONAI* , for I am in distress!
 My stomach churns,
 my heart pounds within me,
 for I have been very rebellious.
 Outside, the sword bereaves,
 in the house it is like death.
²¹They have heard me groaning.
 There is no one to comfort me.
 All my enemies heard of my distress,
 They rejoice that You have done it.
 May You bring about the day that You proclaimed,
 so they may become like me!

[†] *Lit. virgins*

^{††} *cf. Rev. 14:19-20.*

²² Let all their evil come before You.
Deal with them as you dealt with me,
because of all my transgressions.
For my groans are many
and my heart is faint!"

Lament for Zion

2 How my Lord has clouded over
the daughter of Zion in His anger!
He hurled down the splendor of Israel
from heaven to earth.
He has not remembered His footstool
in the day of His anger.
² My Lord has mercilessly swallowed up
all the dwellings of Jacob.
He threw down the strongholds
of the daughter of Judah in His fury.
He knocked to the ground and humiliated
the kingdom and its princes.
³ In fierce anger He has cut off
every horn of Israel.
He has withdrawn His right hand
from before the enemy.
He blazed against Jacob like raging fire,
devouring everything around.
⁴ He bent His bow like an enemy,
set His right hand like a foe,
and killed all those pleasant to the eye.
In the tent of the daughter of Zion
He has poured out His wrath like fire.
⁵ My Lord is like an enemy.
He has swallowed up Israel.
He swallowed up all her citadels,
destroyed her fortifications
and multiplied mourning and moaning
for the daughter of Judah.
⁶ Like the garden He laid waste His dwelling,
destroyed His appointed meeting place.
ADONAI has caused *moed* and *Shabbat*
to be forgotten in Zion.
In the indignation of His anger
He spurned king and *kohen* .
⁷ The Lord rejected His altar,
despised His Sanctuary.
He has delivered the walls of her citadels
into the hand of the enemy.
They raised a shout in the house of *ADONAI*
as if it were the day of a *moed* .
⁸ *ADONAI* resolved to destroy
the wall of the daughter of Zion.
He stretched out a measuring line.
He did not withdraw His hand from destroying.
He caused rampart and wall to lament—
together they languished away.
⁹ Her gates sank into the ground.
Her bars He destroyed and shattered.
Her king and princes are among nations.
There is no more *Torah* .

Also her prophets find
no vision from *ADONAI* .
¹⁰ The elders of the daughter of Zion
sit upon the ground in silence.
They threw dust on their heads
and girded themselves with sackcloth.
The maidens of Jerusalem
have bowed their heads to the ground.
¹¹ My eyes are filled with tears.
My stomach is in torment.
My heart † is poured out on the ground
over the destruction of the daughter of my people—
as young children and infants
languish in the city squares.
¹² They say to their mothers,
"Where is grain and wine?"
as they faint like a wounded soldier
in the city squares,
as their lives ebb away
in their mothers' bosom.
¹³ How can I admonish you?
To what can I compare you,
O daughter of Jerusalem?
To what can I liken you, so that I might console you,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For your wound is as deep as the sea!
Who can heal you?
¹⁴ Your prophets have seen for you
false and worthless visions.
They did not expose your iniquity,
so as to restore your captivity.
Rather, they have seen for you
false and worthless oracles.
¹⁵ All who pass your way
clap their hands at you.
They hiss and shake their heads
at the daughter of Jerusalem.
"Is this the city of which they said,
'The perfection of beauty,
the joy of the whole earth?'"
¹⁶ All your enemies
opened their mouth wide against you;
they hissed and gnashed their teeth,
and say, "We have swallowed her up!
Surely this is the day we have waited for;
we have lived to see it!"
¹⁷ *ADONAI* has done what He planned;
He has fulfilled His word
that He commanded from days of old.
He has overthrown you without pity,
He enabled the enemy to gloat over you.
He has exalted the horn of your foes.
¹⁸ Their heart cried out to the Lord:
O wall of the daughter of Zion,
let tears run down
like a river day and night.
Give yourself no relief,

† *Lit. liver*

your eyes no rest.
 19 Arise! Cry out in the night
 at the beginning of the watches!
 Pour out your heart like water
 before the presence of the Lord.
 Lift up your hands to Him
 for the life of your children
 who faint from hunger
 at the head of every street.
 20 Look, *ADONAI*, and consider
 with whom You have dealt so severely!
 Should women eat their offspring,
 their healthy newborn infants?
 Should *kohen* and prophet be slain
 in the Sanctuary of the Lord?
 21 On the ground in the streets
 lie both young and old.
 My maidens and my young men
 have fallen by the sword.
 You slew them in the day of Your anger.
 You slaughtered them without pity.
 22 As on a *moed* day, You summon
 against me terrors on every side.
 On the day of the wrath of *ADONAI*
 no one escaped or survived.
 Those whom I bore and raised
 my enemy has destroyed.

3 I am the strong man who has seen affliction
 by the rod of His wrath.
 2 He has driven me and made me walk
 in darkness and not light.
 3 Surely, He has turned His hand against me
 again and again all day long.
 4 He made my flesh and my skin
 waste away, broken my bones.
 5 He has besieged me and surrounded me
 with bitterness and hardship.
 6 He made me dwell in dark places
 like those long dead.
 7 He has walled me in so I cannot get out.
 He made my chain heavy.
 8 Even when I cry out and call for help,
 He shuts out my prayer.
 9 He walled in my ways with hewn stone.
 He twisted my paths.
 10 He is a lurking bear to me,
 a lion in hiding.
 11 He turned aside my paths and tore me to pieces.
 He has made me desolate.
 12 He bent His bow and made me
 the target for His arrow.
 13 He shot into my kidneys
 arrows from His quiver.
 14 I have become a laughing stock
 to all my people,
 their song all day long.
 15 He has filled me with bitterness
 and made me drink wormwood.

16 He broke my teeth with gravel.
 He made me wallow in ashes.
 17 My soul has been deprived of *shalom*,
 I have forgotten goodness.
 18 So I said, "My endurance has perished,
 and my hope from *ADONAI*."
 19 Remember my affliction
 my homelessness, bitterness and gall.
 20 Whenever I remember,
 my soul is downcast within me.

Our Hope—His Faithfulness

21 This I recall to my heart—
 therefore I have hope:
 22 Because of the mercies of *ADONAI*
 we will not be consumed,
 for His compassions never fail.
 23 They are new every morning!
 Great is Your faithfulness.
 24 " *ADONAI* is my portion," says my soul,
 "therefore I will hope in Him."
 25 *ADONAI* is good to those who wait for Him,
 to the soul that seeks Him.
 26 It is good to wait quietly
 for the salvation of *ADONAI*.
 27 It is good for a man
 to bear the yoke in his youth.
 28 Let him sit alone and be silent,
 since He has laid it upon him.
 29 Let him put his mouth in the dust—
 there may yet be hope.

Intercession for Justice

30 Let him offer his cheek
 to the one who strikes him. †
 Let him have his fill of disgrace.
 31 For the Lord will not reject forever.
 32 For though He has caused grief,
 yet He will have compassion
 according to His abundant mercies.
 33 For He does not afflict from His heart
 or grieve the sons of men.
 34 To crush under His foot
 all the prisoners of the land,
 35 to deprive a person of justice
 before the face of *Elyon*,
 36 to defraud a person in his lawsuit—
 would the Lord not see?
 37 Who speaks and it comes to pass
 unless the Lord has decreed it?
 38 Is it not from the mouth of *Elyon*
 that both calamities and good things proceed?
 39 Why should any living person complain
 when punished for his sins?
 40 Let us examine and test our ways,
 and let us return to *ADONAI*.

† cf. Matt. 5:39.

41 Let us lift up our heart and hands
to God in heaven.
 42 We have transgressed and rebelled—
You have not pardoned.
 43 You covered Yourself with anger and pursued us.
You have slain without pity.
 44 You shrouded Yourself with a cloud
so that no prayer can get through.
 45 You have made us scum and refuse
in the midst of the peoples.
 46 All our enemies opened their mouth
wide against us.
 47 Panic and pitfall have befallen us,
devastation and destruction.
 48 Streams of tears run down my eyes
because of the destruction of the daughter of my
people.
 49 My eye flows unceasingly,
without stopping,
 50 until *ADONAI* looks down
from heaven and sees.
 51 My eye torments my soul
because of all the daughters of my city.
 52 For no reason, my enemies
hunted me down like a bird.
 53 They cut off my life in the Pit,
and cast stones upon me.
 54 Waters flowed over my head.
I said, "I have been cut off!"
 55 I called on Your Name, *ADONAI*,
from the depths of the Pit.
 56 You heard my voice,
"Do not close Your ears to my cry for relief."
 57 You drew near on the day I called to You.
You said, "Do not fear!"
 58 Lord, You pled my soul's case,
You redeemed my life. †
 59 *ADONAI*, You saw the wrong done to me;
judge my cause!
 60 You have seen all their vengefulness,
all their schemes against me.
 61 You heard their taunt, *ADONAI*,
all their plots against me.
 62 The lips of my assailants and their whispering
are against me all day long.
 63 Look at them, sitting or standing,
they mock me in their song.
 64 Pay them back what they deserve, *ADONAI*,
according to the work of their hands.
 65 Give them a distraught heart.
May Your curse be on them.
 66 Pursue them in anger and destroy them
from under the heavens of *ADONAI*.

Devastation of Jerusalem

4 How dulled is the gold,
how tarnished the fine gold.

† cf. 1 John 2:1.

The sacred gems are poured out
at the corner of every street.
 2 The precious sons of Zion,
once worth their weight in gold—
alas! now they are treated like clay jars,
the work of a potter's hands!
 3 Even jackals offer their breast
to nurse their young.
 The daughter of my people has become cruel,
like ostriches in the desert.
 4 The nursing infant's tongue clings
to the roof of his mouth for thirst.
 Little children ask for bread,
but no one gives it to them.
 5 Those who used to eat delicacies
are desolate in the streets.
 Those who were brought up in purple
embrace trash heaps.
 6 For the iniquities of the daughter of my people
is greater than the sin of Sodom,
which was overthrown in a moment, ††
yet no hands turned to her.
 7 Purer than snow were her princes, ‡
whiter than milk,
their bodies more ruddy than rubies,
their appearance like sapphire.
 8 Their form has become darker than soot!
They are not recognized in the street.
 Their skin has shriveled on their bones,
withered like a tree.
 9 Better are those slain by the sword
than those struck down by famine—
they waste away, racked with pain,
for lack of fruits of the field.
 10 The hands of compassionate women
boiled their own children.
 They became their food
when the daughter of my people were destroyed.
 11 *ADONAI* has vented His fury.
He has poured out His burning anger.
 Yes, He kindled a fire in Zion
that devoured her foundations.
 12 The kings of the earth did not believe,
nor did the inhabitants of the world,
that enemy and foe would enter
the gates of Jerusalem.
 13 Yet it happened because of the sins of her
prophets,
and the iniquities of her *kohanim*,
who shed in her midst
the blood of the *tzaddikim* ‡†.
 14 They wander in the streets,
like blind men.
 They are so defiled with blood,
no one can touch their garments.
 15 "Turn away! Unclean!"

†† cf. Luke 10:12; 2 Pet. 2:6. ‡ Or Nazirite, consecrated ones
‡† Or just ones the righteous

They cry to them.
 "Turn away, turn away! Don't touch!"
 So they fled and wandered about.
 People among the nations say,
 "They can stay here no longer."
¹⁶ *ADONAI* Himself has scattered them.
 He will look on them no more.
 They did not respect the *kohanim*.
 They did not favor the elders.
¹⁷ Even now our eyes waste away
 looking in vain for our help.
 From our towers we watched
 for a nation that could not save us.
¹⁸ They hunted our steps,
 so we could not walk in our streets.
 Our end was near.
 Our days were numbered, for our end had come.
¹⁹ Our pursuers were swifter
 than eagles of the sky;
 they pursued us over the mountains;
 they ambushed us in the wilderness.
²⁰ The anointed of *ADONAI*,
 the breath of our nostrils,
 was captured in their pits,
 of whom we have said,
 "Under His shadow we will live among the nations."
²¹ Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
 you who dwell in the land of Uz.
 To you also will the cup be passed.
 You will be drunk and stripped naked.
²² O daughter of Zion,
 your punishment is accomplished;
 He will exile you no longer.
 But, O daughter of Edom,
 He will punish your iniquity
 and uncover your sins.

Remember Us!

5 Remember, *ADONAI*,
 what has come upon us.
 Look, and see our disgrace!
² Our inheritance is turned over to strangers,
 our homes to foreigners.
³ We have become orphans, fatherless,
 our mothers are like widows.

⁴ We pay silver for the water we drink;
 our wood comes at a price.
⁵ Our pursuers are at our necks.
 We are weary and have no rest.
⁶ We have held out our hand to Egypt
 and Assyria to be satisfied with bread.
⁷ Our fathers sinned and are no more,
 but we bear their punishment.
⁸ Slaves rule over us.
 There is no one to deliver us from their hand.
⁹ We get our bread at the peril of our lives
 because of the sword in the desert.
¹⁰ Our skin is hot as an oven
 due to fever from famine.
¹¹ The women in Zion have been ravished,
 maidens in the towns of Judah.
¹² Princes are hung up by their hands;
 elders are dishonored.
¹³ Young men toil at the millstone.
 Boys stagger under loads of wood.
¹⁴ Elders are gone from the gate,
 young men from their music.
¹⁵ Joy has ceased in our hearts.
 Our dance has turned into mourning.
¹⁶ The crown has fallen from our head.
 Oy to us, for we have sinned!
¹⁷ Because of this our heart is faint,
 for these things our eyes are dim,
¹⁸ for Mount Zion, which lies desolate,
 as jackals prowl over it.

Hashiveinu (Restore Us)

¹⁹ You, *ADONAI*, are enthroned forever;
 Your throne endures from generation to generation.
 †
²⁰ Why do You always forget us
 and forsake us for so long?
²¹ Bring us back to You, *ADONAI*,
 and we will return.
 Renew our days as of old—
²² unless You have utterly rejected us
 and are exceedingly angry with us.

† cf. Rev. 4:9-10; 5:13.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel Introduction

Ezekiel was one of the most controversial of Israel's prophets. He never tickled his recipient's ears; he warned them of God's judgment with the exhortation to repent. His name in Hebrew, לְאֶזְקִיָּאל means "God strengthens." It is believed that Ezekiel began his prophetic office around 590-550 BCE. He was a contemporary of Daniel. His first vision occurred at the river Chebar. Four impressive beings appeared to him, moving only as directed by the Spirit of God. God's glory appeared in the midst of the four beings and four wheels. Ezekiel was so overwhelmed that he fell prostrate in the presence of God.

God commissioned Ezekiel to go to the house of Israel. Throughout chapters 2 and 3, the words "stubborn" and "rebellious house" are frequently used, to impress upon Ezekiel of the seriousness of the mission. He was only to speak what spoke to him. Inaccurate reporting was not to be accepted by God. We must adhere to the same integrity as followers of God. What an encouragement we can glean from Ezekiel's steadfastness in the midst of rejection and pain!

God called Ezekiel to participate in four actions: writing on a brick, lying on each side for a period of time, baking bread with human dung (changed to cattle dung), and parting his hair in thirds. God has His purposes of getting one's attention. The phrase "they will know that I am" appears over sixty times in the book of Ezekiel. God was serious about His warnings.

As it is in this 21st century, so it was in Ezekiel's time that the mountains of Israel were silent participants. Ezekiel issued a prophecy to the mountains. He exhorted the people to be assured that the day of will indeed come, yet they still had time to repent. Their pagan ceremonies and ritual ablutions were empty elaborate demonstrations of vanity. However, the people did not heed Ezekiel; they continued in their idolatrous, heathen worship. In 591 BCE, the prophet had a vision that the glory of God would depart from the Temple. The vision came true and judgment fell hard upon Israel. Ezekiel likened Israel to a rusty pot, contaminated and not fit for use.

Ezekiel continued to exhort the nations: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt—none were spared of his condemnation. Today, these nations may bring threat against Israel, but no weapon formed against her shall prosper.

Ezekiel held out hope that Israel would repent. In chapter 33, Ezekiel was called to be a watchman for God's people. Yet, even as Jerusalem lay in ruins, the people refused to repent. They were indeed a stubborn and rebellious people.

Finally, chapters 40-48 document Ezekiel's vision of Jerusalem restored. Although scholars disagree on the many interpretations of these chapters, one thing is for certain: a New Jerusalem is coming. Her twelve gates will be restored. The name of this city is to be "is there." As followers of , we have this promise "But as it is written: "Things no eye has seen and no ear has heard that have not entered the heart of mankind – these things God has prepared those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9, cf. Isa. 64:4). means "God strengthens." It is believed that Ezekiel began his prophetic office around 590-550 BCE. He was a contemporary of Daniel.

His first vision occurred at the river Chebar. Four impressive beings appeared to him, moving only as directed by the Spirit of God. God's glory appeared in the midst of the four beings and four wheels. Ezekiel was so overwhelmed that he fell prostrate in the presence of God.

God commissioned Ezekiel to go to the house of Israel. Throughout chapters 2 and 3, the words "stubborn" and "rebellious house" are frequently used, to impress upon Ezekiel of the seriousness of the mission. He was only to speak what spoke to him. Inaccurate reporting was not to be accepted by God. We must adhere to the same integrity as followers of God. What an encouragement we can glean from Ezekiel's steadfastness in the midst of rejection and pain!

God called Ezekiel to participate in four actions: writing on a brick, lying on each side for a period of time, baking bread with human dung (changed to cattle dung), and parting his hair in thirds. God has His purposes of

getting one's attention. The phrase "they will know that I am " appears over sixty times in the book of Ezekiel. God was serious about His warnings.

As it is in this 21st century, so it was in Ezekiel's time that the mountains of Israel were silent participants. Ezekiel issued a prophecy to the mountains. He exhorted the people to be assured that the day of will indeed come, yet they still had time to repent. Their pagan ceremonies and ritual ablutions were empty elaborate demonstrations of vanity. However, the people did not heed Ezekiel; they continued in their idolatrous, heathen worship. In 591 BCE, the prophet had a vision that the glory of God would depart from the Temple. The vision came true and judgment fell hard upon Israel. Ezekiel likened Israel to a rusty pot, contaminated and not fit for use.

Ezekiel continued to exhort the nations: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt—none were spared of his condemnation. Today, these nations may bring threat against Israel, but no weapon formed against her shall prosper.

Ezekiel held out hope that Israel would repent. In chapter 33, Ezekiel was called to be a watchman for God's people. Yet, even as Jerusalem lay in ruins, the people refused to repent. They were indeed a stubborn and rebellious people.

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¹ In the thirtieth year on the fifth day of the fourth month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens opened, and I saw visions of God. ² In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, ³ the word of *ADONAI* came to Ezekiel the *kohen*, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar. (The hand of *ADONAI* was upon him there.)

Vision of Supernatural Beings

⁴ I looked, and behold, a storm wind came from the north, a great cloud with flashing fire and brightness all around it, and something like a glowing alloy [†] out of the fire. ⁵ From within it came the likeness of four living creatures. This was their appearance: they had a likeness of a human, ⁶ but each one had four faces and each one of them had four wings. ⁷ Their legs were straight and the soles of their feet were like the hoof of a calf. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. ⁸ They had human hands under their wings on their four sides. The four of them had faces and wings: ⁹ their wings touched one another; they did not turn when they moved; each could move in the direction of any of its faces. ¹⁰ As for the form of their faces, each had a human face, the four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle. ¹¹ Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above.

[†] Hebrew obscure; possibly an amber-colored amalgam of gold and silver.

Each creature had two wings touching the wing of another, while another two were covering their bodies. ¹² Now each being could move in the direction of any of its faces; wherever the *Ruach* would go, they went, without turning as they went.

¹³ As for the form of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, resembling torches moving between the living creatures. There was brightness to the fire, and lightning went forth from the fire. ¹⁴ The living creatures were running back and forth like flashes of lightning. ¹⁵ As I looked at the living creatures, behold, one wheel was on the ground next to each of the four-faced creatures. ¹⁶ The appearance and structure of the wheels was like the gleaming of beryl. The four had the same likeness, their appearance and their structure seemed to be a wheel within a wheel.

¹⁷ When they went, they went in any of their four directions without pivoting as they went. ¹⁸ Their rims were high and awesome—all four rims were full of eyes all around. ¹⁹ When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them. When the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. ²⁰ Wherever the *Ruach* wanted to go, they went, in the direction the *Ruach* wanted to go. The wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. ²¹ Whenever the creatures went, the wheels went. When the creatures stood still, these wheels stood still. When the creatures rose from the earth, the

wheels rose with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

²² Now over the heads of the living creatures there was something like an expanse, shining like the color of ice, stretched forth over their heads. ²³ Under the expanse, their wings were stretched out straight, one toward the other. Each had another pair covering its body.

²⁴ When they moved, I could hear the sound of their wings like the sound of rushing waters, like the voice of *Shaddai*, a noise of tumult like the noise of an army. Whenever they stood still, they let down their wings. ²⁵ There came a voice from above the expanse over their heads. Whenever they stood still, they let down their wings.

²⁶ Above the expanse over their heads was something like a throne, resembling a sapphire stone. Above the shape of the throne was a figure of human appearance. ²⁷ From what appeared as his waist upward, I saw a glowing metal, looking like a fire encased in a frame. From what was like his waist down, I saw the appearance of fire radiating around him.

²⁸ Like the appearance of the rainbow † in the cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the radiance. It was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of *ADONAI*. I saw it, fell upon my face, and heard the voice of the One who was speaking.

A Rebellious House

² Then He said to me: “Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak with you.” ² As He spoke to me, the *Ruach* came upon me and stood me up on my feet. I heard Him speaking to me again.

³ He said to me, “Son of man, I send you to *Bnei-Yisrael*, to rebellious nations that have been rebelling against Me. They and their fathers have rebelled against Me to this very day. ⁴ The children have hard faces and stubborn hearts. I am sending you to them, and you are to tell them, ‘Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*.’ ⁵ Whether they listen, or whether they will refuse to listen—for they are a rebellious house—they will know that a prophet was among them.

⁶ “But you, son of man, do not be afraid of them. Do not fear their words, though thistles and thorns are beside you and you sit among scorpions. Do not be afraid of their words or be dismayed by their looks—for they are a rebellious house. ⁷ You will speak My words to them, whether they will listen or whether they will refuse to listen—for they are rebellious. ⁸ Now you, son of man, hear what I say to you: do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth, and eat what I am giving to you.”

⁹ I looked, and behold, a hand was stretched out to me, holding a written scroll. ¹⁰ He spread it out before me. It was written on, front and back. Written on it were lamentations, dirges, and woe.

Eat the Scroll

³ Then He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find—eat this scroll. Then go, speak to the house of Israel.” ² So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat, ³ as He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.” I ate it and it tasted as sweet as honey.

⁴ Then He said to me, “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak My words to them. ⁵ For you are not sent to a people of unintelligible speech and difficult tongue, but to the house of Israel, ⁶ nor to many peoples of unintelligible speech or difficult tongue, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to such, they would listen to you. ⁷ But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me. Surely the whole house of Israel has a hard forehead and a stubborn heart.

⁸ Look, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. ⁹ I will make your forehead like adamant, harder than flint. Do not fear them. Do not be dismayed by their faces, for they are a rebellious house.”

¹⁰ Furthermore, He said to me: “Son of man, receive in your heart and hear with your ears all My words that I will speak to you. ¹¹ Go to the exiles, to the children of your people. Speak to them. Tell them, ‘Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*.’ Whether they will listen or whether they will refuse to listen.”

¹² Then the *Ruach* lifted me up. I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake—“Blessed is the glory of *ADONAI* from His place!”—¹³ also the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a great earthquake. ¹⁴ The *Ruach* lifted me up and took me away. I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit. The hand of *ADONAI* was strong upon me. ¹⁵ I came to the exiles at Tel-Abib who lived by the river Chebar. I sat where they were dwelling. I sat there overwhelmed among them for seven days.

Watchman Must Warn

¹⁶ Now at the end of seven days, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁷ “Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for the house of Israel. When you hear a word from My mouth, give them a warning from Me. ¹⁸ When I say to the wicked, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn him or speak to warn the wicked of his wicked way, to save his life, that wicked person will die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood from your hand. ¹⁹ Yet you, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul. ²⁰ When a righteous person turns from his righteousness and acts perversely, I will lay a stumbling block before him and he will die. Be-

† cf. Rev. 4:2-3; 10:1.

cause you have not warned him, he will die in his sin. His righteous deeds that he has done will not be remembered—but I will require his blood at your hand. ²¹ If you warn the righteous person not to sin and the righteous person does not sin, he will surely live, because he took warning. You will have delivered your soul."

²² The hand of *ADONAI* came upon me there. He said to me: "Arise, go out to the valley. I will speak with you there." ²³ So I arose, and went out to the valley. Behold, the glory of *ADONAI* stood there—like the glory that I saw by the River Chebar—and I fell on my face. ²⁴ The *Ruach* came into me, and stood me upon my feet. Then He spoke with me and said to me: "Go, shut yourself in your house. ²⁵ You, son of man, behold, ropes will be put on you. You will be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people. ²⁶ I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth. You will be mute and unable to reprove them, for they are a rebellious house. ²⁷ But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth. You will say to them: 'Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*;' he that hears, let him hear. He that refuses to hear, let him refuse—for they are a rebellious house."

Ezekiel Portrays the Siege of Jerusalem

⁴ "Now you, son of man, take a brick and lay it before you. Engrave on it a city, Jerusalem. ² Lay siege against it, build earthworks against it, raise an assault ramp against it; pitch camps against it and place battering rams all around it. ³ Then take an iron plate and set it up as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face toward it so that it is under siege. So you will lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

⁴ "Then you are to lie on your left side, and set on it the punishment of the house of Israel; according to the number of days that you lie on it, you will bear their iniquity. ⁵ I have appointed the years of their punishment to you as a number of days—390 days. So you will bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. ⁶ When you have completed these, you will lie on your right side and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah—40 days—a day for each year, I have appointed to you. ⁷ You will set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, with your arm bared, and prophesy against it.

⁸ "Behold, I will put ropes upon you. You will not be able to turn from side to side until you have completed the days of your siege. ⁹ Take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and rye, and put them in one bowl. You will make bread from them for the number of days that you will lie on your side; for 390 days, you will eat it. ¹⁰ The food that you will eat will be 20 shekels a day by weight †. You may eat from it from time to time. ¹¹ You are also to drink water by measure, a sixth of a hin ††. You may drink it from time to

time. ¹² Eat it as barley cakes. Bake it on human dung before their eyes."

¹³ Then *ADONAI* said, "This is how *Bnei-Yisrael* will eat their bread—unclean, among the nations where I will scatter them."

¹⁴ Then I said, "Ah, *ADONAI Elohim*! Behold, I have never defiled myself. From my youth up until now have I not eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts. Tainted meat has never come into my mouth."

¹⁵ He said to me, "See, I have given you cow dung instead of human dung. So you will prepare your bread on it." ¹⁶ Then he said to me, "Son of man, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem. They will eat bread by weight, in anxiety, and they will drink water by measure, in horror. ¹⁷ On account of their lack of bread and water they will be appalled at one another and waste away in their iniquity."

Sign of a Shaved Head

⁵ "Now you, son of man, take a sharp sword. Use it as a barber's razor to shave your head and your beard. Then take balances to weigh and divide the hair. ² A third you will burn in fire in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are complete. Take a third and strike it with the sword all around the city. Scatter a third to the wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. ³ Take a few from there and tie them up in your garment. ⁴ Again take some of them, throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. A fire will spread from it into all the house of Israel."

⁵ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "This is Jerusalem! I have set her in the midst of the nations, with countries all around her. ⁶ She has rebelled against My ordinances by doing wickedness worse than the nations, and against My decrees worse than the surrounding countries. For they have rejected My ordinances and as for My decrees, they have not walked in them."

⁷ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "Because you are more turbulent than the surrounding nations, in that you have not walked in My decrees or followed my ordinances, nor have you observed the ordinances of the surrounding nations, ⁸ therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Behold, I in turn am against you. I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations. ⁹ On account of your abominations I will do with you that which I have never done, and the like of which I would never do again. ¹⁰ Therefore the fathers will eat the sons in your midst, and sons will eat their fathers. I will execute judgments on you and I will scatter the remainder of you to all the winds."

¹¹ "Therefore, as I live, says *ADONAI Elohim*, surely, because you have defiled My Sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will shave you off. My eye will not spare, and I will have no pity. ¹² A third of you will die with the plague and will be consumed with famine in your midst. A third will fall by the sword all around you. A third I will scatter to all the winds, and draw out a

† About eight ounces. †† About three cups.

sword after them. ¹³ I will vent all My anger and satisfy My fury on them. Then I will rest. So they will know that I, *ADONAI*, have spoken in My zeal, when I have satisfied My fury on them.

¹⁴ "Moreover I will make you a ruin and a mockery among the surrounding nations and in the sight of all who pass by. ¹⁵ When I execute judgment upon you in anger, rage, and furious chastisement, you will be a mockery and a taunt, a warning and a horror to the surrounding nations: I, *ADONAI*, have spoken it.

¹⁶ When I send evil arrows of famine upon them, for destruction I will send them to destroy you, and I will intensify the famine upon you and will break your staff of bread. ¹⁷ I will send on you famine and evil beasts, and they will make you childless. Plague and blood will sweep through you. I will bring the sword upon you. I, *ADONAI*, have spoken."

Woe to the Mountains

6 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel and prophesy to them. ³ Say: Mountains of Israel, hear the word of *ADONAI*!" Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* concerning the mountains and concerning the hills, concerning the wadis and concerning the valleys: "Behold, I will bring a sword on you. I will destroy your high places. ⁴ Your altars will become desolate. Your sun pillars will be broken. I will cast down your slain men before your idols. ⁵ I will lay the corpses of *Bnei-Yisrael* before their idols. I will scatter your bones around your altars. ⁶ In all your dwellings the cities will be desolate. The high places will be deserted. Your altars will be laid waste and made desolate, your idols broken and destroyed, your sun pillars cut down and your works blotted out. ⁷ The slain will fall in your midst. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*.

⁸ "Yet I will leave a remnant, some that escape the sword among the nations, when you have been scattered through the countries. ⁹ The survivors will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, how I was crushed by their adulterous heart that has strayed from Me and their eyes which have lusted after their idols. They will loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils that they committed in all their abominations. ¹⁰ They will know that I am *ADONAI*. I have not warned in vain that I would do this evil to them."

¹¹ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "Clap your hands, stamp your foot and cry, 'Alas!' because of all the vile abominations of the house of Israel who will fall by the sword, by famine, and by plague. ¹² The one who is far off will die of the plague; the one who is near will fall by the sword. Whoever remains and is spared will die by the famine; this is how I will spend My fury on them. ¹³ You will know that I am *ADONAI*, when your slain lie among their idols surrounding their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every green tree, and under every leafy oak—the places

where they offer sweet aroma to all their idols. ¹⁴ I will stretch out My hand over them and make the land desolate and waste, more than the wilderness of *Di-blah*, wherever they live. Then they will know that I am *ADONAI*."

A Singular Evil Comes

7 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "You, son of man, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* concerning the land of Israel:

"An end! The end has come on the four corners of the land. ³ The end is upon you. I will send My anger on you. I will judge you according to your ways. I will bring all your abominations on you. ⁴ My eyes will not spare you nor will I have pity, but I will bring your ways upon you, for your abominations in your midst. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*."

⁵ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:

"An evil, a singular evil, behold, it comes. ⁶ An end has come, the end has come! It has awakened against you. Look, it is coming! ⁷ Doom has come upon you, inhabitant of the land! The time has come, the day is near—panic, not joyful shouting on the hills. ⁸ Now, soon, I am about to pour out My fury on you. I will exhaust My anger on you. I will judge you according to your ways. I will bring all your abominations on you. ⁹ My eye will not spare you nor will I have pity—I will repay you for your ways—your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that it is I, *ADONAI*, who strikes. ¹⁰ Behold, the day! Look, it is coming! Doom has gone out. The rod has budded, arrogance has blossomed. ¹¹ Violence grows into a rod of wickedness. Nothing will come from them, nothing from their crowd, nothing from their tumult, nothing distinctive among them. ¹² The time has come—the day draws near. The buyer will not rejoice, the seller will not play the mourner, for wrath is on the entire crowd. ¹³ For a seller will not regain what he sold, as long as they are alive. For the vision against her whole crowd will not be revoked. No one will preserve his life, because of his iniquity.

¹⁴ "They have blown the horn. They have made everyone ready. Yet no one goes to the battle. Surely My wrath is on her whole crowd. ¹⁵ Outside is the sword, inside plague and famine. Whoever is in the field will die by the sword. Whoever is in the city will be devoured by famine and plague. ¹⁶ Those survivors who escape will head for the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them moaning, each one over his iniquity. ¹⁷ All hands will be feeble. All knees will turn to water. ¹⁸ They will also gird on sackcloth. Horror will cover them. Shame will be upon all faces. Baldness will be upon all their heads. ¹⁹ They will throw their silver in the streets. Their gold will be as garbage. Their silver and their gold cannot deliver them in the day of *ADONAI*'s wrath. They will not satisfy their appetite or fill their bellies, for their iniquity is a stumbling block.

²⁰ They took pride in their beautiful jewelry and made

images of their abominations and their detestable idols. Therefore I made it *niddah* to them. ²¹ I will give it into the hands of the strangers as plunder and to the wicked of the earth as spoil, and they will profane it. ²² I will turn My face from them, as they will profane the place I treasure. Robbers will enter it and profane it.

²³ "Forge the chain! For the land is full of bloodshed. The city is full of violence. ²⁴ I will bring the wicked of the nations. They will possess their houses. So I will end the pride of the strong, when their holy places are profaned. ²⁵ Shuddering comes. They will seek peace but there will be none. ²⁶ Disaster upon disaster will come, and rumor upon rumor. They will seek a vision from a prophet, but *Torah* will perish from the *kohen* and counsel from the elders. ²⁷ The king will mourn. The prince will be clothed with despair. The hands of the people of the land will tremble. By their conduct I will deal with them. By their own standards I will judge them. Then they will know that I am *ADONAI*."

Abomination in the Temple

8 In the sixth year, on the fifth day of the sixth month, I was sitting in my house. The elders of Judah were sitting before me. There the hand of *ADONAI* fell on me. ² I looked, and behold, a form resembling fire—from the appearance of his waist downward, fire; and from his loins and waist upward, something like the appearance of brightness, as glowing metal. ³ Something like the form of a hand stretched out, and took me by the hair of my head. The *Ruach* lifted me up between the earth and the heaven. He brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the gate of the inner court facing north—where the idol that provokes furious jealousy was.

⁴ Behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the valley. ⁵ He said to me: "Son of man, lift your eyes toward the north." So I lifted up my eyes toward the north. Behold, north of the gate of the altar, was this image provoking jealousy in the entrance.

⁶ He said to me: "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel is committing here, that drives me far off from My own Sanctuary? But you will see even greater abominations."

⁷ He brought me to the door of the court. When I looked, behold, a hole in the wall. ⁸ Then He said to me, "Son of man, now dig through the wall." When I had dug through the wall, there was a door. ⁹ He said to me: "Go and see the wicked abominations that they do here." ¹⁰ So I went in and saw, behold, every detestable image of creeping things and beasts and all the idols of the house of Israel, engraved on the surrounding walls. ¹¹ Standing there before them were 70 men of the elders of the house of Israel, Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing in their midst, each man with his censer in his hand. A thick cloud of incense went up.

¹² Then He said to me: "Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in his chamber of his carved idol? For they say, '*ADONAI* does not see us. *ADONAI* has forsaken the land.'"

¹³ He said further to me, "You will see still greater abominations that they are doing." ¹⁴ He brought me to the door of the gate of *ADONAI*'s House, which was toward the north. Behold, the women sat there weeping for Tammuz. ¹⁵ He said to me, "Have you seen this, son of man? You will again see even greater abominations than these."

¹⁶ So He brought me into the inner court of *ADONAI*'s House. Behold, at the door of the Temple of *ADONAI*, between the porch and the altar, were about 25 men, with their backs toward the Temple of *ADONAI* and their faces toward the east—and they were bowing in worship eastward toward the sun.

¹⁷ He said to me, "Have you seen this, son of man? Is it too light a thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations they practice here, that they must also fill the land with violence and provoke Me still more? Look, they are putting the twig to My nose! ¹⁸ Therefore I will indeed act in fury. My eye will not spare you nor will I have pity. Though they cry into My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them."

Wrath upon Jerusalem

9 Then He called into my ears in a loud voice saying: "Bring near the executioners of the city, each with his weapon of destruction in his hand." ² Behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate, facing north, each with his war club in his hand. One man among them, clothed in linen, had a scribe's writing case at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

³ Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from above the *cheruv*, where it had been, to the threshold of the House. He called to the man clothed in linen, who had the scribe's inkhorn at his side. ⁴ *ADONAI* said to him, "Go throughout the city, through the midst of Jerusalem. Make a mark on the foreheads of the people † who sigh and moan over all the abominations that are committed in it." ⁵ To the others He said in my hearing: "Go through the city after him and strike. Show no pity or compassion; ⁶ kill off old men, young men and girls, little children and women. But touch no one who has the mark. Begin at My Sanctuary." Then they began with the elders who were before the House.

⁷ He said to them, "Defile the House and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" So they went out and began to kill in the city.

⁸ While they were out killing, and I was left alone, I fell on my face and cried out saying, "Alas, *ADONAI Elohim*! Are you going to destroy all the remnant of Israel by pouring out Your wrath upon Jerusalem?"

† cf. Rev. 9:4.

⁹ He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is very, very great; the land is full of blood and the city is full of corruption. For they say, 'ADONAI has forsaken the land, ADONAI does not see!' ¹⁰ As for Me, my eye will not show pity nor will I spare. I will bring their conduct upon their head."

¹¹ Behold, the man clothed in linen, who had the inkhorn at his side, reported saying, "I have done just as You have commanded me."

The Glory Arises

10 Then I looked, and behold, above the expanse over the heads of the *cheruvim*, there appeared above them something like a sapphire stone, resembling a throne. ² He spoke to the man clothed in linen and said, "Go in between the whirling wheels underneath the *cheruvim*. Fill your hands with glowing coals from between the *cheruvim* and scatter them over the city." So he went in before my eyes.

³ Now the *cheruvim* stood on the right side of the House when the man went in. The cloud filled the inner court. ⁴ Then the glory of ADONAI rose up from above the *cheruv* to the threshold of the House. The House was filled with the cloud and the court was full of the brilliance of ADONAI's glory. ⁵ The sound of the wings of the *cheruvim* was heard as far as the outer court, as the voice of *El Shaddai* when He speaks.

⁶ After He commanded the man clothed in linen saying: "Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the *cheruvim*," he went in and stood beside a wheel. ⁷ The *cheruv* reached out his hand from between the *cheruvim* into the fire that was between the *cheruvim* and took some of it. He put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out. ⁸ The *cheruvim* appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

⁹ Then I looked, and behold, four wheels beside the *cheruvim*, one wheel beside one *cheruv*, and another wheel beside another *cheruv*. The appearance of the wheels was like the sparkling of a beryl stone. ¹⁰ As for their appearance, the four had one form—like a wheel within a wheel. ¹¹ When they went, they would go in any of their four directions, without pivoting as they went. So to whatever place the head faced, they followed, without turning as they went. ¹² Their whole body, their backs, their hands, their wings, and their wheels, the wheels of the four of them, were full of eyes all around. ¹³ As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing "the whirling wheels." ¹⁴ Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of the *cheruv*, the second face was the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. ^{††}

¹⁵ The *cheruvim* arose—these were the living creatures that I saw by the river Chebar. ¹⁶ As the *cheruvim* went, the wheels would go beside them. When the *cheruvim* lifted up their wings to rise from the earth, the wheels would not turn from beside them. ¹⁷ When

they stood still, these stood still. When they rose up, these rose up with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

¹⁸ Then the glory of ADONAI went forth from above the threshold of the House and stood above the *cheruvim*. ¹⁹ The *cheruvim* lifted up their wings and arose from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels went with them. They stood still at the door of the east gate of ADONAI's House. The glory of the God of Israel was over them from above. ²⁰ They were the living creatures that I saw under the God of Israel by the river Chebar. I knew that they were *cheruvim*. ²¹ Each of them had four faces and each one four wings. The appearance of human hands was under their wings. ²² As for the appearance of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I saw by the river Chebar. Each could move in the direction of any of its faces.

11 Then the *Ruach* lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of ADONAI's House, facing east. Behold, at the door of the gate, were 25 men. I saw among them Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people. ² He said to me, "Son of man, these are the men that devise sin and give wicked counsel in this city, ³ who say, 'This is not the time to build houses! This city is the cooking pot and we are the meat!' ⁴ Therefore, prophesy against them, prophesy, son of man."

⁵ Then the *Ruach* ADONAI fell upon me and said to me, "Speak! Thus ADONAI says: So you are thinking, house of Israel—for I know the thoughts that come into your mind. ⁶ You have multiplied your slain in this city and you filled the streets with corpses."

⁷ Therefore, thus says ADONAI *Elohim*, "Your corpses you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat and this city is the cooking pot! But I will bring you out of it. ⁸ You feared the sword, so I will bring the sword against you." It is a declaration of ADONAI *Elohim*.

⁹ "I will bring you out of the midst of it, give you into the hands of strangers, and execute judgments against you. ¹⁰ You will fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel. So you will know that I am ADONAI. ¹¹ This city will not be your cooking pot nor will you be the meat in the midst of it—I will judge you at Israel's border. ¹² So you will know that I am ADONAI, whose laws you did not follow and whose ordinances you did not obey. Instead, you have acted in accord with the ordinances of the nations around you."

¹³ As I prophesied, Pelatiah son of Benaiah dropped dead. I fell upon my face and cried out with a loud voice and said, "Ah, ADONAI! Are you going to completely eradicate the remnant of Israel?"

¹⁴ The word of ADONAI came to me saying: ¹⁵ "Son of man, as for your kinsmen, your fellow kin, fellow exiles, and the whole house of Israel—all of them—are those about whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem said, 'Keep far away from ADONAI! This land has been given to us for a possession!'" ¹⁶ Therefore say, thus says

† cf. Rev. 4:6,8. †† cf. Rev. 4:7.

ADONAI Elohim, "Though I removed them far away, among the nations, though I scattered them among the countries, yet for a little while I was a sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone."

Heart of Stone to Heart of Flesh

¹⁷ Therefore say, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, "I will gather you from the peoples and collect you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. ¹⁸ When they come there, they will remove all of its detestable things and all of its abominations. ¹⁹ Then I will give them one heart. I will put a new Spirit within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰ so that they may follow My laws, keep My ordinances, and practice them. They will be My people and I will be their God. ²¹ As for those whose heart walks after the heart of their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their ways upon their heads." It is a declaration of *ADONAI Elohim*.

The Glory Departs Jerusalem

²² Then the *cheruvim* lifted up their wings. The wheels were beside them. The glory of the God of Israel was over them from above. ²³ The glory of *ADONAI* went up from within the city and then stood still on the mountain that is to the east of the city. ²⁴ The *Ruach Elohim* lifted me and brought me in the vision by the *Ruach Elohim* to Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen left me. ²⁵ So I told the exiles all the things that *ADONAI* had shown me.

Baggage for Exile

12 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, you live in the midst of the rebellious house. They have eyes to see, but do not see, ears to hear, but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house. ³ You, son of man, prepare supplies for exile. Go into exile by day in their sight, go away as if into exile from your home to another place in their sight—perhaps they will recognize that they are a rebellious house. ⁴ You will bring out your baggage by day in their sight, as baggage for exile. You will go out at evening in their sight, like those going into exile. ⁵ As they watch, dig through the wall and go out through it. ⁶ Bear the burden on your shoulder in their sight. Carry it out in the darkness; cover your face so that you cannot see the ground. For I have made you a sign for the house of Israel." ⁷ I did just as I was commanded: I brought out my baggage by day, as baggage for exile. In the evening, I dug through the wall with my hand. I carried it out in the darkness and bore it on my shoulder, as they watched.

⁸ In the morning, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying, ⁹ "Son of man, has the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?'"

¹⁰ Say to them, 'Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: this burden

concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel there.' ¹¹ Say, 'I am a sign for you. Just as I have done, so it will be done to them—they will go into exile, into captivity. ¹² The prince who is among them will bear a burden on his shoulder, and go out in the darkness. They will dig through the wall to get out; he will cover his face so that he cannot see the land with his eyes. ¹³ I will spread out My net upon him, so he will be caught in My net. I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans. He will not see it, though he will die there. ¹⁴ I will disperse toward every wind all that surround him to help him and all his troops. I will draw out the sword after them. ¹⁵ So they will know that I am *ADONAI* when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them among the countries. ¹⁶ But I will let a few of them escape the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, so they may tell about all their detestable practices among the nations where they go. And they will know that I am *ADONAI*.'" "

¹⁷ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁸ "Son of man, eat your bread with quaking and drink your water with trembling and anxiety. ¹⁹ Say to the people of the land, 'this is what *ADONAI* says concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They will eat their bread with anxiety and drink their water with horror, because her land will be stripped of all that is in it, because of the violence of all who live there.

²⁰ The inhabited cities will be deserted and the land will become desolate. And you will know that I am *ADONAI*.'" "

²¹ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²² "Son of man, what is that proverb you people have in the land of Israel saying, 'The days are prolonged and every vision fails'? ²³ Tell them therefore, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, 'I will put an end to this proverb. They will not use it anymore as a proverb in Israel.' Say to them, 'The days are at hand as well as the fulfillment of every vision. ²⁴ For no longer will every vision be deceitful and every oracle false in the house of Israel. ²⁵ For I am *ADONAI*. I will speak whatever word I will speak and it will happen. It will not be delayed anymore; for in your days, rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it.'" It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁶ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²⁷ "Son of man, behold, the house of Israel says, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now. He prophesies about times that are far off.' ²⁸ Therefore say to them, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, 'None of My words will be delayed anymore, but the word that I speak will be fulfilled.'" It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

False Prophets

13 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, prophesy concerning the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying, say to those who prophesy out of their own heart, hear the word of *ADONAI*, ³ thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: 'Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit—except they have seen noth-

ing! ⁴ O Israel, your prophets have been like jackals among ruins. ⁵ You have not gone up into the breaches and repaired the walls for the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of *ADONAI*. ⁶ They have prophesied emptiness and predicted falsely, who say, “*ADONAI* says.” *ADONAI* has not sent them, yet they hope for confirmation of their word. ⁷ Did you not see an empty vision and speak a false omen, when you say, “*ADONAI* says”—when I have not spoken?”

⁸ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “Because you have spoken falsely and prophesied lies, therefore behold, I am against you.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. ⁹ “My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will not remain in the assembly of My people, nor will they be recorded in the register of the house of Israel, nor enter into the land of Israel. You will know that I am *ADONAI*. ¹⁰ Precisely because they have led My people astray saying, ‘*Shalom*’ when there is no *shalom*, they build a weak wall, behold, they plaster it over with whitewash. ¹¹ Say to those who plaster it over with whitewash, that it will fall. There will be a down-pouring rain, and on you great hailstones will fall, and a storm wind will break out. ¹² Behold, when the wall has fallen, will it not be said about you, ‘Where is the whitewash that you plastered it with?’”

¹³ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “I will cause a storm wind to burst out in My fury. There will be a down-pouring rain in My anger and great hailstones in destructive wrath. ¹⁴ I will tear down the wall that you have plastered with whitewash and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation of it is exposed. It will collapse and you will be consumed within it. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*. ¹⁵ I will spend My wrath against the wall and against those who plastered it with whitewash. I will say to you, the wall is no more! The whitewashers are no more— ¹⁶ the prophets of Israel who prophesy to Jerusalem and see visions of *shalom* for her, when there is no *shalom*.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁷ “Now you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own imagination. Prophesy against them ¹⁸ saying, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, ‘*Oy* to the women who sew magic charms on all their wrists and make veils of every size for their heads in order to ensnare souls! You hunt down the souls of My people, but preserve yourselves. ¹⁹ You have profaned Me among My people for handfuls of barley and crumbs of bread, to kill those who should not die and to save those who should not live, by lying to My people, who listen to lies.”

²⁰ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, “Behold, I am against your magic charms with which you hunt people like birds. I will tear them from your arms. I will deliver the people you hunt like birds. ²¹ I will tear off your veils and deliver My people from your hands. They will never again be in your hand to be hunted. So

you will know that I am *ADONAI*. ²² Because you have discouraged the hearts of the righteous with your lies, when I have not grieved him; and strengthened the hands of the wicked so he may not return from his wicked way and live, ²³ therefore you will no longer see false visions or utter lying divinations again. I will deliver My people out of your hand. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*.”

14 Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. ² The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ³ “Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts. They have put the stumbling block of their iniquity right before their faces. Should I let them inquire of me at all? ⁴ Therefore speak to them, and say to them, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Every man from the house of Israel who sets up idols in his heart and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity right before his face, and then comes to the prophet—I, *ADONAI*, will answer him as he comes with the multitude of his idols, ⁵ so I may take hold of the house of Israel in their hearts. For they have all become estranged from Me through their idols.’

⁶ “Therefore say to the house of Israel, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “Return, turn away from your idols; turn your faces from all your abominations. ⁷ For anyone from the house of Israel or the outsiders who dwell in Israel who breaks himself away from Me takes idols into his heart, puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and then comes to the prophet to inquire of Me through him—I, *ADONAI*, will answer him Myself. ⁸ I will set My face against that man. I will make him a sign and a proverb and cut him off from among My people. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*.”

⁹ “When the prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I, *ADONAI*, have deceived that prophet. I will stretch out My hand against him. I will destroy him from among My people Israel. ¹⁰ They will bear their punishment—the punishment of the prophet will be the same as the punishment of the inquirer— ¹¹ so that the house of Israel will not wander again from Me or defile themselves again with all their transgressions. They will be My people and I will be their God.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹² The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying, ¹³ “Son of man, suppose a land sins against Me by trespassing grievously and I stretch out My hand over it, break off its staff of bread, send famine upon it and cut it off from man and beast. ¹⁴ Even if these three men—Noah, Daniel, and Job—be in it, they would only deliver their own souls by their righteousness.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁵ “If I cause evil beasts to pass through the land and they ravage it and make it a wasteland, so that no one would pass through because of the beasts, ¹⁶ even if these three men were in it, as I live, says *ADONAI*, they will not deliver sons or daughters. They would only deliver themselves, but the land will be desolate. ¹⁷ Or if I

bring a sword on that land and say: 'Let the sword go through the land,' so that I cut off man and beast from it; ¹⁸ though these three men were in it, as I live, says *ADONAI*, they will not deliver sons or daughters, for they will only deliver themselves.

¹⁹ "Or, suppose I were to send a plague to that land and pour out My fury upon it in blood, to cut off man and beast from it. ²⁰ Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, says *ADONAI*, they would not deliver either a son or a daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness."

²¹ For thus *ADONAI* says: "How much more if I send My four dreadful judgments against Jerusalem—the sword, the famine, the evil beasts, and the plague—to cut man and beast off from it. ²² Yet behold, survivors would remain in it who would be brought out, both sons and daughters. Behold, when they come to you and you see their ways and their deeds, you would be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought against Jerusalem, all that I have brought on it. ²³ They would comfort you when you see their ways and their deeds. So you will know that I had not done all that I had done without cause." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Vine Wood for the Fire

15 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, how can the wood of a vine be better than the branch of any tree that is among the trees of the forest? ³ Can wood be taken from it to make anything useful? Can a peg be made from it to hang anything on? ⁴ Behold, when it is cast in the fire for fuel, both ends are devoured in fire and the middle is charred—is it useful for any work? ⁵ Look, when it was whole, it was not useful for any work—how much less, when the fire has devoured it and it is charred, will it be useful for any work? ⁶ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Like the vine's wood among the trees of the forest that I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ⁷ I will set My face against them. Even if they come out of the fire, the fire will yet devour them. So you will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I set My face against them. ⁸ I will make the land desolate, because they have acted so faithlessly." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Harlot, Hear the Word of *ADONAI*

16 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, confront Jerusalem with her abominations ³ and say, 'thus says *ADONAI* to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite; your father was an Amorite, your mother was a Hittite. ⁴ As for your birth, on the day you were born your umbilical cord was not cut nor were you washed in water for cleansing. You were never rubbed with salt nor were you swaddled at all. ⁵ No eye pitied you enough to do any of these things to you out of com-

passion. Instead, you were cast out in the open field, for you were detested on the day you were born.

⁶ "When I passed by you, and saw you kicking in your blood, I said to you, 'In your blood, live!' Yes, I said to you, 'In your blood, live!' ⁷ I made you grow as myriads, like a branch of the field. You grew up, got tall and came to full adornment. Your breasts were formed, your hair sprouted. Yet you were naked and bare.

⁸ "Again I passed by and saw you, and behold, you were truly at the time of love. I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you,' says *ADONAI*. 'So you became Mine. ⁹ Then I washed you with water, rinsed off your blood from on you, and anointed you with oil. ¹⁰ I clothed you with embroidery and put sandals of fine leather on you. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk. ¹¹ I adorned you with jewelry, put bracelets on your hands, and a necklace on your neck. ¹² I put a ring in your nose, earrings on your ears, and a crown of glory on your head. ¹³ So you were adorned with gold and silver, and your raiment was of fine linen, silk, and embroidery. You ate fine flour, honey, and oil. You became exceedingly beautiful, and advanced to the kingdom. ¹⁴ Your fame spread among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect, through My splendor, which I bestowed on you.' It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁵ "But you trusted in your beauty and used your fame to become a harlot. You poured out your enticements on everyone who passed by—they were his. ¹⁶ You took your garments, made high places decked out with various colors, and fornicated on them—this should not happen, it should not be! ¹⁷ You also took your jewelry—My gold and My silver, which I gave you—made male images for yourself and committed harlotry with them. ¹⁸ You took your embroidered garments, covered them and placed My oil and My incense before them. ¹⁹ My bread that I gave you, fine flour, oil, and honey that I fed you with, you set before them as a sweet aroma. That is what happened.' It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁰ "You took your sons and your daughters whom you bore for Me, and sacrificed them to be eaten by them. Were your obscene practices not enough? ²¹ You slaughtered My children, making them pass through fire for them. ²² In all your abominations and harlotry, you have not remembered the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, kicking about in your blood. ²³ So it was after all your wickedness— *oy, oy to you!*" It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁴ "Then you built a mound for yourself. You made a high place for yourself in every square. ²⁵ You built your lofty place at the head of every street. You made your beauty an abomination. You spread your legs for everyone passing by and multiplied your harlotry. ²⁶ You committed immorality with the Egyptians, your

lustful neighbors. You multiplied your prostitution, to provoke Me.

²⁷ “So behold, I stretched out My hand over you. I diminished your ration. I gave you over to those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your indecent conduct. ²⁸ Then you also played the harlot with the Assyrians, never being satisfied; you played the harlot with them, and still you were not satisfied. ²⁹ So you multiplied your harlotry toward the land of merchants—Chaldea—yet even with this, you were not satisfied.

³⁰ “How weak is your heart”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI Elohim*—“while you are doing all these things, the work of a shameless harlot, ³¹ when you build your mound at the head of every road and make your high place in every street. Yet you were not like a harlot, since you scoffed at receiving payment. ³² You adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! ³³ To all prostitutes gifts are given—but you gave your gifts to all your lovers! You bribed them to come to you from every side in your harlotry. ³⁴ So you are the opposite of other women—no one runs after you for favors. You give payment and none is given to you. So you are the opposite!

³⁵ “Therefore, harlot, hear the word of *ADONAI*!
³⁶ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : Because your filth was poured out and your nakedness exposed through your harlotry with your lovers, because of all the idols of your abominations, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, ³⁷ therefore behold, I will gather all your lovers—those you have pleased and all those you have loved, with all them that you have hated. I will gather them against you from every side. I will expose your nakedness to them, so they may all see your nakedness. ³⁸ So I will judge you, as women who commit adultery and shed blood are judged. Then I will bring on you the blood of fury and jealousy. ³⁹ I will give you into their hand. They will tear down your mound and break down your high places. They will strip you of your clothes and take your jewelry. They will leave you naked and bare. ⁴⁰ They will also incite an assembly against you, stone you with stones, and thrust you through with their swords. ⁴¹ They will set your houses on fire and execute judgment on you in the sight of many women. So I will cause you to stop your harlotry. You will never again pay for a lover. ⁴² So I will calm My fury against you and My jealousy will turn away from you. Then I will be quiet and angry no longer.

⁴³ “Because you did not remember the days of your youth, but have enraged Me in all these things, behold, I will also bring your way on your head”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* . “Have you not committed this wickedness on top of all your abominations? ⁴⁴ Behold, everyone who uses proverbs will say this proverb against you, saying, ‘As the mother, so her daughter.’ ⁴⁵ You are your mother’s daughter, who despises her husband and her children. You are the sister of your

sisters, who despised their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite. Your father was an Amorite. ⁴⁶ Your elder sister who lives to your left is Samaria, she and her daughters. Your younger sister who lives to your right is Sodom, with her daughters. ⁴⁷ You have not only walked in their ways and gone after their abominations, but in a very short time, you have acted more corruptly than them in all your ways.”

⁴⁸ “As I live”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —“your sister Sodom with her daughters have not done as you have done, you and your daughters. ⁴⁹ Behold, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: pride, gluttony, and careless ease—so had she and her daughters—and she did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. ⁵⁰ So they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I removed them when I saw it. ⁵¹ Moreover, Samaria did not commit even half of your sins. You multiplied your abominations beyond theirs. So you made your sisters seem righteous by all your disgusting things you have done. ⁵² You also bear your own shame, since you have interceded for your sisters. Because of your sins that you committed, more treacherous than theirs, they appear more righteous than you. So you also, be ashamed! Bear your disgrace, since you have justified your sisters.

⁵³ “I will return their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and along with them, your own captivity. ⁵⁴ So you will bear your own disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have done in becoming a consolation to them. ⁵⁵ Your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, will return to their former state. You and your daughters will return to your former state.

⁵⁶ “Was not your sister Sodom an object of scorn to you in the day of your pride, ⁵⁷ before your own wickedness was exposed? Now you have become an object of scorn for the daughters of Aram and all that surround her, for the daughters of the Philistines, for all around who despise you. ⁵⁸ You will bear your wickedness and your abominations.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

⁵⁹ “For thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘I will do to you just as you have done, since you despised the oath by breaking the covenant. ⁶⁰ Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth. Moreover, I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. ⁶¹ Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and younger sisters. I will give them to you for daughters, yet not because of your covenant. ⁶² So I will establish My covenant with you, and you will know that I am *ADONAI* . ⁶³ So you will remember, be ashamed, and never open your mouth again because of your disgrace, when I have forgiven you of all that you have done.’” It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

Parable of Eagles and Branches

17 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying, ²“Son of man, propose a riddle and tell a parable to the house of Israel. ³Say, ‘thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : A great eagle with large wings and broad wings, full of feathers which had varied colors, came to Lebanon and took hold of the top of the cedar. ⁴He plucked off its topmost twigs, carried them to the land of trade and set it in a city of merchants. ⁵Then he took some of the seed of the land and planted it in fruitful soil. He placed it beside abundant waters. He set it like a willow twig. ⁶Then it sprouted and became a low, spreading vine, with its branches turned toward him, but its roots grew under him. So it became a vine, produced branches, and sent out shoots.

⁷“There was also another great eagle with large wings and many feathers. Behold, this vine bent its roots toward him and shot forth its branches toward him from the bed where it was planted, so that he might water it. ⁸It was planted in good soil by much water, so it would bring forth branches, bear fruit, and be a glorious vine.

⁹“Say, ‘thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : Will it thrive? Will it not be uprooted and stripped of its fruit so it withers? All its new roots will wither. It will not take a strong arm or many people to pull it up by its roots. ¹⁰Behold, though planted, will it thrive? Will it not completely wither when the east wind strikes it? In the beds where it grew it will wither.”

¹¹Then the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹²“Say now to the rebellious house, ‘Do you not know what these things mean?’ Tell them: ‘Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took the king and the princes and brought them with him to Babylon. ¹³He took one of the royal offspring, cut a covenant with him, putting him under oath. He also took away the leading men of the land, ¹⁴so the kingdom might be lowly, not exalting itself, but keeping his covenant so it would hold up.

¹⁵“However, he rebelled against him in sending his messengers into Egypt, so they might give him horses and many people. Will he succeed? Will one doing such things escape? Will he break a covenant and escape? ¹⁶As I live’—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—‘surely in the place of the king who put him on the throne, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke, within Babylon he will die. ¹⁷Pharaoh with his mighty army and great throng will be of no help to him in war, when ramps are cast up and siege towers erected, to cut off many lives.

¹⁸“Since he has despised the oath by breaking the covenant, and behold, he had given his hand yet did all these things, he will not escape. ¹⁹Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘As I live, surely I will bring on his head My oath that he has despised and My covenant that he has broken. ²⁰I will spread My net over him and he will be caught in My snare. Then I will bring

him to Babylon, and judge him there for his treachery that he committed against Me. ²¹All the fugitives of all his armies will fall by the sword. Those that remain will be scattered to every wind. Then you will know that I, *ADONAI*, have spoken.”

²²“Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘I, even I, will take from a sprig from the top of the lofty cedar and will plant it. I will crop off a tender twig from the topmost of its young shoots, and I will plant it on a tall and prominent mountain. ²³I will plant it on Israel’s high mountain. It will bring forth branches, bear fruit, and be a magnificent cedar. Birds of every kind will nest under it—they will nest in the shade of its branches. ²⁴Then all the trees of the field will know that I, *ADONAI*, have brought down the high tree, exalted the lowly tree, dried up the green tree, and made the dry tree flourishing. I, *ADONAI*, have spoken and I will do it.”

No More Sour Grapes

18 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²“What do you mean by using this proverb in the land of Israel saying,

‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, so the children’s teeth are set on edge?’

³“As I live”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“you will never again use this proverb in Israel. ⁴Behold, every living soul is Mine—the soul of father as well as the soul of son—both are Mine. Behold, the soul who sins is the one who will die.

⁵“Suppose a man is just and does what is lawful and right: ⁶He has not eaten at mountain shrines or lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel. He has not defiled his neighbor’s wife or come near to a woman during *niddah*. ⁷He does not wrong anyone, returns his pledge for a debt, does not commit robbery, gives his bread to the hungry, and covers the naked with a garment. ⁸He does not loan with interest or take unjust gain. He keeps his hand from iniquity, executes true justice between people, ⁹walks in My laws, and keeps My statutes, behaving honestly. Such a person is just—he will surely live.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁰“Now suppose he fathers a son who is violent, who sheds blood, and does any of these things to a brother ¹¹(though the father himself does none of these things). He has even eaten at mountain shrines, defiled his neighbor’s wife, ¹²wronged the poor and needy, taken by robbery, not restored the pledge, lifted up his eyes to the idols, committed abomination, ¹³loaned with interest and taken unjust gain. Will he then live? He will not live! He has done all these detestable things. He will surely be put to death and his blood will be on him.

¹⁴“Now behold, suppose he fathers a son who sees all his father’s sins that he committed, and observing, does not do likewise. ¹⁵He does not eat at mountain shrines, or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, or defile his neighbor’s wife, ¹⁶nor does he

wrong anyone, take pledged property, or commit robbery, but he gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, ¹⁷ withholds his hand from mistreating the poor, does not take interest or increase, practices My laws and walks in My statutes—he will not die for the iniquity of his father, he will surely live.

¹⁸ “As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, committed robbery from his brother, and did what is not good among his people—behold, he will die for his iniquity. ¹⁹ Yet you say, ‘Why does the son not bear the iniquity of the father with him?’ When the son has done what is lawful and right, has kept all My statutes and has done them, he will surely live. ²⁰ The soul that sins, he will die. The son will not bear the iniquity of the father with him, nor will the father bear the iniquity of the son with him. The righteousness of the righteous will be on him and the wickedness of the wicked will be on him. ²¹ But if the wicked turns from all his sins that he has committed, and keeps all My laws and does what is lawful and right, he will surely live, he will not die. ²² None of his transgressions that he committed will be remembered; because of his righteousness that he practiced, he will live.

²³ “Do I delight at all in the death of the wicked?” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. “Rather, should he not return from his ways, and live? ²⁴ But when the righteous turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity and does according to all the detestable acts that the wicked man does, will he live? None of his righteous deeds that he has done will be remembered; for his trespass that he trespassed and for his sin that he has sinned, for them he will die. †

²⁵ “Yet you say, ‘*ADONAI*’s way is unfair!’ Hear now, house of Israel! Is My way not fair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶ When the righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he will die for it; because of his iniquity that he did, he will die. ²⁷ But when the wicked man turns away from his wickedness that he committed and does what is lawful and right, his soul will live. ²⁸ Because he considers and turns away from all his transgressions that he committed, he will surely live, not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of *ADONAI* is unfair!’ House of Israel, are My ways not fair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰ “Therefore I will judge you, house of Israel, each one according to his ways.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. “Return, and turn away from all your transgressions, so they would not be a stumbling block of iniquity for you. ³¹ Cast off from you all your transgressions that you have committed. Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“so return, and live!”

Two Lamentation Songs

19 “As for you, raise a lamentation for the princes of Israel,

² and say: ‘What was your mother? A lioness!

Among lions she couched, among young lions she reared her cubs.

³ When she raised up one of her cubs, he became a young lion.

When he learned to tear prey, he devoured people.

⁴ When the nations heard about him, he was caught in their pit.

They brought him with hooks to the land of Egypt.

⁵ When she saw that she waited in vain, her hope was lost.

So she took another cub and made him a young lion.

⁶ He prowled among the lions.

He became a young lion, learned to catch prey, devoured men.

⁷ He ravaged their widows and laid waste their cities.

The land and all who were in it were terrified from his roaring.

⁸ The nations gathered against him on every side from the provinces.

They spread their net over him. He was caught in their pit.

⁹ They put him in a cage with hooks and brought him to the king of Babylon.

They brought him in hunting nets. So his roar was no longer heard on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁰ “Your mother was like a vine in your blood, planted by the water.

It was fruitful and full of branches because of abundant water.

¹¹ Its strong rods became rulers’ scepters. Its height was exalted above the clouds.

It was seen in its height with the mass of its branches.

¹² But it was uprooted in fury.

It was cast down to the ground.

The east wind dried up its fruit.

Its strong branches were broken off and dried up—fire consumed it.

¹³ Now it is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land.

¹⁴ Fire has spread from its main branch and devoured its fruit.

No strong branch is left on it to become a ruler’s scepter.”

This is a lamentation, and it is to be used as a lamentation.

† cf. 2 Pet. 2:20-21.

Rebellion and Return

20 On the tenth day of the fifth month of the seventh year, some of the elders of Israel came to seek *ADONAI*. They sat before me. ² The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ³ "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel. Say to them, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Have you come to inquire of Me? As I live—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—'I will not be inquired of by you.'

⁴ "Will you judge them, son of man, will you judge them? Make them know the detestable practices of their fathers. ⁵ Say to them, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: On the day I chose Israel, I lifted up My hand to the seed of the house of Jacob and made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I lifted up My hand to them saying, "I am *ADONAI* your God." ⁶ On that day I lifted up My hand to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had sought out for them, flowing with milk and honey, the splendor of all lands. ⁷ I said to them, "Each of you must throw away every detestable thing from his eyes, and not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am *ADONAI* your God."

⁸ "But they rebelled against Me and were unwilling to listen to Me. None of them cast away the detestable things that were before their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. So I resolved to pour out My fury upon them, to expend My anger upon them in the midst of the land of Egypt. ⁹ But I acted, for the sake of My Name, to keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations, where they were, in whose sight I made Myself known to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ So I led them out from the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. ¹¹ I gave them My laws and taught them My judgments, which if a man does, he will live by them. ¹² I also gave them My *Shabbatot*, as a sign between Me and them, so that they would know that I am *ADONAI* who made them holy.

¹³ "But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not walk in My statutes. They rejected My judgments, which if a man does, he will live by them. They greatly profaned My *Shabbatot*. Then I resolved to pour out My fury on them in the wilderness to consume them. ¹⁴ But for the sake of My Name I did what would keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. ¹⁵ Yet I also lifted My hand to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the splendor of all lands. ¹⁶ For they rejected My laws, did not walk in My rulings, and profaned My *Shabbatot*—for their heart went after their idols. ¹⁷ Nevertheless, My eye spared them from destruction, so I did not make a full end of them in the wilderness.

¹⁸ "I said to their children in the wilderness, "Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, do not keep their ordinances, do not defile yourselves with their idols.

¹⁹ I am *ADONAI* your God. Walk in My statutes, keep My

ordinances, and do them. ²⁰ Keep My *Shabbatot* holy, so they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am *ADONAI* your God."

²¹ "But the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes. They did not keep My ordinances to do them, which if a man does, he will live by them; they profaned My *Shabbatot*. Then I resolved to pour out My fury on them, to expend My anger on them in the wilderness. ²² Nevertheless, I withheld My hand. For the sake of My Name I did what would keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. ²³ I also lifted up My hand to them in the wilderness, to scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries. ²⁴ For they had not obeyed My ordinances, but had rejected My statutes and profaned My *Shabbatot*. Their eyes went after their fathers' idols. ²⁵ I also gave them statutes that were not good, ordinances by which they could not live. ²⁶ I let them become polluted in their own gifts, when they offered up all that opened the womb to pass through the fire, so that I might make them desolate, so that they would know that I am *ADONAI*."

²⁷ "Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Again your fathers have blasphemed Me, in that they dealt faithlessly with Me. ²⁸ When I brought them into the land, which I lifted up My hand to give to them, they saw every high hill and every leafy tree. There they slaughtered their sacrifices and presented their offensive offering. There they made their soothing aroma and poured out their drink offerings. ²⁹ So I asked them, "What is the high place where you are going?" So the name of it is called Bamah † to this day.

³⁰ Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Will you pollute yourselves after the manner of your fathers and go after their abominations? ³¹ When offering your gifts, making your sons pass through the fire, you keep polluting yourselves with all your idols, up to this day. So should I be inquired of by you, house of Israel? As I live—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—'I will not be inquired of by you. ³² What comes up in your mind will not happen at all, when you say, "Let us be like the nations, like the families of the countries, worshiping wood and stone."

³³ As I live,'—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—'surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with fury poured out, I will be king over you. ³⁴ I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with fury poured out. ³⁵ I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples. I will judge you there face to face. ³⁶ Just as I judged your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will judge you.' It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³⁷ "I will make you pass under the rod and bring you into the bond of the covenant. ³⁸ I will purge out the

† Meaning High Place

rebels from among you and those who transgress against Me. I will bring them out from the land where they dwell, but they will not enter the land of Israel. So you will know that I am *ADONAI*.

³⁹ "As for you, house of Israel," thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "go on serving your idols, all of you! Yet afterward, you will surely listen to Me. My holy Name you will no longer profane with your gifts and your idols. ⁴⁰ For in My holy mountain, Israel's high mountain"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"there the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve Me in the land. There I will take pleasure in them. There I will receive your offerings, the first of your gifts, with all your holy things. ⁴¹ With your sweet aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered. I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations. ⁴² You will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country where I lifted up My hand to give it to your fathers. ⁴³ There you will remember your ways and all your deeds, by which you defiled yourselves. You will loathe yourselves for all your evil that you have done. ⁴⁴ Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I deal with you for My Name's sake and not according to your evil ways and your corrupt deeds, house of Israel." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*."

The Parable of the Sword

21 ^(20:45) The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² ^(20:46) "Son of man, set your face toward Teman and proclaim to the South. Prophecy against the brush land of the Negev. ³ ^(20:47) Say to the brush land of the South: 'Hear the word of *ADONAI*!' Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: 'Behold, I will kindle a fire in you. It will devour every moist tree in you and every dry tree. Its leaping flame will not be extinguished. All faces from the south to the north will be scorched by it. ⁴ ^(20:48) All flesh will see that I, *ADONAI*, have kindled it; it will not be extinguished.'"

⁵ ^(20:49) Then I said, "Ah, *ADONAI*! They say of me. 'Isn't he just speaking in parables?'"

⁶ ⁽¹⁾ Then the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ⁷ ⁽²⁾ "Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem and proclaim to the sanctuaries and prophecy against the land of Israel. ⁸ ⁽³⁾ Say to the land of Israel, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Behold, I am against you. I will draw My sword from its sheath. I will cut off the righteous and the wicked from you. ⁹ ⁽⁴⁾ Since I will cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked, therefore My sword will come out of its sheath against all flesh from the south to the north. ¹⁰ ⁽⁵⁾ All flesh will know that I, *ADONAI*, have drawn My sword from its sheath; it will not return any more. ¹¹ ⁽⁶⁾ "As for you, son of man, groan, with breaking of your sides and with bitterness you will groan before their eyes. ¹² ⁽⁷⁾ Now when they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' you will say, 'Because of the news that is coming. Every heart will melt, every hand will be limp, every spirit will be faint, and all

knees will turn to water. Behold, it is coming, and it will happen!'" It is a declaration of *ADONAI Elohim*.

A Sword Sharpened

¹³ ⁽⁸⁾ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying, ¹⁴ ⁽⁹⁾ "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'Thus says *ADONAI*,' and say: 'A sword! A sword! Sharpened and also polished! ¹⁵ ⁽¹⁰⁾ Sharpened to slaughter ruthlessly! Polished so it will flash like lightning! Or should we rejoice? It is the rod, † My son—despising every tree! ¹⁶ ⁽¹¹⁾ It is given to be polished, to be seized. The sword is sharpened, polished, to be put into the hand of the slayer. ¹⁷ ⁽¹²⁾ Cry and wail, son of man! For it is against My people. It is against all the leaders of Israel. They are thrown over to the sword, along with My people. Therefore strike your thigh. ¹⁸ ⁽¹³⁾ For it is a testing. What if they scorn even the rod? It must not be!' It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. ¹⁹ ⁽¹⁴⁾ You, son of man, prophesy. Strike your hands together. The sword will strike twice, even three times, a sword for the slain, a sword for a great slaughter—it surrounds them! ²⁰ ⁽¹⁵⁾ So that their hearts will melt and many will stumble and fall, I have set the point of the sword against all their gates. Alas! It is made for lightning, it is polished for slaughter. ²¹ ⁽¹⁶⁾ Slash to the right, turn to the left—wherever your blade is meeting! ²² ⁽¹⁷⁾ I also will clap My hands together. So I will satisfy My wrath. I, *ADONAI*, have spoken."

The Sword of God's Judgment

²³ ⁽¹⁸⁾ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²⁴ ⁽¹⁹⁾ "Now you, son of man, mark two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to come. Both of them should originate from the same land. Mark a signpost; cut it out at the start of the road to the city. ²⁵ ⁽²⁰⁾ You are to mark out a way, so the sword can come to Rabbah of the children of Ammon and to Judah in fortified Jerusalem. ²⁶ ⁽²¹⁾ For the king of Babylon stands at the fork in the road, at the start of the two roads, to seek divination. He shakes the arrows, consults the idols, †† he looks in the liver. ²⁷ ⁽²²⁾ In his right hand is the lot for Jerusalem—to set up battering rams, to open the mouth for slaughter, to lift up the voice with a war cry, to set up battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build a siege wall. ²⁸ ⁽²³⁾ It will seem to them like a false divination. They have sworn solemn oaths, but he will remember their iniquity, so they may be seized."

²⁹ ⁽²⁴⁾ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "Because you have caused your iniquity to be remembered, by exposing your transgressions, so that your sins appear in all your deeds—because you have come to remembrance, you will be seized with the hand. ³⁰ ⁽²⁵⁾ So you, wicked one, prince of Israel, the day has come to be slain, the time of final punishment."

³¹ ⁽²⁶⁾ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:

† Or scepter †† Hebrew teraphim

“Remove the turban, take off the crown!

This will no longer be the same.

What is low will be exalted.

What is high will be abased.

³² (27) Ruin, ruin, I will make it a ruin!

Even this will not be,

until He comes to whom belongs the judgment,
and I give it to Him.

³³ (28) “Now you, son of man, prophesy and say, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* concerning the children of Ammon and concerning their taunt, say:

“A sword, a sword,
drawn for slaughter,
polished to consume,
to flash like lightning—

³⁴ (29) while they see false visions for you,
while they divine lies for you
—to lay you out on the necks
of the wicked who are to be slain,
whose day has come,
in the time of the final punishment.

³⁵ (30) Return to its sheath!

In the place where you were created,
in the land of your origin,
I will judge you.

³⁶ (31) I will pour out My indignation on you.
I will blow on you with the fire of My fury.
I will hand you over to brutal men,
skilled to destroy.

³⁷ (32) You will be fuel for the fire.
Your blood will be throughout the land.
You will not be remembered.
For I, *ADONAI*, have spoken.”

Blood and Injustice

²² The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² “You, son of man, will you judge? Will you judge the bloody city? So explain to her all her abominations. ³ Say, ‘thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: City that spills blood in her midst and makes idols for herself that defile—her time has come! ⁴ You have become guilty in your blood that you have spilled, and are defiled by your idols that you have made. So you have brought your days near, and have come up to your years. Therefore I have made you a disgrace to the nations and a mockery to all the lands. ⁵ Those near and far from you will mock you—with a defiled name and full of turmoil.

⁶ “Behold, each prince of Israel has used his own arm’s strength in you to shed blood. ⁷ Father and mother have been treated with contempt; the outsider has been oppressed in your midst; the orphan and the widow have been mistreated in you. ⁸ You have despised My holy things and profaned My *Shabbatot*. ⁹ Slandering men are in you in order to shed blood. They have eaten at the mountain shrines; they commit immoral acts in your midst. ¹⁰ They have uncovered their fathers’ nakedness in you; they violate women

that are in *niddah* within you. ¹¹ One has been detestable with his neighbor’s wife; another has wickedly defiled his daughter-in-law; yet another has violated his sister, his father’s daughter, in you. ¹² They accept bribes in order to shed blood in you; you have taken usurious interest. You have greedily gained by oppressing your neighbors, and you have forgotten Me.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹³ “Now look, I clap My hands at your dishonest gain that you have made and at your bloodshed in your midst. ¹⁴ Will your heart’s courage stand or your hands be strong in the days when I deal with you? I, *ADONAI*, have spoken it and will do it. ¹⁵ I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you throughout the lands. I will purge your uncleanness from you. ¹⁶ You will be defiled in the sight of the nations. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*.”

¹⁷ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁸ “Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to Me—all of them are the copper, tin, iron, and lead left inside a furnace—they are the dross of silver.” ¹⁹ Therefore, “thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Because you have all become dross, therefore behold, I will gather you into Jerusalem. ²⁰ As one gathers silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin into the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so I will gather you in My anger and in My fury. I will put you in and melt you. ²¹ I will gather you and blow the fire of My wrath upon you, so you may be melted in the midst of it. ²² As silver is melted in the furnace, so will you be melted within it. So you will know that I *ADONAI* have poured out My fury on you.”

²³ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²⁴ “Son of man, say to her: ‘You are a land that is not cleansed or rained upon in the day of indignation.’ ²⁵ There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst, like a roaring lion tearing prey. They have devoured lives, they take wealth and valuables, they multiply widows in her midst. ²⁶ Her *kohanim* have done violence to My *Torah* and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, nor have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean. They shut their eyes to My *Shabbatot*. So I am profaned among them. ²⁷ Her princes in her midst are like wolves tearing at prey, spilling blood and destroying lives for dishonest gain. ²⁸ Her prophets have plastered them with whitewash, seeing false visions, and predicting lies to them, saying ‘Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*,’ when *ADONAI* has not spoken.

No One in the Breach

²⁹ “The people of the land have oppressively blackmailed, plundered in robbery, wronged the poor and needy and abused the outsider unjustly. ³⁰ I searched for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand in the breach before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it, but I found no one.

³¹ Therefore I have poured out My fury on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; I have

brought their own way upon their heads." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Jerusalem and Samaria Take Lovers

23 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. ³ They were harlots in Egypt; they were harlots in their youth; their bosoms were caressed there and their virgin breasts were fondled. ⁴ Their names were Oholah, the older one, and Oholibah, † her sister. They became Mine, and they gave birth to sons and daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem.

⁵ "Oholah prostituted herself, though she was Mine. She lusted after her lovers, the Assyrians, warriors, ⁶ dressed in blue, governors and rulers, all of them handsome young men, horsemen riding on horses. ⁷ She prostituted herself with them, all of the choice men of Assyria. She defiled herself with all the idols of everyone she lusted after. ⁸ She did not give up her harlotry in Egypt; for in her youth they had lain with her. They fondled her virgin breasts and poured out their lust on her. ⁹ Therefore I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, whom she lusted after. ¹⁰ They stripped her naked, they took her sons and her daughters, and slaughtered her with the sword. She became notorious among women. Judgments were executed upon her.

¹¹ "Now her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more depraved in her lust than her sister and her promiscuous acts worse. ¹² She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and rulers, warriors splendidly clad, horsemen riding on horses, all of them handsome young men. ¹³ I saw that she defiled herself; they both went the same way. ¹⁴ But she kept increasing her harlotry. She saw men carved on the wall, the images of the Chaldeans carved in red, ¹⁵ girded with sashes on their loins, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them had the appearance of officers, the likeness of Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their birth. ¹⁶ As soon as she saw them she lusted after them. She sent messengers to them in Chaldea. ¹⁷ The Babylonians came to her, to the bed of love, and defiled her with their lust. Yet when she was defiled by them, she turned away from them in disgust. ¹⁸ When she exposed her harlotry and uncovered her nakedness, My soul was disgusted by her, just as My soul was disgusted by her sister. ¹⁹ Yet she multiplied her harlotry—remembering the days of her youth, when she was a harlot in the land of Egypt. ²⁰ She lusted after their paramours, whose flesh is like the flesh of donkeys, and whose issue is like that of horses. ²¹ So you revisited the promiscuity of your youth, when the Egyptians used to fondle your bosom and youthful breasts.

²² "Therefore Oholibah, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, behold, I will stir up your lovers against you, from whom you turned in disgust. I will bring them against you on

every side: ²³ the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa and Koa and all the Assyrians with them, handsome young men, governors and rulers all of them, commanders and officers, all of them riding on horses. ²⁴ They will come against you with armed chariots, whirling wheels, and an assembly of people. They will set themselves against you on every side with armor, shield, and helmet. I will delegate judgment to them, so they will judge you according to their standards of justice. ²⁵ I will vent My jealousy against you, letting them 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 your sons and your daughters, and your survivors will be devoured by fire.

²⁶ They will strip your clothes and take your beautiful jewelry. ²⁷ I will put an end to you and your immorality brought from the land of Egypt. You will no longer lift your eyes toward them or remember Egypt anymore."

²⁸ For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "Behold, I will give you into the hand of those you hate, into the hand of those you turned away from in disgust. ²⁹ They will treat you with hatred, take all your property and leave you naked and exposed. The vulgarity of your prostitutions will be uncovered—your debauchery and your promiscuity. ³⁰ These things will be done to you, for you have gone as a harlot after the nations, so you are defiled with their idols. ³¹ You have walked in the way of your sister, so I will give her cup into your hand."

³² Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:

"You will drink of your sister's cup, which is deep and wide. You will be for laughter and ridicule. It holds so much!

³³ You will be filled with drunkenness and agony, a cup of horror and desolation—the cup of your sister Samaria.

³⁴ You will drink it and drain it, gnaw its shards and tear your breasts. For I have spoken."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³⁵ Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "Because you have forgotten Me and thrust Me behind your back, you will also bear your obscenity and your harlotry."

³⁶ Then *ADONAI* said to me, "Son of man, will you pass judgment on Oholah and Oholibah? Confront them with their disgusting practices. ³⁷ For they have committed adultery and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols and even offered their children, whom they bore for Me, to be devoured. ³⁸ Again, this they have done to Me—they defiled My Sanctuary on the same day and profaned My *Shabbatot*. ³⁹ On the same day that they slaughtered their children to their idols, they came into My Sanctuary to profane it. See, that is what they have done within My House!

⁴⁰ "Furthermore, they sent for men who come from far away. A messenger was sent to them, and look, they came! For them you bathed, painted your eyes,

† Meaning Her Tent My Tent is in Her

and decked yourself with jewelry. ⁴¹ You sat on a glorious bed, with a table arranged before it, on which you set out My incense and My oil. ⁴² The sound of a care-free crowd was with her. Many of the men who came from the desert were drunkards. They put bracelets on their hands and beautiful crowns on their heads."

⁴³ Then I said about her, worn out from harlotry: "Still they commit immorality with her—even her? ⁴⁴ They keep going to her, as they go to a prostitute. So they went to Oholah and to Oholibah—the obscene women. ⁴⁵ Righteous men would judge them as adulteresses are judged and as those who shed blood are judged. For they are adulteresses, and blood is on their hands."

⁴⁶ For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "Bring up an assembly against them. Give them over to terror and plunder. ⁴⁷ The assembly will stone them to death and dispatch them with their swords. They will slaughter their sons and daughters. They will burn down their houses. ⁴⁸ So I will make obscenity cease from the land, that all women may be taught not to imitate your obscenity. ⁴⁹ They will repay you both for wickedness and you will bear the sins of your idols. So you will know that I am *ADONAI*."

Parable of a Rusted Pot

24 The word of *ADONAI* came to me in the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year saying: ² "Son of man, record this date, this exact day—this very day the king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem. ³ Utter a parable concerning the rebellious house. Say to them, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:
 "'Put on the pot, put it on
 and then pour water into it.
⁴ Gather the pieces into it,
 every good piece—thigh and shoulder.
 Fill it with the choice bones.
⁵ Take the choicest of the flock
 and pile the bones under it;
 bring it to a rolling boil,
 so that its bones also seethe in it.'
⁶ "Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:
 'Oy to the city of bloodshed,
 to the pot whose corrosion is in it,
 whose rust will not come off it!
 Draw it out piece by piece
 —no lot would fall for it.
⁷ For her bloodshed is in her midst.
 She put it on the bare rock;
 she did not pour it upon the ground
 to cover it with dust.
⁸ So it stirs up wrath for taking vengeance.
 I have put her blood on the bare rock,
 that it may not be covered.'
⁹ "Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:
 'Oy to the city of bloodshed!
 I will also make the pile great,
¹⁰ heaping on the wood,

kindling the fire,
 boiling the meat well,
 and mixing in spices.

But let the bones be burned!

¹¹ I will set it empty upon the coals
 until it gets hot and its copper scorches,
 so its impurity will be melted,
 its corrosion consumed.

¹² It has wearied toil,
 yet its thick rust will not come out of it.
 Into the fire with its corrosion!

¹³ Because of your filthy obscenity,
 though I tried to purify you
 yet you were not made pure,
 you will never be cleansed from your filth
 until I have satisfied My fury on you.

¹⁴ I, *ADONAI*, have spoken—it is coming.
 I will do it, I will not let go,
 not pity, not relent
 —according to your ways
 and according to your deeds
 they will judge you."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Ezekiel's Wife Dies

¹⁵ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁶ "Son of man, behold, I am about to take away the desire of your eyes with a single blow. But do not lament, do not weep, or allow any tears to flow. ¹⁷ Sigh silently, do not observe mourning for the dead, keep your turban fastened, and keep your sandals on your feet. Do not cover your upper lip or eat the bread of mourners."

¹⁸ So I spoke to the people in the morning and my wife died in the evening. In the morning I did just as I was commanded. ¹⁹ The people said to me, "Won't you tell us what these things you are doing mean to us?"

²⁰ Then I said to them, "The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying, ²¹ 'Speak to the house of Israel, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Behold, I will profane My Sanctuary, the pride of your might, the desire of your eyes and the longing of your soul. Your sons and your daughters that you have left behind will fall by the sword. ²² You will do just as I have done: you will not cover your upper lips or eat the bread of mourners. ²³ Your turbans will remain on your heads and your shoes on your feet—you will not lament or weep. But you will pine away in your iniquities and groan to each other. ²⁴ Ezekiel will be a sign for you; just as he has done, you will do. When this comes, you will know that I am *ADONAI*."

²⁵ "'You, son of man, on the day when I take from them their stronghold, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, the longing of their soul, as well as their sons and their daughters— ²⁶ on that day a fugitive will come to you to tell you the news. ²⁷ On that day your mouth will be opened to him who escaped. You will speak and no longer be mute. So you will be a sign for them, and they will know that I am *ADONAI*.'"

Vengeance on Nearby Nations

25 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²“Son of man, set your face toward the children of Ammon and prophesy against them. ³Say to the children of Ammon—‘Hear the word of *ADONAI*, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*—Because you said, “Aha!” against My Sanctuary when it was defiled, against the land of Israel when it was made desolate and against the house of Judah when they went into exile, ⁴therefore behold, I will give you over to the children of the east as a possession. They will set up their camps among you and make their dwellings among you. They will eat your fruit and drink your milk. ⁵I will make Rabbah a grazing place for camels and the children of Ammon a resting place for flocks. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*.’

⁶“For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Because you have clapped your hands, stomped your feet, and rejoiced with all the disdain of your soul against the land of Israel, ⁷therefore behold, I will stretch out My hand over you. I will deliver you as plunder for the nations. I will cut you off from the people. I will cause you to perish from among the countries. I will destroy you. Then you will know that I am *ADONAI*.’

⁸“Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Because Moab and Seir say, ‘See, the house of Judah is like all the other nations!’ ⁹therefore behold, I will expose the mountain slope of Moab with all its cities, from its frontier cities, the glorious country of Beth-Jeshimoth, Baal-Meon, and Kiriathaim. ¹⁰I will deliver it, together with the children of Ammon, to the children of the east as a possession, so that the children of Ammon will not be remembered among the nations. ¹¹Then I will execute judgments upon Moab. Then they will know that I am *ADONAI*.’

¹²“Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Because Edom has taken severe vengeance against the house of Judah and has grievously offended by taking revenge upon them, ¹³therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘I will stretch out My hand upon Edom. I will cut off man and beast from it. I will make it desolate. From Teman to Dedan they will fall by the sword. ¹⁴I will take My vengeance upon Edom by the hand of My people Israel. They will do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury. They will know My vengeance.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁵Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Because the Philistines have acted in revenge and have taken severe vengeance with scornful soul, destroying in unending hatred, ¹⁶therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “Behold, I will stretch out My hand over the Philistines. I will cut off the Cherethites, and destroy the remnant of the seacoast. ¹⁷I will execute severe vengeance upon them with furious punishments. So they will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I lay My vengeance upon them.”

Downfall of Tyre

26 On the first day of the month in the eleventh year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²“Son of man, because Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha, she is shattered, the gateway of the peoples—she is turned over to me! I will be filled, now that she is laid waste!’ ³Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Behold, I am against you, Tyre. I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. ⁴They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down her towers. I will sweep her dust from her and make her a bare rock. ⁵She will be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea. For I have spoken it.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. ‘She will become plunder for the nations, ⁶and her daughters in the field will be slain by the sword. So they will know that I am *ADONAI*.’

⁷“For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Behold, from the north I will bring against Tyre Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, with chariots, with horsemen and a vast army of troops. ⁸He will slaughter your daughters in the field with the sword. He will build siege works against you, cast up an assault ramp against you and raise up shields against you. ⁹He will thrust his battering engines against your walls. He will tear down your towers with his weapons. ¹⁰You will be covered with dust from the multitude of his horses. At the noise of the horsemen, wheels and chariots, your walls will shake, when he enters your gates, as men enter a breached city. ¹¹With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword. The pillars of your strength will come down to the ground. ¹²They will rob your riches and plunder your merchandise. They will tear down your walls and destroy your fine houses. They will cast your stones and your lumber and your dust into the midst of the sea. ¹³I will put an end to the sound of your songs. The sound of your lyres will no longer be heard. ¹⁴I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets, you will be built no more; for I, *ADONAI*, have spoken.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁵“Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* to Tyre: ‘Will the coastlands not shake at the sound of your downfall—when the wounded groan, when the slaughter is made in your midst? ¹⁶Then all the princes of the sea will come down from their thrones. They will cast aside their robes. They will take off their richly woven garments; they will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground. They will tremble every moment and be appalled at you. ¹⁷They will lift a lament for you and say to you:

“How you have perished
—you who were inhabited from the seas,
the renowned city, strong in the sea,
you and your inhabitants,
who spread their terror

for all your inhabitants!

¹⁸ Now the coastlands will tremble in the day of your downfall.

The islands of the sea will be terrified at your demise.”

¹⁹ “For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “When I make you a desolate city, like the cities that are uninhabited, when I bring the flood upon you and the great waters cover you— ²⁰ then I will bring you down with them who descend into the Pit, to the people of long ago. I will make you dwell in the lowest parts of the earth, like the waste places of old, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you will not be inhabited or radiate splendor in the land of the living. ²¹ I will make you a horror, and you will no longer exist. Though you are sought for, you will never be found again.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI Elohim*.

27 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² “You, son of man, lift up a lament for Tyre. ³ Say to Tyre, dwelling at the entrance of the sea, the merchant to the people of many coastlands, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:

“Tyre, you said: “I am perfect in beauty!”

⁴ Your borders are in the heart of the seas, your builders perfected your beauty.

⁵ All your planks have been fashioned from cypress trees of Senir.

They took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you.

⁶ They made your oars from Bashan’s oaks. Of boxwood from the islands of Kittim they made your decks, inlaid with ivory.

⁷ Fine Egyptian linen was your sail, serving as a banner for you.

Your awning was blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah.

⁸ The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers.

Your skilled men, Tyre, were on you—they were your sailors.

⁹ The elders of Gebal and her experts were within you,

caulking your leaks.

All the ships of the sea with their sailors were with you to trade for your wares.

¹⁰ Persia, Lud, and Put were in your army, our men of war.

They hung the shield and helmet in you; they gave you splendor.

¹¹ Men of Arvad and Helech were all around on your walls, the Gammadim were in your towers.

They hung their shields all around on your walls. They perfected your beauty.

¹² “Tarshish was your trading partner because of the abundance of all riches. With silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded for your merchandise. ¹³ Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traffickers—they gave lives of peo-

ple and vessels of bronze for your wares. ¹⁴ Those from the house of Togarmah traded for your merchandise with horses, steeds, and mules. ¹⁵ The men of Dedan traded with you; many coastlands were your customers; they brought you horns of ivory and ebony as your payment. ¹⁶ Aram was your customer because of your abundant goods—they traded for your merchandise with emerald, purple and embroidered cloth, fine linen, coral, and rubies. ¹⁷ Judah and the land of Israel were your customers; they traded for your wares with wheat of Minnith, confections, honey, oil, and balm. ¹⁸ Damascus was your customer because of the abundance of your goods and all your great wealth, with the wine of Helbon and wool of white †. ¹⁹ Vedan and Javan from Uzal traded for your wares—ironwork, cinnamon, and spices were bartered for your merchandise. ²⁰ Dedan was your dealer in saddlecloth for riding. ²¹ Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored trading partners in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they were your customers. ²² The merchants of Sheba and Raamah were your vendors—they traded for your wares with the finest spices, all precious stones, and gold. ²³ Haran and Canneh and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded with you. ²⁴ They traded for your merchandise with gorgeous fabrics, garments of blue and richly woven work, carpets of multi-colored material, with cords twisted and tightly knotted. ²⁵ The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares.

“So you were filled and heavily loaded in the heart of the seas.

²⁶ Your rowers have brought you into great waters.

But the east wind will break you in the heart of the seas.

²⁷ Your riches, your wares, your merchandise, your sailors, your pilots, your caulkers, the traders of your merchandise, all your men of war that are in you, with all your company in your midst will fall into the heart of the seas on the day of your downfall.

²⁸ At the sound of the cry of your pilots the countryside will shake.

²⁹ All the oarsmen, the sailors, and all the mariners of the sea will come down from their ships to stand on the ground.

³⁰ They will raise their voices over you and cry bitterly.

They will throw up dust on their heads. They will roll themselves in ashes.

³¹ They will shave themselves bald for you and put on sackcloth.

They will weep for you with bitter soul, with bitter lament.

³² In their wailing they will take up a lament for you.

† Hebrew *Zahar*

They will mourn over you:
 “Who was like Tyre—
 silenced in the midst of the sea?”
³³ When your merchandise came out from the seas,
 you satisfied many people.
 With the abundance of your wealth and your wares
 you enriched the kings of the earth.
³⁴ Now you are shattered by the seas
 in the depths of the waters.
 Your merchandise and all your company
 have fallen in your midst.
³⁵ All the inhabitants of the coastlands
 are appalled at you.
 Their kings are horribly afraid,
 their faces are convulsed.
³⁶ The merchants among the people hiss at you.
 You have become a horror
 and will be no more.”

Pride for Tyre

28 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
 “So your heart is exalted
 and you say, “I am a god!
 I sit in the seat of the gods
 in the heart of the seas!”
 Yet you are human, not a god,
 even if you set up your heart like the heart of a god.
³ See, you are wiser than Daniel!
 No secret is hidden from you!
⁴ By your wisdom and by understanding
 you have made wealth for yourself
 and have gathered gold and silver
 into your treasuries.
⁵ In your great skill, by your trade,
 you have increased your wealth,
 so your heart is exalted
 by your wealth.’
⁶ “Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
 ‘Because you have set up your heart
 like the heart of God,
⁷ behold, I will bring strangers against you,
 the ruthless of the nations.
 They will draw their swords against the beauty of
 your wisdom.
 They will defile your splendor.
⁸ They will bring you down to the Pit.
 You will die the death of those slain
 in the heart of the seas.
⁹ Will you still say, “I am a god”
 before the one who slays you?
 Yet you are man, and not a god,
 in the hand of those who pierce you.
¹⁰ You will die the deaths of the uncircumcised
 at the hand of strangers.
 For I have spoken.”
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

Lament for Tyre

¹¹ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹² “Son of man, lift up a lament for the king of Tyre. Say to him, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
 “You were the seal of perfection,
 full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God.
 Every precious stone was your covering
 —ruby, topaz and diamond, beryl, onyx
 and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and emerald—
 your settings and your sockets a workmanship of
 gold
 —in the day you were created they were prepared.
¹⁴ You were an anointed guardian *cheruv* .
 I placed you on the holy mountain of God.
 You walked among stones of fire.
¹⁵ You were perfect in your ways
 from the day that you were created,
 until unrighteousness was found in you.
¹⁶ By the abundance of your trade
 they filled you within with violence.
 So you have sinned.
 So I threw you out as a profane thing
 from the mountain of God.
 I made you vanish, guardian *cheruv* ,
 from among the stones of fire.
¹⁷ Your heart was exalted because of your beauty.
 You corrupted your wisdom because of your splen-
 dor.
 I threw you down to the earth. †
 Before kings I set you up as a spectacle.
¹⁸ “By the multitude of your iniquities,
 in the injustice of your trade,
 you profaned your sanctuaries.
 So I brought fire out from within you,
 and it has consumed you.
 I have turned you to ashes on the earth
 in the eyes of all who saw you.
¹⁹ All who know you among the people
 will be appalled at you.
 You have become a horror
 and will be nothing forever.”
²⁰ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²¹ “Son of man, set your face toward Sidon and prophesy against her. ²² Say, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
 “Behold, I am against you, Zidon. I will be glorified in
 your midst. They will know that I am *ADONAI* , when I
 execute judgments in her, and show my holiness
 through her. ²³ I will send a plague to her and blood in
 her streets. The wounded will fall in her midst by the
 sword on every side. So they will know that I am *ADONAI* .’
²⁴ “Never again will there be a briar pricking at the
 house of Israel or a piercing thorn from any around
 them who scorn them. They will know that I am the
 Lord *ADONAI* .

† cf. Luke 10:18.

²⁵ "Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : 'When I have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered and show my holiness through them in the eyes of the nations, then they will live in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. ²⁶ They will live safely there, and they will build houses and plant vineyards. They will live securely when I have executed judgments on all those around them that treated them with contempt. So they will know that I am *ADONAI* their God.'"

Prophecy against Egypt

29 On the twelfth day of the tenth month of the tenth year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt. Prophecy against him and against all Egypt, ³ speak and say, "thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :

"Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great crocodile lying in his rivers, who says:

"My Nile is my own—I made it for myself."

⁴ I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your streams stick to your scales.

I will haul you up from within your rivers and all the fish of your streams will stick to your scales.

⁵ I will leave you in the desert—you and all the fish of your streams. You will fall on the open field.

You will not be gathered or picked up. I will give you as food for the beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky.

⁶ Then all the inhabitants of Egypt will know that I am *ADONAI* , because they were a staff of reed to the house of Israel.

⁷ When they took hold of you by the hand, you snapped and tore all their shoulders. When they leaned on you, you broke and wrenched all their hips.'

⁸ "Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : 'Behold, I will bring a sword against you. I will cut off from you man and beast. ⁹ The land of Egypt will become desolate and waste. Then they will know that I am *ADONAI* . Because he said, 'The Nile is mine—I made it!' ¹⁰ therefore behold, I am against you and against your rivers. I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia. ¹¹ No human foot will pass through it, and no foot of beast will pass through it. It will be uninhabited for 40 years. ¹² I will make the land of Egypt a desolation among devastated countries. Her cities will be a desolation 40 years among ruined cities. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries.'

¹³ "For thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : 'At the end of 40 years, I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples where they were scattered. ¹⁴ I will restore the fortunes of Egypt. I will cause them to return to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin. But they will be a lowly kingdom there. ¹⁵ It will be the lowliest of the kingdoms. It will no longer exalt itself above the nations. I will diminish them, so that they no longer rule over the nations. ¹⁶ It will no longer be as security for the house of Israel, bringing to mind the iniquity of their turning after them. So they will know that I am *ADONAI* .'

¹⁷ On the first day of the first month of the twenty-seventh year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁸ "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head became bald and every shoulder chafed. But he and his army had no profit from Tyre for the labor that he had expended against it."

¹⁹ "Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : 'Behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He will carry off her abundance, take her spoil, and take her prey. It will be the wages for his army. ²⁰ I have given him the land of Egypt as his wages for which he served, because they worked for Me.' It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

Messianic Horn

²¹ "In that day I will cause a horn to shoot up for the house of Israel. I will open your mouth among them. They will know that I am *ADONAI* ."

Doom of Egypt

30 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, prophesy, and say, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :

"Wail, alas, for the day!

³ For the day is near, the day of *ADONAI* is near, a day of clouds, a time for the nations.

⁴ A sword will come against Egypt. Anguish will be in Ethiopia when the slain fall in Egypt.

They will take away her abundance. Her foundations will be torn down.

⁵ Ethiopia, Put, and Lud, all the mixed people, Libya, and children of the covenant land will fall with them by the sword.'

⁶ "Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : 'Those who support Egypt will fall. The pride of her power will collapse. From Migdol to Syene they will fall within her by the sword.' It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

⁷ "They will be desolate among desolate lands. Her cities will be among ruined cities.

⁸ They will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I have set a fire in Egypt and all her supporters are destroyed.

⁹ "On that day, messengers will go out from before Me in ships to frighten Ethiopians out of complacency. Anguish will come on them as on the day of Egypt—for, behold, it is coming!"

¹⁰ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "I will put away the pomp of Egypt by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon. ¹¹ He and his people with him, the ruthless of the nations, will be brought in to destroy the land. They will draw their swords against Egypt and fill the land with the slain. ¹² I will make the rivers dry. I will sell the land into the hand of evildoers. I will make the land desolate, and all that is in it, by the hand of strangers. I, *ADONAI*, have spoken it."

¹³ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "I will destroy the idols.

I will destroy the pagan gods from Noph. [†] There will no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt. I will strike terror in the land of Egypt.

¹⁴ I will make Pathros desolate.

I will set a fire in Zoan.

I will execute judgments in No. ^{††}

¹⁵ I will pour My fury on Sin, the stronghold of Egypt.

I will cut off the multitude of No.

¹⁶ I will set a fire in Egypt.

Sin will writhe in anguish.

No will be assaulted.

Noph will face enemies daily.

¹⁷ The young men of Aven and Pi-Beseth will fall by the sword

and the women will go into captivity.

¹⁸ In Tehaphnehes the day will grow dark

when I break the yokes of Egypt there.

The pride of her power will cease in her—a cloud will cover her.

Her daughters will go into captivity.

¹⁹ So I will execute judgments in Egypt, and they will know that I am *ADONAI*."

²⁰ On the seventh day of the first month of the eleventh year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²¹ "Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Behold, it has not been bound up to be healed or put in a splint, so that it is wrapped up with a bandage, to grow strong to wield the sword.

²² "Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: 'I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt. I will break his arms, the strong one and the one that was broken. I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand. ²³ I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. ²⁴ I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword into his hand. I will break the arms of Pharaoh, so he will groan before him like a fatally wounded man. ²⁵ I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but Pharaoh's arms will

fall. So they will know that I am *ADONAI* when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. ²⁶ I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them through the countries. Then they will know that I am *ADONAI*."

Fall of the Haughty Cedar

31 On the first day of the third month of the eleventh year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude:

"Who is like you in your greatness?

³ Behold, Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon, with beautiful branches shadowing the forest, of lofty height.

Its top was in leafy branches.

⁴ Water nourished it,

the deep made it tall,

with its rivers going around its planting

as it sent out its water-courses

to all the trees of the field.

⁵ Therefore its height was loftier

than all the trees of the field.

Its branches multiplied

and its boughs became long

because of the abundant water in its shoots.

⁶ All the birds of the sky nested in its branches.

All the beasts of the field gave birth to their young under its branches.

All great nations lived under its shade.

⁷ It was beautiful in its greatness,

in the length of its branches,

for its root was in abundant water.

⁸ The cedars in the garden of God

could not compare with it.

No cypress trees could rival its boughs.

No plane-trees could match its branches.

No tree in the garden of God

could compare to its beauty.

⁹ I made it beautiful with its many limbs.

All the trees of Eden in God's garden envied it.'

¹⁰ "Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*:

'Because you were exalted in height

—its top set up among leafy branches,

its heart haughty in its height—

¹¹ I gave it into the hand of a ruler of nations,

who surely dealt with it.

I drove it out

as befits its wickedness.

¹² "Ruthless barbarians from the nations cut it down.

They cast it down on the mountains and in all the valleys its branches fell. Its branches have laid broken in

all the streambeds of the land. All the people of the earth have come out from its shade and abandoned it.

¹³ "All the birds of the sky lived on its fallen trunk and

all the beasts of the field upon its fallen branches.

[†] Or, Memphis ^{††} Or, Thebes

¹⁴“So none of all the trees by the water should exalt themselves in their height or set their top among the leafy boughs. None of their well-watered mighty ones should attain their height.

“For they have all been given to death, to the lowest regions under the earth, among the children of men who go down to the Pit.’

¹⁵“Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
‘In the day when he went down to *Sheol*
I caused the deep to mourn
and cover itself for him.
I restrained his rivers,
so the great waters were stopped.
I made Lebanon mourn for him.
All the trees of the field wilt away for it.

¹⁶I made the nations tremble at the sound of its fall,
when I cast him down to *Sheol* with those who descend into the Pit.

All the well-watered trees of Eden,
the choice and best of Lebanon,
were comforted in the lowest parts of the earth.

¹⁷They also went down with him to *Sheol* ,
to those slain by the sword,
those who were his mighty arm,
who lived in his shadow among the nations.

¹⁸“Who is like you in glory and greatness among the trees of Eden? You will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the lowest parts of the earth. You will lie among the uncircumcised, with those slain by the sword.’

“This is Pharaoh and all his multitude.”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

Lamentations for Pharaoh

32 On the first day of the twelfth month of the twelfth year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²“Son of man, lift up a lament for Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him:

“You compare yourself to a young lion of the nations, but you are a crocodile in the waters. You thrash about in your rivers and muddy the water with your feet and foul their streams.”

³“Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
‘I will throw My net over you
with a host of many peoples.
They will haul you up in My net.
⁴I will leave you on the land.
I will hurl you on an open field.
I will cause all the birds of the sky to settle upon you.
I will gorge the beasts of the whole earth with you.

⁵I will strew your flesh on the mountains
and fill the valleys with your refuse.
⁶I will drench the land with the flow of your blood up to the hills.

The ravines will be full of you.

⁷When I extinguish you,
I will cover the sky and darken the stars.

I will cover the sun with cloud,
and the moon will not give her light. †

⁸I will darken all of heaven’s bright lights over you
and set darkness on your land.’

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

⁹“I will disturb the hearts of many peoples
when I bring about your destruction among the nations,

into lands you have not known.

¹⁰I will make many people appalled at you.
Their kings will be totally aghast at you
when I brandish My sword over you.
They will shudder every moment,
every man for his own life,
on the day of your downfall.’

¹¹“For thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
‘The sword of the king of Babylon
will come upon you.

¹²By the swords of the mighty
I will cause your multitude to fall.
They are all ruthless among the nations.
They will devastate the pride of Egypt.
All of its multitude will be annihilated.

¹³I will destroy all the beasts from beside plentiful water.

No human foot will muddy them again,
nor will hoofs of beasts muddy them.

¹⁴Then I will make their waters settle
and make their streams flow like oil.’

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹⁵“When I make the land of Egypt desolate
and waste when it was previously full,
when I strike all that live there,
they will know that I am *ADONAI* .

¹⁶This is the funeral song—chant it,
daughters of the nations, chant for Egypt.
All her multitude will chant it.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹⁷On the fifteenth day of the month in the twelfth year, the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying:

¹⁸“Son of man, wail over Egypt’s throng.
Bring them down
—her and the daughters of lofty nations,
to the underworld,
to those who go down to the Pit.

¹⁹Who do you surpass in beauty?

Go down, lie with the uncircumcised.

²⁰They fall among those slain by the sword.

She is given over to the sword.

They drag her down with all her throng.

²¹The strongest warriors will speak of him
and his allies from the midst of *Sheol* .

They have gone down,
they lie still, the uncircumcised,
slain by the sword.

²²“Assyria is there and all her company,
their graves surround them

† cf. Matt. 24:29.

—all of them slain,
fallen by the sword.
²³ Her graves are set in the deepest parts of the Pit.
Her company surrounds her grave
—all of them slain, fallen by the sword
—who put terror in the land of the living.
²⁴ “There is Elam and all her multitude surrounding
her grave
—all of them slain, fallen by the sword
—who went down uncircumcised into
the underworld, who caused terror in the land of the
living.
They bear their disgrace with those who go down to
the Pit.
²⁵ They have made her a bed among
the slain with all her throng,
her graves about them
—all of them uncircumcised, slain, fallen by the
sword—
though they caused terror in the land of the living.
So they bear their disgrace with those who go down
to the Pit.
They are laid among the slain.
²⁶ “Meshech-Tubal is there and all her throng,
her graves around them
—all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword,
though they spread their terror in the land of the liv-
ing.
²⁷ They do not lie with the mighty,
the fallen from among the uncircumcised,
who went down to *Sheol* with their weapons of war.
They put their swords under their heads.
Their iniquities rest on their bones because the terror
of the mighty ones was in the land of the living.
²⁸ You also will be shattered and lie among the uncir-
cumcised, with those who are slain by the sword.
²⁹ “Edom is there, her kings and all her princes,
who for all their might are laid with those slain by the
sword.
They lie with the uncircumcised,
with those who go down to the Pit.
³⁰ “The princes of the north are there,
all of them, all the Zidonians, who have gone down
with the slain,
ashamed for all the terror that they caused by their
might.
They lie uncircumcised with those slain by the sword.
They bear their disgrace with those who go down to
the Pit.
³¹ When Pharaoh sees them,
he will be comforted for all his throng,
Pharaoh and all his army,
slain by the sword.”
It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
³² “For I have put My terror in the land of the living.
He will lie among the uncircumcised,
with those slain by the sword,
Pharaoh and all his multitude.”

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Watchman, Blow the *Shofar*

33 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² “Son
of man, speak to the children of your people
and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword upon a land,
suppose the people of the land take a man from
among them, and set him as their watchman. ³ If,
when he sees the sword coming upon the land, he
blows the *shofar* and warns the people, ⁴ then whoev-
er hears the sound of the *shofar* but ignores the warn-
ing, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood
will be on his own head. ⁵ He heard the sound of the
shofar and ignored the warning; his blood will be on
himself. However, if he had taken warning, he would
have saved his soul. ⁶ But if the watchman sees the
sword come and does not blow the *shofar*, the people
are not warned. Then the sword does come and takes
a person from among them—he is taken away in his
iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman’s
hand.’

⁷ “You, son of man, I have set you as a watchman for
the house of Israel. When you hear the word from My
mouth, warn them from Me. ⁸ When I say to the
wicked: ‘Wicked one, you will surely die!’ and you do
not speak to warn the wicked about his way—that
wicked one will die in his iniquity, but his blood I will
require at your hand. ⁹ If you warn the wicked of his
way to turn from it and he does not turn from his way,
then he will die in his iniquity—but you have saved
your soul.

¹⁰ “You, son of man, say to the house of Israel: ‘You
have said, “Surely our transgressions and our sins are
upon us and we are pining away in them. So how can
we live.’ ¹¹ Say to them: ‘As I live—it is a declaration of
ADONAI—I have no pleasure in the death of the
wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.
Return, return from your evil ways. Why will you die, O
house of Israel?’

¹² “You, son of man, say to the children of your peo-
ple: ‘The righteousness of the righteous person will
not deliver him in the day of his transgression. Nor will
the wickedness of the wicked person make him stumble
in it on the day he turns away from his wickedness.
Nor will the righteous person be able to live by it on
the day he sins. ¹³ When I tell the righteous that he will
surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and
commits iniquity, none of his righteous deeds will be
remembered. But in his iniquity that he has commit-
ted, he will die. ¹⁴ When I say to the wicked, “You will
surely die,” yet he turns from his sin and does what is
just and right— ¹⁵ if the wicked restores a pledge,
gives back what he had taken by robbery, walks in the
laws of life, committing no iniquity—he will surely live,
he will not die. ¹⁶ None of his sins that he has commit-
ted will be remembered against him. He has done
what is just and right; he will surely live.’

¹⁷“Yet the children of your people say, ‘The way of *ADONAI* isn’t fair!’ but it is their way, theirs that is unfair. ¹⁸When a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he will die in it. ¹⁹When a wicked person turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live by it. ²⁰Yet you say, ‘The way of *ADONAI* is not fair!’ House of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his ways.”

Jerusalem Falls

²¹In the twelfth year of our exile, on the fifth day of the tenth month, a survivor from Jerusalem came to me saying, “The city has been struck down.” ²²The hand of *ADONAI* had been upon me in the evening, before the survivor came. He had opened my mouth by the time of his coming to me in the morning. So my mouth was opened and I was no longer mute.

²³Then the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²⁴“Son of man, the inhabitants of these ruins in the land of Israel keep saying, ‘Abraham was only one, yet he inherited the land. Since we are many, the land is given to us as a possession.’

²⁵“Therefore say to them, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘You eat with the blood, lift up your eyes to your idols and shed blood. Should you possess the land? ²⁶You rely on your sword, commit abominations, and each of you defiles his neighbor’s wife. Should you possess the land?’ ²⁷Say this to them, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘As I live, surely those who are in the ruins will fall by the sword. Whoever is in the open field I will give to the beasts to be devoured, and whoever is in the strongholds and in the caves will die of the plague. ²⁸I will make the land a desolation and a horror. The pride of her power will cease. The mountains of Israel will be desolate, so that no one will pass through.’ ²⁹They will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I have made the land a desolate waste, because of all their abominations that they have committed.

³⁰“Now as for you, son of man, the children of your people are talking about you by the walls and in the doorways of the houses. Each one speaks to one another, each saying to his brother: ‘Come now, hear what message is coming forth from *ADONAI*!’ ³¹So they come to you, as people come, and sit before you as My people and hear your words—but they do not do them—for with their mouth they express dotting love, but their heart goes after their own dishonest gain. ³²Look, you are like a love song to them, one who has a beautiful voice and can play well on an instrument. They hear your words, but do not practice them. ³³When this comes to pass—behold, it is coming—they will know that a prophet has been among them.”

ADONAI, Our Shepherd

34 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ²“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Is-

rael. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘*Oy*, shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should shepherds not take care of the sheep? ³You eat the fat. You clothe yourself with the wool. You kill the fat ones. But you do not take care of the sheep. ⁴You do not strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring back the stray, or seek the lost. Instead, you have ruled over them with force and cruelty. ⁵They were scattered for lack of a shepherd. They became food for all the beasts of the field as they were scattered. ⁶My sheep wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill. Over all the face of the earth My sheep were scattered. No one searched. No one sought.’

⁷“Therefore, shepherds, hear the word of *ADONAI*: ⁸‘As I live—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—as surely as My sheep became prey and My sheep became food for all the beasts of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My sheep,’ ⁹therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of *ADONAI*, ¹⁰thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Behold, I am against the shepherds and I will demand My flock from their hand. I will dismiss them from tending the flock. The shepherds will no longer feed themselves. I will rescue My sheep from their mouth, so they will not be food for them.’

¹¹“For thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Here I am! I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. ¹²As a shepherd seeks out his sheep on the day he is among his scattered flock, so I will seek out My sheep. I will rescue them out of all the places where they have been scattered, on a day of cloud and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples. I will gather them from the countries. I will bring them back to their own land. I will shepherd them upon the mountains of Israel, by the streams and in all the habitable places of the land. ¹⁴I will shepherd them in a good pasture—their grazing place will be on the high mountains of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground. They will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I will tend My flock and make them lie down”’—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁶“‘I will seek the lost and bring back the stray, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick. But the fat and the strong I will destroy—I will tend them with justice. ¹⁷As for you, My flock’—thus says *ADONAI Elohim*—‘behold, I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats. ¹⁸Was it too little for you that you were feeding in the good pasture? Must you trample down the rest of your pastures with your feet? You were drinking clear water. Must you muddy the rest with your feet? ¹⁹Yet My sheep must eat what you have trampled with your feet and drink what you have muddied with your feet!’

²⁰“Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim* to them: ‘Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat sheep and the

† cf. Matt. 25:32.

lean sheep. ²¹ Because you thrust with your side and with shoulder and gore all the weak with your horns, until you have scattered them all over, ²² I will save My flock. They will no longer be prey. I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³ So I will set up One Shepherd over them, My servant David—He will tend them, He will feed them Himself, and be their shepherd. ²⁴ I, ADONAI, will be their God, and My servant David will be Prince among them. I, ADONAI, have spoken.

²⁵ “I will make a covenant of *shalom* with them. I will remove the evil beasts from the land, so they may dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the forest. ²⁶ I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. I will cause the rain to come down in its season. There will be showers of blessing. ²⁷ The tree of the field will yield its fruit. The ground will yield its produce. They will be secure in their land. Then they will know that I am ADONAI, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. ²⁸ They will no longer be prey to the nations. The beast of the earth will not devour them. They will live in security. No one will make them afraid. ²⁹ I will make their agriculture renowned. They will no longer be consumed with hunger in the land. They will no longer bear the scorn of the nations. ³⁰ They will know that I, ADONAI their God, am with them. They, the house of Israel, are My people.’ It is a declaration of ADONAI. ³¹ ‘So you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are human, and I am your God.’ It is a declaration of ADONAI Elohim.

Edom Made Desolate

³⁵ The word of ADONAI came to me saying: ² “Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it. ³ Say to it, thus says ADONAI Elohim: ‘Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir. I will stretch out My hand over you and make you utterly desolate. ⁴ I will lay your cities waste. You will be devastated. So you will know that I am ADONAI.

⁵ “Because you have a long-standing hatred and have delivered *Bnei-Yisrael* to the power of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time of their final punishment, ⁶ therefore, as I live—it is a declaration of ADONAI—I will destine you for blood, and bloodshed will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, therefore bloodshed will pursue you. ⁷ I will make Mount Seir an utter desolation. I will cut off from it all who come and go. ⁸ I will fill its mountains with its slain; on your hills, your valleys, and all your streams those slain by the sword will fall. ⁹ I will make you everlasting desolations; your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am ADONAI.

¹⁰ “Because you said: “These two nations and these two lands will be mine! We will possess them”—though ADONAI was there—¹¹ therefore, as I live—it is a declaration of ADONAI—I will deal with you with the same anger and envy that you had because

of your hatred against them. I will make Myself known among them, when I judge you. ¹² You will know that I, ADONAI, have heard all your blasphemies that you uttered against the mountains of Israel saying: “They are laid desolate—they are given for us to devour!” ¹³ You have magnified yourselves against Me with your mouth. You multiplied your words against Me. I heard it.’

¹⁴ “Thus says ADONAI Elohim: ‘When the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. ¹⁵ As you rejoiced over inheriting the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will do to you. You will be desolate, Mount Seir and all Edom—all of it. Then they will know that I am ADONAI.’

Comfort to the Land of Israel

³⁶ “You, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say: ‘Mountains of Israel, hear the word of ADONAI. ² Thus says ADONAI Elohim: The enemy has said against you, “Aha! Even the ancient high places have become our possession!” ³ Therefore prophesy and say, thus says ADONAI Elohim: Because they ravaged and crushed you from every side, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations and you became the talk and evil gossip of people, ⁴ therefore, mountains of Israel, hear the word of ADONAI, thus says ADONAI Elohim to the mountains, the hills, the streams and the valleys, the desolate wastes, and the cities that are forsaken, which have become prey and derision to the rest of the surrounding nations. ⁵ Therefore thus says ADONAI Elohim: Surely in the fire of My wrath I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, that have taken My land for themselves as a possession with the joy of all their heart and contempt in their souls, in order to seize it as plunder. ⁶ Therefore, prophesy to the land of Israel and say to the mountains and the hills, the streams and the valleys, thus says ADONAI Elohim: Behold, I have spoken in My wrath and in My fury, because you have suffered the scorn of the nations.’ ⁷ Therefore thus says ADONAI Elohim: I have lifted My hand. Surely the nations that surround you will themselves suffer scorn.

⁸ “But you, mountains of Israel, you will shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit for My people Israel; for their return is near. ⁹ For behold, I am for you. I will turn to you. You will be tilled and sown. ¹⁰ I will settle a large population upon you—the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities will be inhabited. The desolate places will be built up. ¹¹ I will multiply man and beast upon you. They will increase and be fruitful. I will cause you to be inhabited as you were before. I will do better for you than at your beginnings. You will know that I am ADONAI. ¹² I will cause people, my people Israel, to walk upon you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance. You will no longer deprive them of children.’

† cf. John 10:11.

¹³ “Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘Because they say to you, “You are a devourer of men and you deprive your nation of children,” ¹⁴ therefore you will no longer devour men and you will no longer deprive your nation of children.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI* . ¹⁵ ‘I will no longer let the scorn of the nations be heard against you. You will no longer bear disgrace from the peoples. You will no longer cause your nation to stumble.’” It is a declaration of *ADONAI* .

¹⁶ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁷ “Son of man, when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their way and by their deeds. Their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her *niddah* . ¹⁸ So I poured out My fury on them for the blood which they had shed upon the land and because they had defiled it with their idols. ¹⁹ I scattered them among the nations, so they were dispersed through the countries. According to their way and their deeds I judged them. ²⁰ Wherever they went among the nations, they profaned My holy Name, since it was said about them, ‘These are the people of *ADONAI* , yet they had to leave His land.’ ²¹ But I had concern for My holy Name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

²² “Therefore say to the house of Israel, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘I do not do this for your sake, house of Israel, but for My holy Name, which you profaned among the nations wherever you went. ²³ I will sanctify My great Name, which has been profaned among the nations—which you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am *ADONAI* ’—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —‘when I am sanctified in you before their eyes.

New Heart, New Spirit

²⁴ “For I will take you from the nations, gather you out of all the countries, and bring you back to your own land. ²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. ²⁶ Moreover, I will give you a new heart. I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the stony heart from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My *Ruach* within you. Then I will cause you to walk in My laws, so you will keep My rulings and do them. ²⁸ Then you will live in the land that I gave to your fathers. You will be My people and I will be your God.

²⁹ “So I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful. I will not bring a famine upon you. ³⁰ I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field, so that you will no longer bear the disgrace of famine among the nations. ³¹ When you remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good, you will be disgusted with yourselves because of your iniquities and your abominations. ³² Not for your sake will I do this’—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —‘let that be known to you. Be

ashamed and confounded for your ways, house of Israel!’

³³ “Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘In the day that I pronounce you clean from all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins will be rebuilt. ³⁴ The land that was desolate will be tilled instead of being a wasteland in the sight of all that passed by. ³⁵ They will say, “This land that was a wasteland has become like the garden of Eden. The waste, desolate, and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited.” ³⁶ Then the nations that are left all around you will know that I, *ADONAI* , have rebuilt the ruined places, and replanted what was desolate. I, *ADONAI* , have spoken it. So I will do it.’

³⁷ “Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘I will again be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them—I will populate them with people like a flock. ³⁸ Like the holy flock, like the flock of Jerusalem during her *moadim* , so the waste cities will be filled with flocks of people. † Then they will know that I am *ADONAI* .”

Dry Bones Live

37 The hand of *ADONAI* was upon me. The *Ruach ADONAI* carried me out and set me down in the middle of the valley. It was full of bones. ² He led me all around them. Behold, there were very many on the floor of the valley. Behold, they were very dry. ³ Then He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” †

I answered, “*ADONAI Elohim* , You know.”

⁴ “Prophecy over these bones,” He said to me. “Say to them: ‘Dry bones, hear the word of *ADONAI* !’ ⁵ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* to these bones: Behold, I will cause *Ruach* †† to enter you, so you will live. ⁶ I will attach tendons to you, bring flesh on you and cover you with skin. Then I will put breath in you. You will live. You will know that I am *ADONAI* .”

⁷ So I prophesied just as I was commanded. As I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, an earthquake. Then the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸ I saw, and behold, there were tendons on them, flesh came up and skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then He said to me, “Prophecy to the *Ruach* . Prophecy, son of man, and say to the *Ruach* , ‘thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : Come from the four winds, *Ruach* ! Breathe upon these slain, that they may live.’” ¹⁰ So I prophesied just as He commanded me. The *Ruach* came into them and they lived. They stood up on their feet, a vast army.

¹¹ Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say: ‘Our bones are dried up; our hope is lost; we are cut off—by ourselves.’ ¹² Therefore prophecy and say to them, thus says *ADONAI Elohim* : ‘Behold, I will open your graves. I will bring you up out of your graves, My people. I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

† cf. John 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:3.

†† cf. John 10:7, 9, 16. ‡ cf. John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:35-36, 46.
‡† Or breath

¹³ You will know that I am *ADONAI*, when I have opened your graves and brought you up out of your graves, My people. ¹⁴ I will put My *Ruach* in you and you will live. I will place you in your own land. Then you will know that I, *ADONAI*, have spoken and that I have done it." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Reunification of Southern and Northern Kingdoms

¹⁵ The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁶ "You, son of man, take one stick and write on it, 'For Judah'—for *Bnei-Yisrael* joined with him. Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph'—the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel joined with him. ¹⁷ Join them one to another for yourself, as one stick, so they may become one in your hand.

¹⁸ "When the children of your people speak to you saying, 'Won't you tell us what you mean by these?' ¹⁹ say to them, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph—which is in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel joined with him—and I will put them together with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick. They will be one in My hand.' ²⁰ The sticks that you write on will be in your hand before their eyes.

²¹ "Then say to them, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Behold, I will take *Bnei-Yisrael* from among the nations, where they have gone. I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land. ²² I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will be king to them all. They will no longer be two nations and never again be divided into two kingdoms. ²³ They will never again be defiled with their idols, their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. I will save them out of all their dwellings in which they sinned. I will purify them. Then they will be My people and I will be their God. ²⁴ My servant David will be king over them. They will all have One Shepherd. They will walk in My ordinances and observe My rulings and do them. ²⁵ They will live in the land that I gave to My servant Jacob, where your ancestors lived. They will live there—they, their children, and their children's children, forever, and My servant David will be their prince forever. ²⁶ I will cut a covenant of *shalom* with them—it will be an everlasting covenant with them. I will give to them and multiply them. I will set up My Sanctuary among them forever. ²⁷ My dwelling-place will be over them. I will be their God and they will be My people. ²⁸ Then the nations will know that I am *ADONAI* who sanctifies Israel, when My Sanctuary is in their midst forever."

Gog's Alliance Invades Israel

38 The word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ² "Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ^{††} Prophecy against him ³ and say, 'thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: Be-

hold, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ⁴ I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws. I will bring you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen—all of them splendidly dressed—a vast assembly with breastplate and shield, all of them wielding swords. ⁵ With them will be Persia, Cush, and Put, all of them with shield and helmet, ⁶ Gomer and all his troops, the house of Togarmah from the extreme north and all his troops—many peoples with you.

⁷ "Be prepared, prepare yourself, you and all your company gathered around you. Be a guard for them. ⁸ After many days you will be summoned. In the latter years, you will come against the land that has been brought back from the sword and regathered from many peoples on the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste. But they were brought out from the peoples. When all of them are dwelling securely, ⁹ you will come up, you will come like a storm, you will be like a cloud covering the land—you and all your troops and many peoples with you.'

¹⁰ "Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: 'It will come to pass in that day that things will come into your heart and you will devise an evil plan. ¹¹ You will say, "I will go up against the land of unwallled villages. I will fall upon the quiet people who live securely, all of them living without walls, having no bars or gates, ¹² in order to seize spoil and carry off plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places now inhabited and against the people gathered from the nations, who have been acquiring livestock and property, who live in the center of the world."

¹³ "Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish with all its young lions will say to you: "Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your company to plunder? To carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and property, to make off with immense spoils?"

¹⁴ "Therefore, son of man, prophesy, say to Gog, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: "In that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know? ¹⁵ You will come from your place out of the extreme north—you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and mighty army. ¹⁶ You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud covering the land. It will happen in the last days. I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me—when I am sanctified through you, Gog, before their eyes."

¹⁷ "Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: 'Are you the one that I spoke about in former times through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them? ¹⁸ In that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"My fury will rise up in My nostrils. ¹⁹ In My jealousy and the fire of My wrath I have spoken! Surely in that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. ²⁰ The fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field,

† cf. Rev. 21:3. †† cf. Rev. 20:8.

all creeping things that creep upon the ground, and all humans upon the face of the earth will shake at My presence. The mountains will be thrown down. The steep places will fall. Every wall will fall to the ground. ²¹ I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—“every man’s sword will be against his brother. ²² I will punish him with pestilence and blood. I will pour out rain on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire, and brimstone. ²³ So I will magnify and sanctify Myself. I will make Myself known in the eyes of many nations, and they will know that I am *ADONAI*.’

Destruction of Gog

39 “You, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘Behold, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. ² I will turn you around, drive you along, and lead you up from the extreme north. I will bring you upon the mountains of Israel. ³ Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand. ⁴ You will fall on the mountains of Israel—you, all your troops, and the people that are with you. I will give you as food to all kinds of birds of prey and to the beasts of the field. ⁵ You will fall on an open field, for I have spoken.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

⁶ “I will send fire on Magog and on those who live securely in the islands. Then they will know that I am *ADONAI*. ⁷ So I will make My holy Name known among My people Israel. I will not let My holy Name be profaned anymore. The nations will know that I am *ADONAI*, the Holy One in Israel. ⁸ Behold, it is coming. It will be done.’—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—‘This is the day that I have spoken about.

⁹ “The inhabitants of Israel’s cities will go out and kindle fires with the weapons—shields and breastplates, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears. They will make fires with them for seven years. ¹⁰ They will not take wood out of the field or cut anything from the forests, for they will make fire from the weapons. They will plunder those who plundered them and loot those who looted them.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹¹ “On that day, I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, the valley of the travelers east of the sea. It will block those who travel through, since they will bury Gog and all his multitude there. Then they will call it the valley of Hamon-Gog. ¹² The house of Israel will bury them for seven months, in order to cleanse the land. ¹³ All the people of the land will bury them. It will be memorable for them, a day when I am glorified.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁴ “Men will be continually set apart to travel through the land and bury the travelers remaining on the face of the land, in order to cleanse it. At the end of seven months, they will make their search. ¹⁵ When they travel through the land, if any sees a man’s bone, he will

set up a sign by it, until the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-Gog. ¹⁶ Hamonah will also be the name of the city. So they will cleanse the land.’

¹⁷ “You, son of man”—thus says *ADONAI Elohim*—“say to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field: ‘Assemble and come! Gather from all around to My sacrificial feast that I have prepared for you, a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. You will eat flesh and drink blood. ¹⁸ You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth—as rams, lambs, goats, bulls—all of them fatlings of Bashan. ¹⁹ So you will eat fat until you are gorged and you will drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrificial feast that I have prepared for you. ²⁰ You will be filled at My table with horses and horsemen, with mighty men and all the warriors.’ It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Israel Will Know *ADONAI*

²¹ “I will put My glory among the nations. All the nations will see My judgment that I will execute and My hand that I will lay on them. ²² The house of Israel will know that I am *ADONAI* their God, from that day onward. ²³ The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile for their iniquity, because they broke faith with Me. So I hid My face from them and gave them into the hand of their enemies. All of them fell by the sword. ²⁴ I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions. I hid My face from them.’

²⁵ “Therefore thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “Now I will restore Jacob from exile, when I have compassion on the whole house of Israel. I will be zealous for My holy Name. ²⁶ They will bear their shame and all their disloyalty by which they broke faith with Me, when they were living securely in their land, with no one making them afraid. ²⁷ When I have brought them back from the peoples and have gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, I will be sanctified in them in the eyes of many nations. ²⁸ Then they will know that I am *ADONAI* their God, since it was I who caused them to go into exile among the nations and I who will gather them back to their own land. I will never again leave them there. ²⁹ I will never again hide My face from them. For I have poured out My *Ruach* upon the house of Israel.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Measurements of a New Temple

40 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month—in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day—the hand of *ADONAI* was on me, and He brought me there. ² In visions God brought me to the land of Israel and set me down upon a very high mountain. On it, toward the south, was something like the construction of a city. ³ He brought me there, and behold, there was a man whose appear-

† Meaning, *Gog’s multitude*

ance was like bronze. † He had a linen cord in his hand and a measuring rod. †† He was standing in the gateway.

⁴ The man said to me, “Son of man, see with your eyes, hear with your ears, set your heart on all that I show you—for I brought you here in order to show you—and report all that you see to the house of Israel.”

⁵ Behold, an outer wall was all around the House. The measuring rod in the man’s hand was 6 cubits long, ‡ each of which was a normal cubit and a handbreadth. When he measured the thickness of the wall structure, it was one rod, and the height was one rod.

⁶ Then he went to the gate that faced east and went up its steps. When he measured the threshold of the gate, it was 1 rod wide. Also the other threshold was 1 rod wide. ⁷ Each guard chamber was 1 rod long and 1 rod wide. The space between the chambers was 5 cubits. The threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate, facing the House, measured 1 rod. ⁸ When he measured the porch of the gate toward the House, it was 1 rod. ⁹ When he measured the porch of the gate, it was 8 cubits; its pillars were 2 cubits. The porch of the gate faced the House. ¹⁰ Now the guard chambers of the east gate were three on this side, and three on the other side—the three had the same measurement. The side pillars had the same measure on this side and on that side. ¹¹ When he measured the width of the entrance of the gate, it was 10 cubits, and the length of the gate was 13 cubits. ¹² A barrier wall was in front of the guard chambers, 1 cubit on each side. Each chamber was 6 cubits on each side. ¹³ When he measured the gate from the roof of the one chamber to the roof of the other, the width was 25 cubits, door facing door. ¹⁴ Then he did the pillars—60 cubits. A gateway extended all around to the pillar of the courtyard. ¹⁵ Now from the front of the gate of the entrance to the front of the inner porch of the gate measured 50 cubits. ¹⁶ There were shuttered windows toward the chambers and toward their pillars within the surrounding gate, and likewise the porches had windows all around inside. On each pillar were palm trees.

¹⁷ Then he brought me to the outer court. †† Behold, there were rooms and pavement, made for the surrounding court, with 30 rooms along the pavement. ¹⁸ The pavement was by the side of the gates, as wide as the gates were long. This was the lower pavement. ¹⁹ He measured the width from the front of the lower gate to the exterior front of the inner court—it was 100 cubits, to the east and to the north.

²⁰ Next he measured the length and width of the gate of the outer court facing toward the north. ²¹ Its guard chambers were three on this side and three on that side. Its pillars and its porches had the same measurements as the first gate—50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ²² Its windows, porches, and palm trees were

the same measurements as the gate facing toward the east. Its stairway had seven steps, and its porch was in front of them. ²³ A gate to the inner court was opposite the other gate, northward and eastward. He measured 100 cubits from gate to gate.

²⁴ Then he led me toward the south, and behold, there was a gate toward the south. He measured its pillars and its porches. They had the same measurements. ²⁵ The gate and its porch had windows all around, like the other windows, 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ²⁶ Its stairway had seven steps, and its porches were in front of them. It had palm trees on its pillars, one on this side and another on that side.

²⁷ There was a gate to the inner court toward the south. He measured from gate to gate toward the south—100 cubits.

²⁸ Then he brought me to the inner court through the south gate. When he measured the south gate, it had the same measurements. ²⁹ Its chambers, pillars, and porch had the same measurements. There were windows in it and in the surrounding porch. It was 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ³⁰ There were porches all around, 25 cubits long and 5 cubits wide. ³¹ Its porch was toward the outer court. Palm trees were on its pillars. Its stairway had 8 steps.

³² Then he brought me into the inner court toward the east. He measured it with the same measurements. ³³ Its chambers, pillars, and porch had the same measurements. There were windows in it and in its surrounding porch. It was 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ³⁴ Its porch was toward the outer court. Palm trees were on its pillars on this side and on that side. Its stairway had 8 steps.

³⁵ He brought me to the north gate. He measured it with the same measurements: ³⁶ its chambers, pillars, and porch. There were windows in it all around. It was 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ³⁷ Its pillars were toward the outer court. Palm trees were on its pillars, on this side and on that side. Its stairway had 8 steps. ³⁸ A chamber with its entry was by the pillars at the gates; there they rinse the burnt offering. ³⁹ In the porch of the gate were two tables on this side and two tables on that side, on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering. ⁴⁰ Off to the side, on the outside as one goes up to the entry of the north gate, were two tables. On the other side of the porch of the gate were two tables. ⁴¹ Four tables were on one side and four tables were on the other side, by the side of the gate—eight tables, on which they would slaughter. ⁴² There were four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, a cubit and a half long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit high. The instruments for the slaughter of the burnt offering and the sacrifice were laid on them. ⁴³ Hooks, a handbreadth long, were fastened in the House all around. The flesh of the offering was to be placed upon the tables.

⁴⁴ Outside the inner gate in the inner court were chambers for the singers, one of which was at the side

† cf. Rev. 1:15. †† Lit. reed

‡ About ten and a half feet. †† cf. Rev. 11:2.

of the north gate, facing south. The one at the side of the east gate faced north. ⁴⁵ He said to me, "This chamber that faces toward the south is for the *kohanim* who keep charge of the House. ⁴⁶ The chamber that faces toward the north is for the *kohanim* who keep charge of the altar. These are the sons of Zadok, those from the sons of Levi who come near to *ADONAI* to minister to Him."

⁴⁷ Then he measured the court. It was 100 cubits long and 100 cubits wide, a square. The altar was in front of the House. ⁴⁸ He brought me to the porch of the House. He measured each pillar of the porch, 5 cubits on this side and 5 cubits on that side. The width of the gate was 3 cubits on this side and 3 cubits on that side. ⁴⁹ The length of the porch was 20 cubits and the width 11 cubits. It was ascended by way of steps, where pillars stood, one on each side.

The Inner Sanctuary

41 Then he brought me to the Temple, and measured the pillars—6 cubits wide on one side, 6 cubits wide on the other side, which was the width of the tent. ² The width of the entrance was 10 cubits. The sides of the entrance were 5 cubits on the one side and 5 cubits on the other side. He measured its length, 40 cubits and its width, 20 cubits. ³ He went to the inner room and measured each pillar of the entrance, 2 cubits; the doorway, 6 cubits; and the width of the doorway, 7 cubits. ⁴ When he measured the inner room's length, it was 20 cubits, and the width was 20 cubits, in front of the Temple. He said to me, "This is the Holy of Holies."

⁵ When he measured the wall of the House, it was 6 cubits, and the width of every side chamber was 4 cubits, surrounding the House on every side. ⁶ There were 33 side chambers. There were supports in the wall, which belonged to the House for the side chambers all around, so that they were not supported by the wall of the House. ⁷ The side chambers were wider as they wound about higher and higher. Because the winding about of the House went higher and higher round about the house, therefore the width of the House expanded. One went up from the lowest row to the highest by way of the middle. ⁸ I saw also that the House had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers were a full rod of 6 cubits up to the joint. ⁹ The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers was 5 cubits. The space between the side chambers of the House ¹⁰ and the outer chambers was 20 cubits wide all around the House on every side. ¹¹ The doors of the side chambers were toward the space, one door toward the north and another door toward the south. The width of the space was 5 cubits all around.

¹² The building that was before the separate area at the side toward the west was 70 cubits wide. The wall of the building was 5 cubits thick all around and its length was 90 cubits. ¹³ When he measured the House,

it was 100 cubits long; the separate area and the building with its walls, was 100 cubits long; ¹⁴ and the width of the face of the House and the separate area toward the east was also 100 cubits.

¹⁵ When he measured the length of the building facing the separate area behind it, with its galleries on each side, it was 100 cubits. Now the inner Sanctuary and the porches of the court—¹⁶ the thresholds, the shuttered windows, and the galleries all around in three stories opposite the thresholds—were paneled with wood all around, from the ground up to the windows (even the windows were covered), ¹⁷ over the space above the door, as far as the inner House, and on all the wall outside all around inside and outside, by measurement. ¹⁸ It was made with *cheruvim* and palm trees. A palm tree was between *cheruv* and *cheruv*. Every *cheruv* had two faces: ¹⁹ the face of a man toward the palm tree on one side and the face of a young lion toward the palm tree on the other side. Thus was it made on all the House all around. ²⁰ The *cheruvim* and palm trees were made from the ground up to above the door and on the wall of the Temple.

²¹ The Temple's doorposts were square. Now the front of the Sanctuary had something resembling ²² an altar—3 cubits high and 2 cubits long, made of wood. Its corners, its base, and its sides were also of wood. He said to me, "This is the table of the Presence of *ADONAI*."

²³ The Temple and the inner Sanctuary each had double doors. ²⁴ The doors each had two turning leaves—two leaves for one door and two leaves for the other. ²⁵ *Cheruvim* and palm trees were made on them, on the doors of the Temple, just like those made on the walls. There were thick beams of wood on the face of the porch outside. ²⁶ There were shuttered windows and palm trees on one side and on the other, on the sides of the porch, the side chambers of the House, and the thick beams.

The Outer Courtyard

42 He led me out to the outer courtyard toward the north. He brought me to the chamber that was opposite the separate area and opposite the building toward the north. ² The length of the building with the door on the north was 100 cubits and the width was 50 cubits. ³ Opposite the 20 cubit space belonging to the inner court and opposite the pavement belonging to the outer court was gallery by gallery in three stories. ⁴ In front of the chambers was a walkway 10 cubits wide and 100 cubits long. Their doorways were toward the north. ⁵ The upper chambers were narrower, because the galleries took more away from them than from the lower and the middle ones in the building. ⁶ For they were in three stories and had no pillars like the pillars of the courtyards; therefore more space was taken away than from the lower and the middle floors, in comparison with the ground. ⁷ A wall that was outside by the side of the chambers, toward

the outer court in front of the chambers, was 50 cubits in length. ⁸ For the chambers that were toward the outer court were 50 cubits long while those facing the Temple were 100 cubits. ⁹ Below these chambers was the entrance on the east side, as one enters them from the outer courtyard.

¹⁰ In the thickness of the wall of the courtyard toward the east, in front of the separate area and in front of the building, there were chambers. ¹¹ The passageway in front of them was similar to the chambers on the north, as long and wide as them, with all their exits and similar arrangements and doors. ¹² Corresponding to the doorways of the chambers on the south, there was a doorway at the head of the passageway—a way directly in front of the wall toward the east, as one enters them.

¹³ Then he said to me, “The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate area, they are the holy chambers, where the *kohanim* who are near to *ADONAI* eat the most holy things. There they will put the most holy things—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for the place is holy. ¹⁴ Once the *kohanim* enter, they are not to go out of the holy place into the outer court without leaving there their garments in which they minister—for they are holy. They will put on other garments and approach the area for the people.”

¹⁵ When he had finished measuring the inner House, he brought me out by way of the gate facing east and measured all around. ¹⁶ When he measured the east side with the measuring rod, it was 500 rods, with the measuring rod round about. ¹⁷ When he measured the north side, it was 500 rods by the measuring rod. ¹⁸ When he measured the south side, it was 500 rods, with the measuring rod. ¹⁹ Then he turned about to the west side and measured 500 rods with the measuring rod. ²⁰ So he measured the four sides. It had a wall all around—the length was 500 and the width was 500—to make a distinction between the holy and the profane.

The Glory Returns

43 Then he led me to the gate, the gate looking east, ² and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters. The earth was radiant with His glory. ³ The appearance of the vision that I saw was like the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar. So I fell on my face. ⁴ Then the glory of *ADONAI* came into the House by way of the gate facing the east. ⁵ The *Ruach* took me up and brought me into the inner court. Then behold, the glory of *ADONAI* filled the House.

⁶ Then I heard someone speaking to me from the House, while a man was standing beside me. ⁷ He said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of My throne, the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the

midst of *Bnei-Yisrael* forever. The house of Israel will no longer defile My holy Name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution or by the corpses of their kings in their high places. ⁸ Whenever they set their threshold next to My threshold and their doorpost next to My doorpost, with only a wall between Me and them, they defiled My holy Name by their abominations that they committed. So I have finished them off in My fury. ⁹ Now let them put away their prostitution and the corpses of their kings, far from Me. Then I will dwell among them forever.

¹⁰ “You, son of man, describe the House to the house of Israel, so they will be ashamed of their iniquities. Let them measure accurately. ¹¹ If they are ashamed of all they have done, sketch out the House for them, its layout, its exits and its entrances, its complete design, with all its ordinances and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so they may observe its complete design and all its ordinances and do them. ¹² This is the *Torah* of the House: the whole territory around it on top of the mountain will be most holy. Behold, this is the *Torah* of the House.

The Altar

¹³ “These are the measurements of the altar by cubits (a cubit being a normal cubit plus a handbreadth). Its gutter will be one cubit deep and one cubit wide. Its rim will be one span surrounding the edge. This will be the base of the altar. ¹⁴ From the base on the ground to the lower ledge will be 2 cubits and the width 1 cubit. From the smaller ledge to the larger ledge will be 4 cubits and the width 1 cubit. ¹⁵ The altar hearth will be 4 cubits high. Four horns will project upward from the hearth. ¹⁶ The hearth will be 12 cubits long by 12 wide, with four sides square. ¹⁷ The ledge will be 14 cubits long and 14 wide with four sides square. The border surrounding it will be half a cubit and its bottom will be one cubit all around. Its steps will face east.”

¹⁸ Then he said to me, “Son of man, thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: ‘These are the statutes for the altar on the day when they will construct it, in order to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it. ¹⁹ Give a young bull for a sin offering to the Levitical *kohanim* who are from the offspring of Zadok, who come near to Me to minister to Me’—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*. ²⁰ “You are to take some of its blood and put it on its four horns, on the four corners of the ledge and on the border around it. So you will purify it and make atonement for it. ²¹ Take the bull of the sin offering and burn it in the appointed place of the House, outside the Sanctuary.

²² “On the second day, offer a male goat without blemish as a sin offering. They will purify the altar as they purified it with the bull. ²³ When you have finished purifying it, offer a young bull without blemish and a ram out of the flock without blemish. ²⁴ Present them before *ADONAI*. The *kohanim* will cast salt upon them. They will offer them up as a burnt offering to *ADONAI*.

²⁵ Every day for seven days, prepare a goat as a sin offering. They will prepare a young bull and a ram out of the flock, without blemish. ²⁶ They will make atonement for the altar and cleanse it for seven days. This is how they will consecrate it. ²⁷ When they have completed the days, from the eighth day and onward the *kohanim* will make your burnt offerings upon the altar as well as your fellowship offerings. Then I will accept you—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Prince at the Eastern Gate

44 Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the Sanctuary looking east. It was shut. ² *ADONAI* said to me: "This gate is to be shut. It must not be opened. No one may enter through it, for *ADONAI* God of Israel has entered through it. So it is to be kept shut. ³ Only the prince, since he is a prince, will sit there to eat bread before *ADONAI*. He will enter by way of the porch of the gate and go out the same way."

Levitical Priesthood

⁴ Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the House. I looked, and behold, the glory of *ADONAI* filled the House of *ADONAI*. So I fell upon my face. ⁵ *ADONAI* said to me, "Son of man, set your heart, behold with your eyes, and hear with your ears all that I say to you concerning all the ordinances of *ADONAI*'s House and all its laws. Set your heart to the entrance of the House, with all exits of the Sanctuary. ⁶ Say to the rebellious, to the house of Israel, 'thus says *ADONAI* *Elohim*: Enough of your abominations, house of Israel! ⁷ You brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My Sanctuary, to profane it—My House—when you offer My bread, the fat, and the blood. They have broken My covenant, to add to all your abominations. ⁸ You have not kept charge of My holy things, but you have set keepers of My service in My Sanctuary to please yourselves.'"

⁹ Thus says *ADONAI* *Elohim*: "No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, may enter My Sanctuary, not any foreigner who is among *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁰ For the Levites who went far from Me, when Israel went astray after their idols, will bear their iniquity. ¹¹ Yet they will be ministers in My Sanctuary, overseers of the gates of the House and ministering in the House. They will slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people. They will stand before them to minister to them. ¹² Because they ministered to them before their idols, and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have lifted up My hand against them—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*. "They will bear their iniquity. ¹³ They will not come near to Me, to minister to Me as *kohanim*, nor come near to any of My holy things, to the things that are most holy. They will bear their shame and their abominations, which they have committed.

¹⁴ "Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the House, for all its service and for all that will be done in it. ¹⁵ So the Levitical *kohanim*, the sons of Zadok who kept charge of My Sanctuary when *Bnei-Yisrael* wandered from Me, will draw near to Me to minister to Me. They will stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood"—it is declaration of *ADONAI*. ¹⁶ "They are ones who will enter My Sanctuary and draw near to My table to minister to Me. They will keep My charge. ¹⁷ It will be that when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they will be clothed with linen garments. No wool will come on them, while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within. ¹⁸ They will have linen turbans upon their heads and linen underclothes upon their loins; they will not wear anything that causes sweat. ¹⁹ Before they go out to the outer court—to the outer courtyard to the people—they must take off their garments in which they minister and leave them in the holy chambers. They will put on other garments, so they do not consecrate the people while in their garments. ²⁰ They must not shave their heads or let their locks grow long, but must carefully trim the hair of their heads. ²¹ No *kohen* may drink wine before entering the inner court. ²² None may take a widow or a divorced woman as his wife, for they must take virgins of the offspring of the house of Israel or a widow who is the widow of a *kohen*.

²³ "They will teach My people the difference between the holy and the common and explain to them the difference between the unclean and the clean. ²⁴ In a lawsuit, they will stand to judge, and judge in accordance with My ordinances. They will keep My laws and My statutes in all My *moadim* and keep My *Shabbat* holy. ²⁵ They must not come near a dead person to defile themselves—only for a father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister who had no husband may they defile themselves. ²⁶ After he is cleansed, they will count seven days for him. ²⁷ On the day he goes into the Sanctuary, into the inner court to minister in the Sanctuary, he is to offer his sin offering." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

²⁸ "It will be an inheritance for them. I am their inheritance. Do not give them any possession in Israel for I am their possession. ²⁹ They will eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering. Every devoted thing in Israel will be theirs. ³⁰ The first of all the first-fruits of everything and every offering of every kind from all your offerings will belong to the *kohanim*. You will also give the *kohen* the first of your dough, to make a blessing to rest on your house. ³¹ The *kohanim* may not eat any carcass, whether bird or beast, that dies of itself or is torn.

Levitical Land

45 "When you allot the land for inheritance, set apart an offering to *ADONAI*, a holy portion of the land. The length will be 25,000 and the width will be 10,000. † It will be holy within all its surrounding

borders. ² Out of this, there will be the Holy Place, 500 long by 500 wide, square all around, and 50 cubits for the open land surrounding it. ³ From this area you are to measure a length of 25,000 and a width of 10,000, in which will be the Sanctuary, which is most holy. ⁴ It is to be the holy portion of the land, for the *kohanim* ministering in the Sanctuary, who draw near to serve *ADONAI*. It will be a place for their houses as well as a place consecrated for the Sanctuary. ⁵ An area 25,000 long by 10,000 wide will be for the Levites, the ministers of the House. It will be a possession for themselves—20 chambers.

⁶ “You will give the city possession of an area 5,000 wide by 25,000 long, alongside the offering of the holy allotment. It will be for the whole house of Israel.

The Prince's Allotment

⁷ “The prince will have a portion on either side of the holy allotment and the city's property, adjacent to the holy offering and the city's property, on the west side westward and on the east side eastward. Its length will correspond to one of the tribal portions, from the western boundary to the eastern boundary. ⁸ It will be land for him as a possession in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress My people. They will give land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.”

⁹ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “Let it be enough for you, princes of Israel. Get rid of violence and destruction, execute justice and righteousness, take away your oppression from My people”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*. ¹⁰ “You are to have just balances, an honest dry measure, and an honest liquid measure. ¹¹ The dry and liquid measure will be of a uniform measure: the bath will contain a tenth part of a homer, and the ephah a tenth part of a homer; the standard measure will be the homer. ¹² The shekel will be 20 gerahs; 20 plus 25 plus 15 shekels will be your mina.

¹³ “This is the offering that you are to set apart: a sixth of an ephah out of a homer of wheat, a sixth of an ephah out of a homer of barley, ¹⁴ along with the set portion of oil—a bath of oil—as the tithe of the bath for each kor, which is 10 baths (or a homer, since 10 baths are a homer), ¹⁵ and one lamb of the flock out of 200, from the well-watered pastures of Israel. These are for the grain offering, burnt offering, and fellowship offerings, to make atonement for them.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁶ “All the people of the land must give this contribution to the prince in Israel. ¹⁷ It will be the prince's role to give the burnt offerings, grain offerings and drink offerings at the feasts, New Moons, and *Shabbatot*, in all the *moadim* of the house of Israel. He will prepare the sin offering, the meal offering, the burnt offering, and the fellowship offerings, to make atonement for the house of Israel.”

Offerings for *Moadim*

¹⁸ Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “In the first month, in the first day of the month, take a young bull without blemish and purify the Sanctuary. ¹⁹ The *kohen* will take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it upon the doorposts of the House and upon the four corners of the ledge of the altar and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court. ²⁰ So you will do on the seventh day of the month for everyone who sins unintentionally or through ignorance. So you will make atonement for the House.

²¹ “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you will have the Passover, a feast of seven days when *matzah* will be eaten. ²² On that day the prince will prepare a bull as a sin offering for himself and for all the people of the land. ²³ He will prepare a burnt offering to *ADONAI* for the seven days of the feast—seven bulls and seven rams without blemish daily for seven days and a male goat daily for a sin offering. ²⁴ He will prepare as a grain offering, an ephah for a bull, an ephah for a ram, and a hin of oil for each ephah. ²⁵ He will do this in the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, during the Feast, for seven days, for sin offering as well as burnt offering, grain offering as well as oil.”

46 Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “The gate of the inner court that faces the east will be shut for the six working days. On *Yom Shabbat* it will be opened and in the day of the New Moon it will be opened. ² The prince will enter by way of the porch of the gate from outside, and stand by the post of the gate. Then the *kohanim* will prepare his burnt offering and his fellowship offerings. He will worship at the threshold of the gate, and then go out. The gate will not be shut until the evening. ³ The people of the land will worship at the door of that gate before *ADONAI* on *Shabbatot* and New Moons.

⁴ “The burnt offering that the prince offers to *ADONAI* on *Yom Shabbat* will be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish. ⁵ The grain offering will be an ephah for the ram. The grain offering for the lambs will be a gift of his hand and a hin of oil for an ephah. ⁶ On the day of the New Moon it will be a young bull without blemish, six lambs, and a ram—they must be without blemish. ⁷ He will prepare a grain offering, an ephah for the bull and an ephah for the ram, for the lambs whatever his hand may reach and a hin of oil for an ephah. ⁸ When the prince enters, he will enter by way of the porch of the gate and he will also exit by that way. ⁹ When the people of the land come before *ADONAI* at the *moadim*, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship will exit by way of the south gate. Whoever enters by way of the south gate must exit by way of north gate. He should not return by the way of the gate where he came in, since he must exit straight ahead. ¹⁰ When they enter, the prince will

† i.e., cubits, about 8 1/3 by 6 3/4 miles. † Lit. ephah bath

come in among them. When they go out, they will go out together.

¹¹“At the feasts and the *moadim*, the grain offering will be an ephah for a bull and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs a gift of his hand and a hin of oil for an ephah. ¹²Now if the prince prepares a freewill offering, burnt offering, or fellowship offerings as a freewill offering to *ADONAI*, the gate for him facing east must be opened for him. Then he will prepare his burnt offering and his fellowship offerings as he does on *Yom Shabbat*. Then he will go out. After he exits, the gate should be shut.

¹³You are to prepare a lamb of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering to *ADONAI* daily—morning by morning you are to prepare it. ¹⁴Also you will prepare a grain offering with it morning by morning, a sixth of an ephah and a third of a hin of oil, to moisten the fine flour—a grain offering to *ADONAI* continually. It is perpetual statute. ¹⁵They will prepare the lamb, the grain offering, and the oil, morning by morning, for a continual burnt offering.”

¹⁶Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*: “If the prince gives a gift to any of his sons as his inheritance, it will belong to his sons. It will be their possession by inheritance.

¹⁷But if he gives of his inheritance as a gift to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty, when it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will belong to his sons. ¹⁸The prince must not take from the people’s inheritance, evicting them wrongfully out of their property. He must give inheritance to his sons out of his own property, so that My people will not be displaced, anyone from his own property.”

¹⁹Then he brought me through the entrance that was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the *kohanim*, looking north. Behold, there was a place at the far western end. ²⁰He said to me, “This is the place where the *kohanim* will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, where they will bake the grain offering, so they do not bring them into the outer court, to consecrate the people.”

²¹Then he brought me out to the outer courtyard and led me past the four corners of the courtyard. Behold, in every corner of the courtyard there was another courtyard. ²²In the four corners of the courtyard there were enclosed courts, 40 cubits long by 30 wide—these four in the corners had the same size. ²³There was a row of masonry surrounding them, surrounding the four. Boiling places were built under the surrounding rows. ²⁴He said to me, “These are the boiling places where the ministers of the House will boil the sacrifices of the people.”

River of Life

47 Then he brought me back to the door of the House. Behold, water was flowing out from under the threshold of the House eastward—for the front of the House faced east. The water was flowing down from under the right side of the House, south of

the altar. ²He brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around outside by the way of the outer gate, the way of the gate looking east. Behold, water was trickling out from the right side.

³When the man went out eastward with a line in his hand, he measured 1,000 cubits. Then he led me into the water—water to the ankles. ⁴Again he measured 1,000, and led me into the water—water to the knees. Again he measured 1,000, and he led me into the water—water up to the waist. ⁵Again he measured 1,000, and now it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen, water to swim in—a river that could not be crossed. ⁶He said to me, “Have you seen this, son of man?”

Then he brought me back to the bank of the river. ⁷When I had returned, behold, there were very many trees on one side and on the other, along the bank of the river. ⁸Then he said to me, “These waters go out toward the eastern region. They go down to the Arabah and enter the sea. When they arrive at the sea, the waters of the sea will flow and will become fresh. ⁹It will be that every living creature that swarms will live wherever the rivers go. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because this water goes there and makes the salt water fresh. So everything will be healed and live wherever the river goes. ¹⁰Fishermen will stand by it; from En-Gedi to En-Eglaim, it will be a place for spreading of nets. Their fish will be of many different kinds—like the fish of the Great Sea, a huge quantity. ¹¹Its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be set aside for salt. ¹²On the river, on its bank, on this side and that side, will grow every kind of tree for food. Its leaf will not wither; its fruit will not fail; it will bear new fruit every month, because its water flows out from the Sanctuary. Its fruit will be for food and its leaf will be for healing.”

Borders of the Holy Land

¹³Thus says *ADONAI Elohim*, “This will be the border, by which you will divide the land for inheritance according to the twelve tribes of Israel, Joseph receiving two portions. ¹⁴You will inherit it, each one like another, as I lifted My hand to give to your fathers. So this land will fall to you as an inheritance.

¹⁵“This will be the boundary of the land: on the north side, from the Great Sea, by way of Hethlon, to the entrance of Zedad— ¹⁶Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath, as far as Hazer-Hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran. ¹⁷So the border from the sea will be Hazer-Enon at the border of Damascus, with the territory of Hamath to the north. This will be the northern side.

¹⁸“The east side, between Hauran, Damascus, Gilead, and the land of Israel, will be by the Jordan. You will measure from the northern border to the eastern sea. This will be the eastern side.

† cf. Rev. 22:2. †† Lit. healed

¹⁹“The south side southward will be from Tamar as far as the waters of Meriboth-Kadesh, to the Wadi of Egypt and to the Great Sea. This will be the southern side toward the south.

²⁰“The west side will be the Great Sea, from the southern border as far as the front of the entrance of Hamath. This will be the western side.

²¹“You are to divide this land for yourselves to the tribes of Israel. ²² So you are to divide it by lot for an inheritance for you and for the outsiders who dwell among you, whoever bears children among you. They will be to you like the native-born of *Bnei-Yisrael*; they will be allotted an inheritance along with you among the tribes of Israel. ²³ In whatever tribe the outsider lives, there you will give him his inheritance.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

48 “Now these are the names of the tribes: Dan’s portion will be from the northern frontier, beside the way of Hethlon to the entrance of Hamath, Hazar-Enan at the northern border of Damascus, beside Hamath, and from the eastern side to the sea. ² Next to the territory of Dan, from the east side to the west will be Asher’s one. ³ Next to the territory of Asher, from the east side to the west, will be Naphtali’s one. ⁴ Next to the territory of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, will be Manasseh’s one. ⁵ Next to the territory of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, will be Ephraim’s one. ⁶ Next to the territory of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, will be Reuben’s one. ⁷ Next to the territory of Reuben, from the east side to the west, will be Judah’s one.

⁸“By Judah’s border, from the east side to the west, will be the contribution which you will set aside, 25,000 cubits in width and in length like one of the portions, from the east side to the west. The Sanctuary will be in the midst of it. ⁹ The allotment that you will set apart to *ADONAI* will be 25,000 in length and 10,000 in width. ¹⁰ The holy allotment will be apportioned for these—for the *kohanim*. Toward the north it will be 25,000 cubits and toward the west 10,000 in width, toward the east 10,000 in width and toward the south 25,000 in length. *ADONAI*’s Sanctuary will be in the midst of it. ¹¹ The sanctified portion will be for the *kohanim* of the sons of Zadok, who kept My charge and did not go astray as the Levites went astray when *Bnei-Yisrael* went astray. ¹² It will be for them a portion set apart from the offering of the land, most holy, by the border of the Levites.

¹³“Alongside the border of the *kohanim*, the Levites will have 25,000 in length and 10,000 in width. The entire length will be 25,000 and the width 10,000. ¹⁴ They must not sell or exchange any of it or transfer the choice portion of the land, for it is holy to *ADONAI*. ¹⁵ The 5,000 that remain in the width, in front of the

25,000, will be for common use, for the city, for living, and for pastureland.

“The city will be in the midst of it, ¹⁶ and will have these measurements: the north side; 4,500; the south side 4,500; the east side, 4,500; and the west side, 4,500. ¹⁷ The city will have open land: toward the north 250, toward the south 250, toward the east 250, and toward the west 250. ¹⁸ The remainder of the length, according to the holy allotment, will be 10,000 eastward and 10,000 westward. It will be alongside the holy allotment. Its produce will be food for those who serve the city. ¹⁹ Those who serve the city, out of all the tribes of Israel, will till it. ²⁰ The whole allotment will be 25,000 by 25,000, square; you will set apart the holy allotment with the property of the city.

²¹“What is remaining from this side and on the other of the holy allotment and the city property will be for the prince. What is adjacent to the 25,000 of the allotment toward the eastern border, and westward adjacent to the 25,000 toward the western border, alongside the portions, will be for the prince. The holy allotment and the Sanctuary of the House will be in the midst of it. ²² The property of the Levites and the property of the city will be in the middle of what belongs to the prince; what belongs to the prince will be between Judah’s border and Benjamin’s border.

²³“As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west, will be Benjamin’s one. ²⁴ Next to the territory of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, will be Simeon’s one. ²⁵ Next to the territory of Simeon, from the east side to the west, will be Issachar’s one. ²⁶ Next to the territory of Issachar, from the east side to the west, will be Zebulun’s one. ²⁷ Next to the territory of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, will be Gad’s one. ²⁸ Next to the territory of Gad, at the south side southward, the border will be from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-Kadesh, to the Wadi, to the Great Sea. ²⁹ This is the land that you will divide by lot to the tribes of Israel as an inheritance, and these are their portions.” It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

³⁰“These are the exits of the city: on the north side, 4,500 by measure, ³¹ will be the gates of the city named after the tribes of Israel—three gates northward—the Reuben Gate, one; the Judah Gate, one; the Levi Gate, one. ³² At the east side, 4,500, will be three gates: the Joseph Gate, one; the Benjamin Gate, one; Dan Gate, one. ³³ At the south side, 4,500 by measure, will be three gates: the Simeon Gate, one; the Issachar Gate, one; the Zebulun Gate, one. ³⁴ At the west side, 4,500, with their three gates: the Gad Gate, one; the Asher Gate, one; the Naphtali Gate, one. ³⁵ It will be 18,000 cubits all around.

“From that day on, the name of the city will be: ‘*ADONAI* Is There.’”

Daniel

Daniel Introduction

One could say that this book of the Bible is autobiographical as Daniel refers to himself in the first person. Daniel's Hebrew name means "God is my judge", דָּנִיֵּאל. Daniel lived a life separated to God. This book is described as apocalyptic because the literature content describes visions and dreams that are mysterious and symbolic, involving a heavenly host. The purpose of this book is to encourage God's people to be obedient and faithful in times of great difficulty. One of the difficulties in understanding the book of Daniel is that the book contains Aramaic and Hebrew. Even though scholars have tried to determine the purpose of the use of these two languages, the results are purely speculative.

Daniel was deported to Babylon around 605 BCE, and he lived there for over 60 years. He and his three friends lived right-side-up in a very upside-down world. We are introduced to these four characters in the fourth verse of the first chapter "youths without any defect, handsome, proficient in all wisdom, knowledgeable, intelligent and capable of serving in the king's palace." These four young men demonstrated a life of holy living before God in the midst of turmoil and difficulty.

This book is divided into three main sections: the introduction, chapters 2–7, and chapters 8–12. Because of his trustworthiness and respect for king Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel was given a key position within the kingdom. However, the reader soon notes the difficulty facing Daniel and the three Hebrew boys. King Nebuchadnezzar ordered them (and the entire Empire) to bow down and worship the golden idol formed in his likeness. Daniel and the three Hebrew boys refused and the three Hebrew boys were thrown into the fiery furnace. The God of Israel saved them and not even their clothes smelled like fire. (Dan. 3:27). Daniel 4:25 notes a Christophany "[Nebuchadnezzar] said, "Look! I see four men walking about unbound and unharmed in the middle of the fire, and the fourth has the appearance like a son of the gods!"

In king Nebuchadnezzar, we see the self-destructive force of pride. He thought himself to be invincible and yet God brought forth the victory to Daniel. One of the best-loved stories about Daniel was his experience in the lion's den. Even when king Darius the Mede brought the death sentence against Daniel, Daniel proved to be victorious when thrown into the lion's den. God closed the mouth of the lions.

The book of Daniel then makes a crucial turn at chapter 7, verse 12. Daniel is given a series of visions. In chapter 7, the vision of the four beasts can be interpreted as four earthly kingdoms. Many evangelical scholars ascribe to this view. Most crucial of all of the visions is Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks, or the seventy periods of time. Many evangelical scholars adhere to the position that these verses indicate future fulfillment, that fulfillment will occur at the end of history.

What is more important about the book of Daniel is the exhortation to live godly in the midst of earthly kingdom's darkness. Believers are exhorted to live a life of faith, during persecution and even the threat of death. Regardless of the interpretation, the reader is exhorted to live for God, to walk worthy of the high calling of God in Messiah Jesus.

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Kashrut as a Test of Faithfulness

1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² God gave King Jehoiakim of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the House of God. He brought them into the land of Shinar to the house of his god and put the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

³ Then the king told Ashpenaz the chief of his officials [†] to bring in some of the sons of Israel from royal descent and nobility— ⁴ youths without any defect, handsome, proficient in all wisdom, knowledgeable, intelligent and capable of serving in the king's palace. He was to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵ The king allotted them a daily portion from the king's delicacies and from the wine that he drank. They were to be trained for three years, and at the end they were to stand before the king.

⁶ Now among them were some from the sons of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷ The chief officer gave them new names: to Daniel, Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

⁸ But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the king's delicacies or with the wine he was drinking, so he entreated the chief official for permission not to defile himself. ⁹ Now God caused the chief official to show mercy and compassion to Daniel. ¹⁰ But the chief official said to Daniel: "I fear my lord the king, who allotted your food and your drink. Why should he see your faces looking poorly, unlike the other youths your age? Then the king would have my head because of you."

¹¹ Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹² "Please test your servants for ten days, giving us just vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³ Then compare our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's delicacies, and treat your servants according to what you see." ¹⁴ So he lis-

[†] Or eunuch *passim*

tened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of ten days their appearance looked better and their bodies healthier than all the youths who ate the king's food. ¹⁶ So the guard took away their delicacies and the wine they were supposed to drink and gave them vegetables instead.

¹⁷ Now as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and proficiency in every kind of wisdom and literature, and Daniel could understand all sorts of visions and dreams.

¹⁸ At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ When the king spoke with them, he did not find among all of them anyone like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. ²⁰ In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers throughout his realm.

²¹ Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus.

The King's Dream and Demand

2 In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams. His spirit was troubled and sleep escaped him. ² So the king issued an order to summon the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans in order to explain to the king his dreams. When they came and stood before the king, ³ he said to them, "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is anxious to understand the dream."

⁴ Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic ^{††}, "May the king live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will declare the interpretation."

⁵ The king answered the Chaldeans saying, "I firmly decree: If you do not make the dream and its meaning known to me, you will be torn limb from limb and your houses reduced to rubble. ⁶ But if you tell the dream and its meaning, you will receive from me gifts and re-

^{††} Text from here through chapter 7 is in Aramaic.

wards and great honor. So tell me the dream and its meaning!"

⁷They responded a second time, saying, "Let the king tell his servants the dream and we will declare the interpretation."

⁸The king replied saying, "I know for sure that you are buying time since you see that I have firmly decreed ⁹that if you do not reveal the dream to me, there is only one verdict [†] for you. You have conspired to say something false and fraudulent, until such a time as things might change. So then, tell me the dream and I will know that you can tell me its meaning."

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king saying, "There is no man on earth who can meet the king's demand. For no great king, however great or mighty, has ever asked such a thing from any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. ¹¹What the king asks is too difficult. There is no one who could declare it to the king, except the gods whose dwelling is not with mortals!"

¹²Because of this, the king became furiously angry and gave orders to execute all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³So the decree went out that the wise men were about to be slaughtered. They also sought Daniel and his companions to execute them. ¹⁴Then Daniel spoke with tact and discretion to Arioch, who was captain of the king's guard and who had set out to execute the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁵He spoke up and said to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the king's decree so urgent?" Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter.

¹⁶So Daniel went in and asked the king to grant him time, so that he might disclose the interpretation to the king. ¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house and informed his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah about the matter ¹⁸so they would request mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not perish along with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

The Dream Revealed to Daniel

¹⁹During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven ²⁰and answered, saying:

"Blessed be the Name of God forever and ever,
for wisdom and might are His.

²¹He changes times and seasons.

He removes kings and installs kings.

He gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to the discerning.

²²He reveals deep and hidden things.

He knows what lies in darkness
and light dwells with Him.

²³To You, O God of my fathers,

I give thanks and praise!

For You gave me wisdom and power.

You have made known to me what we asked of You.
You revealed to us the word of the king."

Daniel Interprets the Dream

²⁴Then Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon and said to him, "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon. Bring me in before the king and I will declare the interpretation to the king."

²⁵So Arioch quickly ushered Daniel into the king's presence and said to him, "I have found a man among the sons of the exiles from Judah, who can make known the interpretation to the king."

²⁶The king then asked Daniel (who was renamed Belteshazzar), "Are you able to reveal to me the dream that I saw, as well as its interpretation?"

²⁷Daniel answered the king, saying: "The mystery about which the king inquired is such that neither wise men, astrologers, magicians, or sorcerers can disclose it to the king. ²⁸But, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar the things that will happen in the latter days. The dream and the visions that went through your head as you lay on your bed are these.

²⁹"To you, O king—as you lay on your bed—came thoughts about what will come to pass in the future. The Revealer of mysteries has made known to you what is going to happen. ³⁰But as for me, this mystery is not revealed to me because I possess more wisdom than any other living person, but in order that the king may know the interpretation and understand the thoughts of your heart.

The Statue of Four Kingdoms

³¹"You looked, O king, and behold, there before you stood a huge statue—an enormous and dazzling image, whose appearance was awesome. ³²The head of that statue was of pure gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, and its feet partly iron and partly clay. ³⁴While you were watching, a stone was cut out, but not by hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from summer threshing-floors that the wind blows away. Not a trace of them could be found. Then the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶"This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷You, O king, are the king of kings to whom the God of heaven has given sovereignty, power, might and glory. ³⁸Wherever mankind, beasts of the field, and fowls of the heaven dwell, He has given them into your hand, and made you ruler over them all. You are the head of gold.

³⁹"Now after you another kingdom will arise, one inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron shatters and

† Or law

breaks everything—and just as iron smashes everything, so will it shatter and crush all the others. ⁴¹ Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly potter's clay and partly iron, so this will be a divided kingdom. It will have some of the strength of the iron, for you saw the iron mixed with clay. ⁴² As the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³ Just as you saw iron mixed with clay, people will mix with one another, but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

⁴⁴ "Now in the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will this kingdom be left to another people. It will crush and bring to an end all of these kingdoms. But it will endure forever. ⁴⁵ For just as you saw a stone cut out of a mountain, yet not by hands, crush the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold, the great God has made known to the king what will happen in the future. Now the dream is certain, and its interpretation is trustworthy."

⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid homage to Daniel and gave orders that an offering and incense be provided for him. ⁴⁷ In response the king said to Daniel, "Surely your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, [†] and the revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this secret!"

⁴⁸ Then the king promoted Daniel and lavished on him many marvelous gifts and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ Moreover, at Daniel's request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the administration of the province of Babylon, while Daniel remained at the royal court.

A Gold Idol and a Blazing Furnace

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ⁶⁰ cubits high and six cubits wide. He set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ² Then King Nebuchadnezzar summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the authorities of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. ³ Then the satraps, administrators, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the authorities of the provinces assembled for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had erected. They stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁴ Then the herald loudly proclaimed, "You are commanded O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵ that when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Whoever does not fall down and worship will that same hour be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire." ⁷ Therefore, as soon

as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, and pipes, and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

⁸ At that time certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. ⁹ They spoke up and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "May the king live forever! ¹⁰ You, O king, made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, must fall down and worship the golden image, ¹¹ and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire. ¹² There are certain Jews whom you appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego—those men pay no heed to you, O king. They do not serve your gods, nor will they worship the golden image that you have set up."

¹³ Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego to be summoned. When these men were brought before the king, ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar responded to them saying, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you don't serve my gods or worship the golden image that I set up? ¹⁵ Now if you are ready, at the moment you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp and pipes, and all kinds of music you must fall down and worship the image that I have made. But if you do not worship, you will immediately be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire! Then what god will be able to deliver you out of my hands?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego replied to the king saying, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to answer you concerning this matter. ¹⁷ If it is so, our God whom we serve is able to save us from the furnace of blazing fire and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. ¹⁸ Yet even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image that you set up."

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage and the appearance of his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than it was normally heated ²⁰ and commanded some of the mighty men in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego and to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire. ²¹ So these men, wearing their robes, tunics, hats, and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. ²² But because the king's order was so urgent and the furnace so extremely hot, a raging flame killed those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. ²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell bound into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and leapt to his feet. He asked his ministers, "Didn't we cast three men bound into the middle of the fire?"

† cf. Luke 1:32-33. †† cf. 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16.

They replied to the king, "Surely, O king."

²⁵ But he answered saying, "Look! I see four men walking about unbound and unharmed in the middle of the fire, and the fourth has the appearance like a son of the gods!

²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and exclaimed, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come here!"

So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came out from the middle of the fire. ²⁷ When the satraps, administrators, governors, and royal ministers had gathered around, they saw that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men. Not a hair of their head was singed, nor were their robes scorched, nor was there a smell of fire on them.

²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him! They defied the king's edict and gave up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore I hereby decree that any people, nation, or language that says anything slanderous against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego will be torn limb from limb and their house made a pile of rubble, because there is no other god that is able to deliver in this way."

³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar Acknowledges God's Kingdom

³¹ (4:1) King Nebuchadnezzar—

To all peoples, nations, and languages who dwell in all the earth: May your peace abound!

³² (4:2) It seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders that God Most High has done for me.

³³ (4:3) How great are His signs,
how mighty are His wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
His dominion from generation to generation.

Dream: "Chop down the Tree!"

4 (4) I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. ² (5) I had a dream that frightened me. While on my bed the images and visions in my mind † terrified me. ³ (6) So I issued a decree to bring all the wise men of Babylon before me so that they could make known to me the meaning of the dream. ⁴ (7) When the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and diviners came in, I recounted the dream to them, but they were unable to make known its interpretation to me.

⁵ (8) Finally Daniel—whose name was Belteshazzar after the name of my god and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—came in before me and I told him the dream.

† *Lit. of my head*

⁶ (9) I said, "Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery baffles you. Consider my dream that I have seen and tell me its interpretation.

⁷ (10) "These are the visions in my head while I was on my bed: I looked, and behold, there was a tree in the midst of the earth. Its height was enormous. ⁸ (11) The tree grew large and became strong and its top reached to heaven; it was visible to the ends of the earth. ⁹ (12) Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Beneath it the beasts of the field found shade and birds of the sky lived in its branches, and from it all creatures were fed.

¹⁰ (13) "I was watching the visions in my mind while on my bed, and behold, a watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven. ¹¹ (14) He called loudly, saying: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit!

Let beasts flee from under it,
and birds from its branches.

¹² (15) Yet leave a stump with its roots in the earth, in fetters of iron and bronze,
in the tender grass of the field.

Let him be damp with the dew of heaven,
and let his portion be with the animals in the grass of the earth.

¹³ (16) Let his mind be altered from that of a man and let an animal's mind be given to him and let seven periods of time pass over him.

¹⁴ (17) This sentence is by the decree of the watchers, this verdict by the command of the holy ones, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of man

and bestows it to whomever He wishes,
and may set over them even the lowliest of men.'

¹⁵ (18) "I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw this dream. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell me its meaning, for none of the wise men of my kingdom are able to make known to me its interpretation. But you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

Interpretation: A King Eats Grass

¹⁶ (19) Then Daniel, whose name is also Belteshazzar, was perplexed for a brief time; his thoughts alarmed him. The king answered, and said, "Belteshazzar, don't let the dream or the interpretation disturb you."

But Belteshazzar replied, "My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies! ¹⁷ (20) The tree that you saw grow large and strong, whose top reached to heaven and that was visible to all the earth, ¹⁸ (21) whose leaves were beautiful and whose fruit was so abundant that there was food for all in it and beneath which the beasts of the fields lived and in its branches birds of the sky dwelt— ¹⁹ (22) it is you, O king! For you have grown

great and mighty. Your greatness reaches to heaven, and your authority extends to the end of the earth.

²⁰ (23) "You, O king, saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it! Yet leave a stump with its roots in the ground, in fetters of iron and bronze, in the grass of the field.

Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, until seven time periods pass over him.'

²¹ (24) "This is the interpretation, O king. It is the decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord the king:

²² (25) "You will be driven away from people and will dwell with the wild animals. You will feed on grass like an ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven periods of time will pass over you until you know that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of mankind and gives it to whomever He wishes.

²³ (26) "The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you † as soon as you understand that Heaven is sovereign. ²⁴ (27) Therefore, O king, may my counsel be acceptable to you: Renounce your sins through righteousness and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps your prosperity will be prolonged."

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Fulfilled

²⁵ (28) All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁶ (29) At the end of twelve months, as he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, ²⁷ (30) the king exclaimed, "Is this not the great Babylon that I have built as the royal residence by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

²⁸ (31) The words were still in the king's mouth when a voice fell from heaven. "King Nebuchadnezzar, it has been decreed to you that your kingdom has been removed from you! ²⁹ (32) You will be driven away from men and you will live with the beasts of the field. You will feed on grass like an ox and seven periods of time will pass over you until you come to know that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of mankind and gives it to whomever He wishes."

³⁰ (33) Immediately the word about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from men, ate grass like an ox, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

³¹ (34) But at the end of the appointed days, I Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes up to heaven and my sanity returned to me. So I blessed the Most High and I praised and honored Him who lives forever.

"For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation!

³² (35) All the inhabitants of earth are counted as nothing.

He does as He wills with the army of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. No one can hold back His hand, or say to Him, 'What have you done?'

³³ (36) "At that moment my sanity returned to me, and my majesty and my splendor were restored to me, for the glory of my kingdom. My ministers and nobles sought me out and I was reestablished over my kingdom. I became even greater than before. ³⁴ (37) Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, because all His works are right and His ways just. He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

Handwriting on the Wall

5 King Belshazzar held a great feast for 1,000 of his nobles and was drinking wine in front of the thousand. ² When Belshazzar tasted the wine, he issued an order to bring in the gold and silver vessels that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the Temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his consorts and his concubines could drink from them. ³ So they brought the gold vessels that were taken out of the Temple of the House of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, consorts and concubines drank from them. ⁴ They drank the wine and praised the gods made of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

⁵ At that very moment, the fingers of a human hand emerged and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace opposite the lampstand, so that the king could see the back of the hand that was writing. ⁶ The color drained from the king's face, his thoughts alarmed him, his hips gave way, and his knees began knocking together.

⁷ The king called loudly to summon the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the diviners. The king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing and tells me what it means will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain around his neck, and will have authority as the third ruler in the kingdom!"

⁸ Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the inscription nor tell the king what it meant. ⁹ So King Belshazzar became even more terrified and his face grew pale. His nobles were baffled.

¹⁰ The queen hearing the words of the king and his nobles entered the banquet hall. The queen spoke out and said, "May the king live forever! Do not let your thoughts frighten you, or your face be so pale! ¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the days of your father, he was found to have insight and intelligence, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. So King Nebuchadnezzar your father made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and diviners. ¹² This man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, was found to

† *Lit. remain as yours*

have extraordinary spirit, knowledge, and insight for interpreting dreams, explaining riddles, and solving problems. Now, let Daniel be summoned and he will explain the interpretation."

¹³ So Daniel was brought before the king and the king said to Daniel, "Are you Daniel who is one of the captives of Judah that my father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴ I have heard about you, how a spirit of the gods is in you and how there has been found in you insight, discernment, and extraordinary wisdom. ¹⁵ Just now the wise men and diviners were brought before me to read this writing and to make its meaning known to me, but they are unable to declare its interpretation. ¹⁶ However, I have heard about you that you are able to provide interpretations and to solve difficult problems. Now if you are able to read the writing and explain to me its meaning, you will be clothed in purple and have a gold chain around your neck and have the authority to rule as the third in the kingdom."

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered the king saying, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing to the king and tell him its meaning. ¹⁸ Your majesty, God Most High gave your father Nebuchadnezzar the kingdom, as well as greatness, glory, and splendor. ¹⁹ Because of the grandeur that He bestowed on him, all the peoples, nations, and languages dreaded and feared him. He killed whomever he wanted and spared anyone he wanted; he raised up whomever he wished and humbled anyone he wished. ²⁰ But when his heart became haughty and his spirit hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. ²¹ He was driven away from among men and his mind became like an animal, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he fed on grass like an ox, and his body was damp with the dew of heaven until he recognized that God Most High is sovereign over the realm of mankind and that He sets up over it whomever He wills.

²² "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this. ²³ Instead, you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. You had the vessels of His House brought before you, and you and your nobles, your consorts and your concubines have been drinking wine in them. You have praised the gods made of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. Yet you did not honor the God who holds in His hand your very breath and all your ways. ²⁴ Therefore, the hand was sent from Him that wrote this inscription.

²⁵ "Now this is the writing that was inscribed:
MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN.

²⁶ "This is the interpretation of the inscription:
MENE: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.

²⁷ *TEKEL*: You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting.

²⁸ *PERES*: Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

²⁹ Then at Belshazzar's command, they clothed Daniel with purple, put a chain of gold around his neck, and issued a proclamation about him that he would have the authority as third ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰ On that very night King Belshazzar of the Chaldeans was slain.

6 (5:31) So Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of 62.

Delivered from the Lions' Den

² (1) It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the whole kingdom ³ (2) with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. These satraps were accountable to them so that the king would not be troubled. ⁴ (3) Now this Daniel was distinguishing himself among the supervisors and satraps because he had an extraordinary spirit in him. In fact, the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. ⁵ (4) At this time the supervisors and satraps tried to find ground for a charge against Daniel regarding the kingdom. But they were unable to find fault or corruption, because he was trustworthy and no negligence or dishonesty could be found in him. ⁶ (5) Finally these men said, "We're not going to find any basis for charges against this man Daniel, unless we find something against him regarding the law of his God."

⁷ (6) So these supervisors and satraps went in to the king as a group, and said to him, "King Darius, live forever! ⁸ (7) All the supervisors of the realm, the magistrates and satraps, ministers and governors, have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce a decree that anyone who prays to any god or man for 30 days other than you O king, will be cast into the lions' den. ⁹ (8) Now, O king, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it may not be altered, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed." ¹⁰ (9) Thereupon King Darius issued the written decree.

¹¹ (10) Now when Daniel learned that a written decree had been issued, he went into his house, where the windows in his upper room opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he knelt down, prayed and gave thanks before his God, just as he did before. ¹² (11) Then these men came as a group and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. ¹³ (12) So they approached the king and spoke to him about the royal decree: "Didn't you issue a written decree that anyone who prays to any god or man for 30 days—except for you, O king—shall be cast into the den of lions?"

The king replied, "The decree stands, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

¹⁴ (13) Then they answered and said to the king: "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the decree that you put in writing. He still prays three times a day!" ¹⁵ (14) When the king heard this report, he was deeply distressed, and he set his mind on how he might rescue Daniel. Until sunset he struggled to find a way to save him.

¹⁶ (15) Then these men came as a throng in to the king, and said to the king: "Remember, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or edict which the king issues may be altered."

¹⁷ (16) So the king gave the order and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions' den. Now the king spoke to Daniel saying, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" ¹⁸ (17) A stone was brought to block the mouth of the den. The king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet of his nobles, so that nothing could be changed regarding Daniel. ¹⁹ (18) Then the king went to his palace and passed the night fasting—no entertainment was brought before him. He was unable to sleep.

²⁰ (19) At dawn the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²¹ (20) As he reached the den, he cried out to Daniel with a voice of anguish. The king spoke out to Daniel saying: "Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God, whom you serve continually, able to rescue you from the lions?"

²² (21) Daniel spoke to the king: "May the king live forever! ²³ (22) My God sent His angel to shut the lions' mouths † so that they haven't harmed me, because I was found innocent before Him. Nor have I committed any crime against you, O king."

²⁴ (23) Then the king was overjoyed, and ordered Daniel taken up out of the den. So Daniel was lifted out of the pit. No injury of any kind was found on him because he had trusted in his God. ²⁵ (24) At the king's command, those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the lions' den—they, their children, and their wives. They had not even reached the bottom of the pit before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

²⁶ (25) Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages dwelling in all the earth: "May your peace be abundant!

²⁷ (26) "I issue a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom people are to tremble with fear before the God of Daniel.

"For He is the living God,
enduring forever!

His kingdom will never be destroyed,
His dominion will never end. ††

²⁸ (27) He delivers and rescues.

He performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth.

He has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions!"

²⁹ (28) So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel's Vision of Four Beasts

7 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was on his bed. He wrote down a summary of the dream. ² Daniel said: "I was looking in my vision at night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were churning up the great sea. ³ Four huge beasts came up from the sea, each different from the others.

⁴ "The first was like a lion with eagle's wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off and it was lifted off the ground. It was made to stand upon two feet like a man, and the heart of a human was given to it.

⁵ "And behold there before me was another beast, a second one, like a bear. It raised itself up on one side; it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh!'

⁶ "After that I looked, and behold, there was another one like a leopard. On its back it had four wings like those of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.

⁷ "After this in my vision at night, I looked and behold there was a fourth beast—terrifying, frightening, tremendously strong, with large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed—and anything that was left it trampled with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that came before it; it had ten horns. ‡

⁸ "While I was pondering the horns, behold, another horn, a small one, sprang up between them, and three of the first horns were uprooted from before it. And behold, this horn had eyes resembling human eyes and a mouth speaking boastfully. ††

Ancient of Days and Son of Man

⁹ "While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His garment was as white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels a burning fire. ‡‡

¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him.

Thousands of thousands attended Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. ‡‡‡

The court was seated, and the books were opened. ‡‡‡

¹¹ "I kept watching because of the boastful words that the horn was speaking. I continued watching until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown

† cf. Heb. 11:33. †† cf. Luke 1:33.

‡ cf. Rev. 12:3; 13:1. †† cf. Rev. 13:5-6. ‡‡ cf. Matt. 28:3; Rev. 1:14. ‡‡‡ cf. Rev. 5:11. ‡‡‡ cf. Rev. 20:11-15.

into the blazing fire. ^{†12} As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion had been taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³ "I was watching in the night visions.

Behold, One like a Son of Man, ^{††}

coming with the clouds of heaven.

He approached the Ancient of Days, and was brought into His presence.

¹⁴ Dominion, glory and sovereignty were given to Him that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will never pass away,

and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed. [‡]

Interpretation of the Beasts

¹⁵ "As for me, Daniel, my spirit was disturbed within me, and the visions of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those standing nearby and asked him the true meaning of all this. So he spoke with me and revealed the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ "These large beasts, four in number, are four kings that will rise from the earth. ¹⁸ But the *kedoshim* of the Most High will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever—yes, forever and ever." ^{††19} "Then I wanted to know the true meaning of the fourth beast that was different from all the others, exceedingly terrifying with iron teeth and bronze claws, which broke in pieces and devoured and then stomped with its feet anything that remained. ²⁰ Of the ten horns on its head, the other horn that sprang up before which three others fell—that horn had eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things, and its appearance was more imposing than its companions. ²¹ As I was watching, that horn was waging war against the *kedoshim* and overpowering them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was rendered in favor of the *kedoshim* of the Most High—when the time came and the *kedoshim* possessed the kingdom. ^{‡‡}

²³ "Thus he explained: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on earth that will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth, and trample it and crush it. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise. Another will arise after them, but he will be different from the previous ones; he will subdue three kings. ^{‡‡25} He will speak words against the Most High, and will continually harass the *kedoshim* of the Most High, ^{‡‡‡} and will try to change the appointed times and law. The *kedoshim* will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time. [§]

²⁶ But the court will sit and he will be stripped of his power to be destroyed and abolished for all time.

[†] cf. Rev. 19:20; 20:10. ^{††} cf. Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 2:10, 28; 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Rev. 1:7, 13; 14:14. [‡] cf. Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 1:6. ^{††} cf. Rev. 2:26; 20:4; 22:5. ^{‡‡} cf. 1 Cor. 6:2-3; Rev. 5:10. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Rev. 17:12. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Rev. 13:6-7. [§] cf. Rev. 11:2; 12:14.

²⁷ Then the kingdom, power, and greatness of the kingdoms under all heaven will be given to the people of the *kedoshim* of the Most High. ^{§†} Their kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions will serve and obey him.'

²⁸ "This is the conclusion of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me and the color drained from my face. But I kept the matter in my heart."

Daniel's Vision of a Ram and Goat

8 "In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me earlier. ² In the vision I saw myself in the citadel ^{§††} of Shushan, ^{§†} which is in the province of Elam. In the vision I saw that I was beside the Ulai Canal. ³ I lifted up my eyes and looked up, behold, a ram with two horns was standing in front of the canal. The two horns were long but one was longer than the other, but the longer one grew up last. ⁴ I saw the ram charging toward the west and north and south. No animal could stand against him—none could deliver from his hand. So he did as he pleased and magnified himself.

⁵ "While I was contemplating this, behold, a male goat came from the west crossing the face of the whole earth without touching the ground! Now the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. ⁶ He came up to the two-horn ram that I had seen standing beside the canal, and charged it with raging strength. ⁷ I saw him attacking the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering his two horns. Now the ram was not strong enough to stand against him, so he knocked the ram to the ground and trampled him. No one could rescue the ram from his power.

⁸ "The male goat became exceedingly great, but as soon as he became mighty, the large horn was broken, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven.

⁹ "Out of one of them came forth a small horn, which grew extremely large to the south and the east, and toward the beautiful land. ¹⁰ It grew as high as the host of heaven and hurled some of the host and the stars down to the earth and trampled them. ¹¹ It set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host. It took away from him the daily offering and the place of his sanctuary was thrown down. ¹² The host was given over along with the daily sacrifice, in the course of its rebellion. It will hurl truth to the ground and prosper in what it does.

¹³ "Then I heard a holy one speaking and another holy one said to the one who was speaking, 'How long will the vision last, the daily sacrifice be forsaken because of rebellion, the sanctuary be surrendered, and the host be trampled?' ¹⁴ Then he said to me: 'For 2,300

^{§†} cf. Luke 1:33; Rev. 11:15; 22:5. ^{§††} Narrative from 8:1 switches from Aramaic back to Hebrew. ^{§‡} Or Susa

evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be vindicated.'

Interpretation of Vision: Persian Ram and Greek Goat

¹⁵ "Now it happened that while I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, behold, standing before me was one with the appearance of a man. ¹⁶ Then I heard a human voice coming from between the banks of the Ulai, calling out saying, 'Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.'

¹⁷ "He came near to where I was standing, and as he approached I was terrified and fell on my face. But he said to me, 'Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end.'

¹⁸ "While he was speaking to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me and stood me up, ¹⁹ and said: 'Behold, I am going to inform you about what will happen later in the time of wrath, for the vision pertains to the appointed time of the end. ²⁰ The ram that you saw with the two horns stands for the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹ The buck, the male goat, is the king of Greece; and the large horn between his eyes is the first king. ²² The four horns that replaced the one that was broken represent four kingdoms that will arise from this nation, though not with its power.

²³ "Now toward the end of their reign, when the measure of transgressions is completed, a stern-faced king, a master of intrigue, will arise. ²⁴ His power will be mighty, but it will not be by his strength alone. He will cause extraordinary devastation, and succeed in whatever he does. He will destroy both the powerful and the holy people. ²⁵ By his cunning he will cause deceit to prosper under his hand and he will consider himself superior. He will destroy many, taking them unaware. He will even stand up against the Prince of princes, yet he will be broken, but not by human hands.

²⁶ "Now the vision of the evenings and mornings that has been told to you is true, but seal up the vision for it concerns many days from now.'

²⁷ "Then I, Daniel, was stricken and languished for days. Then I got up and went about the king's business, but I was astounded at the vision and no one could explain it.

Daniel Confesses Israel's Sins

9 "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, ² in the first year of his reign—I, Daniel, understood from the books that according to the word of *ADONAI* to Jeremiah the prophet, the number of the years for the fulfilling of the desolation of Jerusalem would be 70 years. ³ So I set my face to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

† Alexander the Great

⁴ "I prayed to *ADONAI* my God and confessed, saying: 'O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and mercy with those who love Him and keep His *mitzvot*, ⁵ we have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have acted wickedly; we have rebelled; we have turned away from Your *mitzvot* and from Your rulings. ⁶ We have not listened to Your servants the prophets, ^{††} who spoke in Your name to our kings, our leaders, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

⁷ "You Lord are righteousness, but shame covers our face to this day—the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, near and far, in all the countries where you have banished them—because they behaved unfaithfully toward you. ⁸ *ADONAI*, shame covers our face—our kings, our leaders, our fathers—because we have sinned against you. ⁹ The Lord our God is compassionate and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰ We have not obeyed the voice of *ADONAI Eloheinu* by walking in His *Torah* that He set before us through His servants the prophets. ¹¹ Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your *Torah* and has turned away—not obeying Your voice.

"Therefore the curse and sworn judgment written in the *Torah* of Moses the servant of God has been poured out upon us, for we have sinned against Him. ¹² So He has confirmed His words that he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled over us by bringing on us a great calamity. Under the whole heaven nothing like this has ever been done to Jerusalem! ^{†††} As it is written in the *Torah* of Moses, all this calamity came on us, yet we have not sought the favor of *ADONAI Eloheinu* by turning away from our iniquities and paying attention to Your truth. ¹⁴ So *ADONAI* was intent on bringing the calamity upon us, for *ADONAI Eloheinu* is righteous in all His deeds that He has done—while we have not paid attention to His voice.

¹⁵ "So now, *ADONAI Eloheinu*, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and made for Yourself a Name to this day—we have sinned, we have acted wickedly. ¹⁶ Lord, in keeping with all Your righteous acts, let Your anger and Your fury turn away, please, from Jerusalem, Your city, Your holy mountain. Because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become an object of scorn to all those around us.

¹⁷ "So now, our God, listen to the prayers and petitions of Your servant, and cause Your face to shine upon Your devastated Sanctuary, for the sake of my Lord. ¹⁸ Give ear, my God, and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolation and the city called by Your name. We do not present our supplications before You because of our own righteousness, but because of Your great compassions. ¹⁹ Lord, hear! Lord, forgive! Lord, listen and act! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay!

†† cf. Matt. 23:29-31. ‡ cf. Matt. 23:37-38.

For Your city and Your people are called by Your name.'

The *Mashiach* and Seventy Weeks

²⁰ "While I was still speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before *ADONAI* my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God— ²¹ yes, while I was praying, Gabriel, the one I had seen in the earlier vision, [†] came to me swiftly about the time of the evening offering.

²² "He instructed me and said to me: 'Daniel, I have come now to give you insight and understanding. ²³ At the beginning of your requests, a message went out, and I have come to declare it to you, for you are greatly esteemed. Therefore consider the message and understand the vision:

²⁴ "Seventy weeks ^{††} are decreed concerning your people and your holy city, to put an end to transgression, to bring sin to an end, to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of Holies."

²⁵ So know and understand: "From the issuing of the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem until the time *Mashiach*, [‡] the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and 62 weeks.

'It will be rebuilt, with plaza and moat, but it will be in times of distress.

²⁶ 'Then after the 62 weeks *Mashiach* will be cut off and have nothing. ^{††}

'Then the people of a prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. ^{‡‡}

But his end will come like a flood. Until the end of the war that is decreed there will be destruction.

²⁷ 'Then he will make a firm covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.

'And on a wing of abominations will come one who destroys, ^{‡‡†} until the decreed annihilation is poured out on the one who destroys.'"

Angelic Princes Battle for 21 Days

10 In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The oracle was true and concerns a great war. He understood the message and gained insight through a vision.

² "In those days, I, Daniel was mourning for three whole weeks. ³ I ate no rich food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I anoint myself with oil, until the end of three weeks.

[†] cf. Luke 1:19,26. ^{††} Units of seven, for a total of 490 years.
[‡] Or anointed ruler ^{‡†} cf. Mark 9:12; Luke 24:26. ^{‡‡} cf. Matt. 24:2; Mark 13:2; Luke 19:43-44. ^{‡‡†} cf. Dan. 11:31; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20.

⁴ "Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was beside the bank of the great river, the Tigris, ⁵ I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a man dressed in linen with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ^{‡‡‡6} His body was like yellow jasper, his face like a flash of lightning, his eyes like fiery torches, his arms and his feet like the gleam of burnished bronze, [§] and the sound of his words like the roar of a multitude. ^{§†}

⁷ "Only I, Daniel, saw the vision; the men that were with me did not see the vision. Nevertheless, such a great terror fell upon them that they fled and hid themselves. ⁸ So I was left alone to see this great vision. My strength drained from me and my vigor was destroyed; I could not summon any strength. ⁹ Yet I heard the sound of his words. When I heard him speaking, I fell on my face in a deep sleep with my face to the ground. ^{§††}

¹⁰ "Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹ He said to me, 'Daniel, highly valued man, carefully consider the words I am speaking to you. Stand up! For now I have been sent to you.' When he spoke this word to me, I stood up trembling.

¹² "Then he said to me, 'Don't be afraid, Daniel! For from the first day that you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. I have come because of your words. ¹³ However, the prince of the kingdom of Persia resisted me for 21 days, but behold Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me because I had been detained there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future days. For the vision concerns days yet to come.'

¹⁵ "While he was speaking these words to me, I bowed my face toward the ground and was speechless. ¹⁶ Then behold, one who resembled a human touched my lips. I opened my mouth and spoke, and said to him that stood before me, 'O my Lord, because of the vision, anguish has overcome me and I have no strength. ¹⁷ For how can this servant of my Lord speak with my Lord since no strength remains in me and no spirit is left in me?'

¹⁸ "Again the one who looked like a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹ Then he said: 'Highly valued man, do not fear! *Shalom* to you. Be strong, now! *Chazak!*'

"Even as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, 'Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.'

²⁰ "Then he said: 'Do you understand why I have come to you? Now I must return to fight against the prince of Persia! When I go, behold, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹ But first, I will tell you what is

^{‡‡‡} cf. Rev. 1:13; 15:6. [§] cf. Rev. 1:14; 2:18; 19:12. ^{§†} cf. Rev. 1:15; 2:18. ^{§††} cf. Rev. 1:17.

recorded in the writing of truth.' (No one strengthened me against these, except Michael your prince. †

11 "And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

Kings of the South and the North

²"Now I will declare the truth. Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia. Then a fourth will be far richer than all. When he becomes powerful through his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the realm of Greece. ³Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. ⁴But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and distributed to the four winds of heaven—though it will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the authority he exercised, for his kingdom will be uprooted and given to others besides these.

⁵"Then the king of the south will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he, and he will rule a greater kingdom than his.

⁶After some years they will form an alliance. The daughter of the king of the south will approach the king of the north to make an agreement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will his strength endure. Instead she will be given up, together with her escort, her father and the one who supported her in those times. ⁷But another shoot from her roots will arise in his place. He will come against the army of the king of the north and enter his fortress. He will fight against them and prevail. ⁸He will also carry off their gods into captivity to Egypt, along with their metal images and their precious articles of silver and gold. For a few years he will stay away from the king of the north.

⁹"Then the king of the north will invade the realm of the king of the south, but he will retreat to his own land. ¹⁰His sons will prepare for war and assemble a great army, which will advance and overflow and sweep through like a flood and carry the battle as far as his fortress.

¹¹"Then the king of the south, enraged, will march out and fight against the king of the north, who will also muster a massive army. But the army will be defeated. ¹²But when the army is carried off, the heart of the king of the south will become arrogant, and will slaughter thousands and thousands, yet he will not prevail. ¹³The king of the north will raise up another army, one greater than the first. After an interval of some years, he will advance with a great army and with abundant supplies.

¹⁴"In those times many will rise up against the king of the south. The lawless sons among your own people will raise themselves up in order to confirm the vision, but they will stumble. ¹⁵Then the king of the north will come, build a siege-ramp, and capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not prevail—not even their select troops will have strength to

prevail. ¹⁶But the invader will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand against him. He will take his stand in the beautiful land and its devastation in his hand. ¹⁷His intention will be to come with the strength of his entire kingdom, but he will reach an agreement with him. He will give him a daughter in marriage in order to destroy the kingdom, but his plans will not succeed or help him. ¹⁸Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and capture many. But a commander will put an end to his insolence and pay him back for his insolence. ¹⁹He will then turn his face toward the strongholds of his own land, but he will stumble and fall, not to be found again.

²⁰"In his place will arise one who will dispatch a tax collector to extract tribute for royal glory, but within a few days he will be destroyed, though not in anger or battle.

²¹"Then in his place will arise a despicable person, on whom royal honor has not been conferred. He will come in a time of tranquility, and seize the kingdom through intrigue. ²²Armies will be utterly swept away from before him and will be broken, as well as the leader of the covenant. ²³After an alliance is made with him, he will act deceitfully; he will rise to power with a small force. ²⁴Without warning, he will invade the richest province and accomplish what his fathers or predecessors were unable to do. He will lavish on them plunder, loot, and spoils. He will plot the overthrow of strongholds, though only for a while.

²⁵"He will summon his strength and courage against the king of the south with a great army. The king of the south will wage war with a very large and mighty army, but he will not succeed because of plots devised against him. ²⁶Those who eat his delicacies will destroy him, and his army will be swept away; many will be slain in battle. ²⁷These two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and speak lies, but to no avail, for the end will still come at the appointed time. ²⁸The king of the north will return to his own land with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action and then return to his own land.

²⁹"At the appointed time he will invade the south again, only this time the outcome will not be as before. ³⁰The ships of Kittim †† will come against him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his rage against the holy covenant. When he returns, he will favor those who forsake the holy covenant.

³¹"His forces will rise up and profane the fortified Temple; they will stop the daily offering and set up the abomination of desolation. †‡ With smooth words he will seduce those who act wickedly against the covenant, but the people who know their God will stand strong and prevail. ³³Those who are wise among the people will instruct many, though for many days they will fall by the sword, or be burned, captured or

† cf. Rev. 12:7.

†† Or Cyprus

‡ Probably an idol in the Holy place; cf. Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14.

pillaged. ³⁴ When they stumble, they will receive a little help, but many will join them deceitfully. ³⁵ Even some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made spotless until the time of the end—for it will still come at the appointed time.

An Ungodly King Exalts Himself

³⁶ “So the king will do as he pleases, exalting and magnifying himself above every god. He will even speak outrageous things against the God of gods. He will prosper until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been decided will be done. ³⁷ He will show no regard for the gods [†] of his fathers or the one desired by women, nor will he show regard for any god, but will exalt himself above all. ³⁸ Instead of these, he will honor a god of fortresses—a god his fathers did not acknowledge he will honor with gold, silver, precious stones, and costly things. ³⁹ He will attack strong fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him. He will give them authority over many and will parcel out land for a price.

⁴⁰ “Now at the time of the end the king of the south will attack him, and the king of the north will storm out against him with chariots, horsemen and many ships. He will invade lands and pass through them like an overflowing river. ⁴¹ He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many will be overthrown, but these will escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the chief of the sons of Ammon. ⁴² He will extend his hand against other countries; the land of Egypt will not escape. ⁴³ He will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver, as well as all of the riches of Egypt. The Libyans and the Cushites will also be under his feet. ⁴⁴ But reports from the east and north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵ He will pitch his royal tents between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will meet his doom with no one to help him.’

Resurrection and Judgment

12 “At that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will

[†] Or God

arise. ^{††} There will be a time of distress such as has never occurred since the beginning of the nation until then. [‡] But at that time your people—everyone who is found written in the book—will be delivered. ^{‡‡} Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake—some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. ^{‡‡‡} Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavenly expanse. And those who turn many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever. ⁴ But you, Daniel, close up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. ^{‡‡‡} Many will run back and forth and knowledge will increase.’

The Final Outcome

⁵ “Then I, Daniel, looked and behold, two others stood there, one on this bank of the river and the one on the other bank of the river. ⁶ One said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, ‘How long until the end of the wondrous things?’

⁷ “Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised both his right and left hands toward heaven and swore an oath by Him who lives forever, saying, “It is for a time, times, and a half. Then when the breaking of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things will be finished.”

⁸ Now I heard, but I did not understand. So I said, ‘My Lord, what will be the outcome of these things?’

⁹ Then he said: “Go your way, Daniel. For the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.

¹⁰ Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly. None of the wicked will understand, but the wise will understand.

¹¹ “From the time that the daily burnt offering is taken away, and abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. ¹² Happy is the one who keeps waiting, and reaches the 1,335 days. ^{‡‡‡‡} But you, go your way till the end. You will rest and then at the end of days you will arise to receive your portion.”

^{††} cf. Jude 9; Rev. 12:7. [‡] cf. Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19. ^{‡‡} cf. Rev. 20:12; 21:27. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29. ^{‡‡‡‡} cf. Rev. 22:10. ^{‡‡‡‡} cf. Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14.

Hosea

Hosea Introduction

The name “Hosea” comes from a Hebrew word meaning “salvation.” The prophet so named lived and wrote during the kingdoms of Uzziah and Jeroboam II, between 750 and 715 BCE. Hosea’s ministry was to the Northern Kingdom of Israel during a time of deep sin and corruption—at a time when they really needed salvation. Prominent in the book of Hosea is the prophet’s scandalous marriage to Gomer, a prostitute. Their relationship was far from an exemplary marriage! After giving birth to several children, Gomer left her prophet-husband to return to a life of a profit-based prostitution. Having every reason to finally let his wife go, Hosea instead chose to go after Gomer and purchase her out of bondage to prostitution. This marvelous picture of commitment and fidelity between Hosea and his then-estranged wife Gomer is an allegory of God’s love and commitment to Israel. Like Gomer, the people of Israel were acting unfaithfully to God, and “playing the harlot.” Hosea’s marriage to Gomer was an object lesson, an attempt to communicate both the depth of sin to which the nation had sunk and also the everlasting love of God as a faithful husband.

Hosea’s purchase of Gomer out of slavery is yet another reminder of the details of redemption. Sin always has a price that will be paid by someone—the redeemer or the redeemed. Throughout the Scriptures, we see redemption being paid. In Egypt the price was the death of an innocent lamb. For Gomer, the price was 15 shekels and one and a half omers of barley. Yesterday, when the Temple stood in Jerusalem, people were forever reminded of redemption’s cost by the slaughter of the lambs. Today, two thousand years later, there is still a price that needs to be paid for sin. Graciously, God Himself has paid that price for us through the death of , our Messiah.

Hosea Headings

- The Unfaithful Wife
- Restoring the Covenant Promises
- Compassion and Covenant Love
- Buying Back His Wife
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The Unfaithful Wife

¹ The word of *ADONAI* that came to Hosea son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel. ² When *ADONAI* first spoke with Hosea, *ADONAI* said to Hosea:

“Go, get yourself a prostitute as a wife and children with a prostitute!

For the land is an unfaithful prostitute, far from following after *ADONAI*.”

³ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴ Then *ADONAI* said to him:

“Name him Jezreel [†] for in yet a little while

I will visit the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and I will destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel.

⁵ In that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."

⁶ Then she conceived again, and bore a daughter. And He said to him:

"Name her Lo-Ruhamah †—
for no longer will I have compassion on the house of Israel

that I should ever pardon them.

⁷ But on the house of Judah I will have compassion and deliver them by *ADONAI*, their God, yet not by bow, sword or battle, nor by horses and horsemen."

⁸ After she weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. ⁹ Then He said:

"Name him Lo-Ammi ††,
for you are not My people
and I am not yours."

Restoring the Covenant Promises

2 (1:10) "Yet the number of *Bnei-Yisrael* will be like the sand of the sea,

which cannot be measured or counted. ‡

Instead of 'You are not My people' being said to them,

they will be called 'Children of the living God.'

² (1:11) Then the descendants of Judah and descendants of Israel will be gathered together.

They will appoint themselves one head

And they will go up from the land.

For the day of Jezreel will be great.

³ (1) Say you to your brothers, 'Ammi' †† and to your sisters, 'Ruhamah' ††.

⁴ (2) Contend with your mother, contend!

For she is not My wife nor I her husband.

Let her put away her fornications from her face and her adulteries from between her breasts.

⁵ (3) Or else I will strip her naked and expose her as on the day she was born.

Then I will make her like a wilderness.

Yes, I will make her like desert land, and I will let her die of thirst.

⁶ (4) I will have no compassion for her children, for they are children of prostitution.

⁷ (5) For their mother has practiced prostitution.

She who conceived them has been shameful.

For she said, 'Let me go after my lovers, who are giving me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.'

⁸ (6) Therefore see, I will hedge her in with thorns, and I will build a wall around her so she cannot find her paths.

⁹ (7) Then she will chase after her lovers, but she will not overtake them.

She will seek them, but not find.

Then she will say:

'Let me go and return to my first husband, for it was better for me then, than now.'

¹⁰ (8) But she did not realize that I Myself gave her the grain, the wine and the fresh oil. I lavished on her silver, also gold— which they made into Baal.

¹¹ (9) Therefore I will return and take back My grain in its season, and My new wine at its appointed time, and I will snatch away My wool and My linen for covering her nakedness.

¹² (10) So now I will uncover her lewdness to the eyes of her lovers, and no one will rescue her from My hand.

¹³ (11) I will also put an end to all her rejoicing— her feasts, her New Moon, her *Shabbat*, and all her *moadim*.

¹⁴ (12) I will also devastate her vines and her fig trees, of which she said: 'These are my payment that my lovers have given to me.'

But I will turn them into a thicket and beasts of the field will devour them.

¹⁵ (13) Then I will punish her for the days of the Baalim †††

to whom she would burn incense— adorning herself with her rings and jewelry, going after her lovers— but Me she forgot."

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Compassion and Covenant Love

¹⁶ (14) "So then, I Myself will entice her, I will bring her into the wilderness and speak to her heart.

¹⁷ (15) I will give her back her vineyards from there and make the valley of Achor a door of hope.

She will respond there—

as in the days of her youth,

as in the day she came up out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁸ (16) In that day—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*— you will proclaim, 'My husband,' and never again call Me, 'My Baal.'

¹⁹ (17) Then I will remove the names of the Baalim out of her mouth,

no longer to be mentioned by their name.

²⁰ (18) In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the flying creatures in the sky,

and the creeping things on the ground.

I will break into pieces the bow and sword and warfare from the land,

and I will cause them to lie down securely.

²¹ (19) Then I will betroth you to Me forever— yes, I will betroth you to Me with righteousness, justice, covenant loyalty, and compassion.

† Meaning God will sow God will scatter † Meaning Shown no compassion †† Meaning Not my people ‡ cf. Rom. 9:26.

†† Meaning My people ††† Meaning Shown compassion

††† Hebrew gods

22 (20) I will betroth you to Me with faithfulness,
and you will know *ADONAI*.
23 (21) So it will be in that day, I will respond
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
I will respond to the skies,
and they will respond to the earth,
24 (22) and the earth will respond
with grain, new wine, and fresh oil—
and they will respond with 'Jezreel!' †
25 (23) I will sow her in the land for Myself.
I will have compassion on Lo-Ruhamah.
I will say to Lo-Ammi, 'You are My people!' ††
and they will say, 'My God!'"

Buying Back His Wife

3 Then *ADONAI* said to me: "Go again! Love a
woman who is loved by a companion and commit-
ting adultery—just as *ADONAI* has loved the *Bnei-Yis-
rael*, while they were turning to other gods and loving
raisin cakes."

2 So I bought her for myself for 15 shekels of silver
and an omer and a half of barley. 3 Then I said to her:
"For many days you must stay with me. You must not
practice prostitution. You must not have a man, and I
will be the same toward you."

4 For *Bnei-Yisrael* will remain for many days without
king, without prince, without sacrifice, without sacred
pillar, and without ephod or teraphim. ‡

5 Afterwards, *Bnei-Yisrael* will return, and they will
seek *ADONAI* their God and David their king. Then they
will turn in awe to *ADONAI* and to His goodness in the
last days.

Destroyed For Lack of Knowledge

4 Hear the word of *ADONAI*, *Bnei-Yisrael*!
For *ADONAI* has a dispute with the inhabitants of
the land,
because there is no truth,
no covenant loyalty,
and no knowledge of God in the land.
2 Curse, deceive, murder,
steal, commit adultery!
They practice violence,
and bloodshed follows bloodshed.
3 Therefore, the land will mourn,
and everyone dwelling in it will languish
along with the beasts of the field and the flying crea-
tures of the sky—
even the fish of the sea will be removed.
4 Yet let no one dispute
and let no one argue.
Your people are like a kohen
who makes quarrels.
5 So you will stumble by day.
Also a prophet will stumble with you by night,

when I destroy your mother.

6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Since you rejected knowledge,
I will also reject you from being My *kohen*.
Since you forgot the *Torah* of your God,
just so I will forget your children.

7 The more they multiplied,
the more they sinned against Me.
I will change their glory into disgrace.

8 They feed on the sin of My people
and relish their iniquity.

9 But it will be like people, like *kohen*.
So I will punish them for their ways,
and repay them for their deeds.

10 They have eaten but will not be satisfied.
They have fornicated but will not increase.
For they stopped giving heed to *ADONAI*.

11 Prostitution and wine—even new wine—
it takes away understanding.

12 My people consult their wooden idol
and their divining rod informs them.

For a spirit of prostitution
leads them astray
and they have been a prostitute—
out from under their God.

13 They sacrifice on the mountaintops
and on the high places they burn incense
under oak, poplar, and terebinth—
for its shade is good.

Therefore, your daughters are prostitutes
and your daughters-in-law commit adultery.

14 Will I not punish your daughters for prostitution
or your daughters-in-law for adultery?

For they consort with prostitutes,
and they sacrifice with cult prostitutes.
A people without understanding
will be thrust down.

15 Though you, Israel, are a prostitute,
let Judah not become guilty.

But do not come to Gilgal
or go up to Beth-Aven, ††
and do not swear: "As *ADONAI* lives!"

16 For Israel is stubborn like a stubborn cow.
Now *ADONAI* will pasture them
like a lamb in the open field.

17 Ephraim is joined to idols;
let him alone!

18 Their liquor has come to an end.
They surely have practiced prostitution.
Her rulers have deeply loved disgrace.

19 A wind will wrap her up in its wings.
They will be ashamed of their sacrifices.

Judgment for Betrayal

5 Hear this, O priests!
Pay attention, O house of Israel!
Give ear, O house of the king!

† Meaning God sows †† cf. Rom. 9:25; 1 Pet. 2:10. ‡ Mean-
ing sacred vest household idols

†† Meaning House of Iniquity

For the judgment applies to you:
 For you were a snare at Mizpah
 and a net spread on Tabor.
² Rebels were deep in slaughter,
 so I am a chastisement for them all.
³ I myself have known Ephraim,
 and Israel is not hidden from Me.
 For now, Ephraim, you are a prostitute—
 Israel is defiled!
⁴ They will not give up their evil deeds
 to return to their God.
 For a spirit of prostitution is in them,
 and *ADONAI* they have not known.
⁵ The Pride of Israel will answer to his face:
 Israel and Ephraim will stagger in their iniquity,
 Judah also will stumble with them.
⁶ With their flocks and with their herds
 they will go to seek *ADONAI*,
 but they will not find Him—
 He has withdrawn from them.
⁷ They have betrayed *ADONAI*,
 for they have begotten foreign children.
 Now the New Moon will devour them,
 with their portions.
⁸ Blow a *shofar* in Gibeah,
 a trumpet in Ramah!
 Sound an alarm at Beth-Aven:
 "Behind you, Benjamin!"
⁹ Ephraim will become desolate
 in the day of rebuke.
 Among the tribes of Israel
 I made known what is certain.
¹⁰ The princes of Judah were like those who move a
 boundary mark.
 I pour out My fury on them like water.
¹¹ Oppressed is Ephraim,
 crushed by judgment,
 for he willingly followed a worthless thing.
¹² So, I will be like a moth to Ephraim
 and like decay to the house of Judah.
¹³ When Ephraim saw his sickness
 and Judah his wound,
 Ephraim went to Assyria
 and sent envoys to a warring king.
 But he cannot heal you
 nor will he cure your wound.
¹⁴ For I will be like a lion to Ephraim,
 and like a young lion to the house of Judah.
 I, even I, will tear them to pieces and go away.
 I will carry them off, and there will be no one to res-
 cue.
¹⁵ I will go and return to My place
 until they admit their guilt.
 Then they will seek My face.
 In their distress they will seek Me earnestly.

Prayer of *Teshuvah*

6 Come, let us return to *ADONAI*.
 For He has torn, but He will heal us.
 He has smitten, but He will bind us up.
² After two days He will revive us.
 On the third day He will raise us up,
 and we will live in His presence. †
³ So let us know, let us strive to know *ADONAI*.
 Like dawn His going forth is certain.
 He will come to us like the rain,
 like the latter rain watering the earth.

Covenant Loyalty More Than Sacrifice

⁴ "O Ephraim, what shall I do for you?
 O Judah, what will I do for you?
 For your loyalty is like a morning cloud
 or like dew rising early, vanishing.
⁵ Therefore, I cut them down by the prophets.
 I slew them by the words of My mouth.
 Now the judgments pronounced against you:
 light will go forth.
⁶ For I delight in loyalty †† and not sacrifice,
 knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
⁷ But like Adam, they transgressed a covenant.
 There they dealt treacherously with Me.
⁸ Gilead is a city of evildoers,
 tracked with bloody footprints.
⁹ Like marauding bands waiting for a man,
 so a company of priests murders
 on the way toward Shechem.
 For they have committed crime.
¹⁰ In the house of Israel
 I have seen a horrible thing:
 Ephraim's prostitution is there,
 Israel has become unclean.
¹¹ Also, Judah, there is a harvest for you,
 when I return My people from captivity."

Iniquity of Senseless Ephraim

7 "When I would have healed Israel,
 the iniquity of Ephraim was uncovered,
 even the wickedness of Samaria,
 for they practice fraud.
 So a thief breaks in;
 a marauding band will raid outside.
² But they never admit in their heart
 that I remember all their evil.
 Now their deeds are all around them.
 They are right before My face.
³ They gladden the king with their evil
 and the princes with their lies.
⁴ All of them are practicing adultery,
 as an oven heated by a baker who stops stirring
 or kneading dough when it is leavened.

† cf. Matt. 16:21; 1 Cor. 15:4. †† Or covenant love mercy

5 On the day of our king,
 princes become sick from wine.
 His hand drags scorners along.
 6 For their hearts are like an oven,
 as they wait in ambush.
 All night their anger smolders.
 In the morning it burns like a blazing fire.
 7 All of them are hot like an oven,
 and they devour their rulers.
 All of their kings have fallen.
 None among them calls on Me.
 8 Ephraim mixes himself with the peoples.
 Ephraim has become a pancake
 that never gets turned over.
 9 Strangers devoured his strength—
 yet he does not know it.
 Gray hairs have spread on him—
 and he does not know it.
 10 Though the Pride of Israel
 has answered him to his face,
 yet they did not return
 to *ADONAI* their God,
 nor seek Him about all this.
 11 Ephraim is like a senseless silly dove,
 they call to Egypt; they go to Assyria.
 12 As they are going,
 I will spread out My net over them,
 I will bring them down like a bird from the sky.
 I will chasten them as in the report
 that comes to their assembly.
 13 *Oy* to them!
 For they strayed from Me.
 Devastation to them!
 For they rebelled against Me.
 Should I redeem them
 after they spoke lies about Me?
 14 Nor did they not cry to Me in their heart
 when they were wailing on their beds.
 For the sake of grain and new wine
 they slash themselves—
 they keep turning away from Me.
 15 I trained and strengthened their arms,
 yet they kept planning evil against Me.
 16 They will turn back—only not upwards.
 They are like a treacherous bow.
 Their princes will fall by the sword
 because of the insolence with their tongues.
 This will be for their ridicule in the land of Egypt.

Idols Thrown Down

8 "Put a *shofar* to your mouth!
 Like a vulture he comes
 against the house of *ADONAI* .
 For they overstepped My covenant
 and transgressed My *Torah* .
 2 Will they cry out to Me,
 'My God, we—Israel—knew You'? †

† cf. Ps. 78:34; Hos. 7:14; Matt. 7:23; Titus 1:16.

3 Israel has rejected goodness—
 an adversary will pursue him.
 4 They crowned kings, but not by Me.
 They appointed princes
 I did not approve.
 Their silver and gold they made into idols—
 just so they would be cut down.
 5 Samaria! Your calf is thrown down!
 My anger is kindled against them!
 How long will they be incapable of innocence?
 6 For a craftsman from Israel made it,
 so it is no god.
 For the calf of Samaria will be splinters.
 7 "For they sow wind, and reap a whirlwind.
 There is no mature grain—
 the sprout yields no meal.
 Should it produce anything,
 strangers would swallow it up.
 8 Israel has been swallowed up!
 Now they are among the nations,
 like an ornament with no delight in it.
 9 For they have gone up to Assyria,
 like a wild donkey alone by itself.
 Ephraim has hired lovers.
 10 Although they hire among the nations,
 I will now round them up.
 So they will begin to decrease
 under the burden of king and princes.
 11 "When Ephraim multiplied altars
 for making sin offerings,
 they became his altars for sinning.
 12 Though I were to write out for him
 ten thousand things from My *Torah* ,
 they are regarded as something strange.
 13 Sacrifices are gifts for Me—
 should they sacrifice meat and then eat it?
ADONAI will not accept them.
 Now He will remember their iniquity
 and punish their sin—
 they will return to Egypt.
 14 For Israel has forgotten his Maker and built tem-
 ples,
 while Judah has multiplied fortified cities.
 So I will send fire upon its cities
 that will consume their citadels."

Days of Desolation Are Coming

9 Do not rejoice, O Israel,
 do not celebrate like the peoples—
 for so you have gone whoring away from your God.
 You have loved a prostitute's pay,
 on every grain threshing floor.
 2 Threshing floor and winepress will not sustain them,
 and new wine will fail her.
 3 They will not dwell in *ADONAI* 's land.
 Instead Ephraim will return to Egypt,
 and eat unclean food in Assyria.
 4 They will pour no wine offerings to *ADONAI* —

they would not be pleasing to Him.
 Their sacrifices will be like
 the bread of mourners for them.
 All that eat it will be defiled,
 for their bread is for their appetite,
 not coming into the House of *ADONAI* .
⁵ What will you do for a *moed*
 or for the day of *ADONAI* 's feast?
⁶ Look, even if they escape the desolation,
 Egypt will gather them up;
 Memphis will bury them.
 And their precious silver treasures?
 Weeds will possess them.
 Thorns will be in their tents.
⁷ The days of punishment have come;
 the days of retribution have come.
 Let Israel know! The prophet is a fool;
 the man of the spirit is mad!
 For great is your iniquity
 and great the hostility.
⁸ Ephraim is a watchman with my God,
 a prophet.
 A bird catcher's trap is on all his paths.
 Hostility is in the House of his God.
⁹ They have deeply corrupted themselves
 as in the days of Gibeah.
 He will remember their iniquity,
 He will punish their sin.
¹⁰ "Like grapes in the wilderness
 I found Israel.
 Like early fruit on a fig tree in its first season
 I saw your fathers.
 They came to Baal-Peor
 and devoted themselves to shame.
 So they became as detestable
 as the thing they loved.
¹¹ Ephraim's glory flies away like a bird—
 no birth, no pregnancy, no conception!
¹² For if they should raise their children,
 I would make them childless to the last man.
 Yes, woe to them
 when I depart from them!
¹³ Ephraim, as I have seen,
 is like Tyre, planted in a meadow,
 but Ephraim will bring his children out to the slayer."
¹⁴ Give them, *ADONAI* , what will You give?
 Give them a miscarrying womb
 and dried up breasts.
¹⁵ "All their wickedness is at Gilgal,
 for there I despised them.
 Because of their wicked practices,
 I will drive them out of My House.
 I will love them no more.
 All their princes are rebellious.
¹⁶ Ephraim is blighted;
 their root is withered;
 they bear no fruit.
 Even if they bring forth children,

I will slay the cherished ones in their wombs."
¹⁷ My God will cast them off,
 since they did not listen to Him.
 So they will become wanderers among the nations.

Israel to be Shamed in Captivity

10 A luxuriant vine is Israel,
 who produces fruit for himself.
 Like the abundance of his fruit
 he has multiplied his altars.
 Like the goodness of his land,
 they made beautiful sacred pillars.
² Their heart became smooth †.
 Now they will bear their guilt.
 He will break down their altars.
 He will destroy their sacred pillars.
³ Surely now they will say: "We have no king,
 for we have not feared *ADONAI* .
 The king—what can he do for us?"
⁴ They spoke words—
 empty oaths to make a covenant.
 But judgment springs up as hemlock
 in the furrows of the field.
⁵ The inhabitants of Samaria will quarrel
 over the calves of Beth-Aven.
 Indeed its people will mourn over it,
 but its priests will tremble over it.
 For its glory will surely depart from it.
⁶ It also will be carried to Assyria
 as tribute to a warring king.
 Ephraim will receive shame
 and Israel will be put to shame by its own counsel.
⁷ Samaria is being cut off.
 Her king is like a splinter on the surface of the water.
⁸ The high places of Aven,
 the sin of Israel will be destroyed.
 Thorns and thistles will come up on their altars.
 And they will say to the mountains: "Cover us!"
 And to the hills: "Fall on us!" ††
⁹ "From the days of Gibeah,
 you have sinned, O Israel.
 There they took their stand.
 Will not war over sons of iniquity
 overtake them in Gibeah?"
¹⁰ When I desire,
 I will chasten them,
 and peoples will gather against them
 when they are yoked to their two sins.
¹¹ Though Ephraim is a trained heifer
 that loves to thresh,
 I put a yoke
 over her fair neck.
 I will make Ephraim pull;
 Judah will plow;
 Jacob will drag a harrow by himself."

† Or faithless divided †† cf. Isa. 2:19; Luke 23:30; Rev. 6:16.

Plow up Your Ground

¹² Sow for yourselves righteousness. †
 Reap in accord with covenant love.
 Break up your unplowed ground.
 For it is time to seek *ADONAI*,
 until He comes
 and showers righteousness on you.
¹³ You have plowed up wickedness,
 you have reaped iniquity.
 You have eaten the fruit of delusion,
 for you have trusted in your own way,
 in the multitude of your mighty men.
¹⁴ A tumult will arise among your people.
 All your strongholds will be demolished,
 as Shalman destroyed Beth-Arbel in the day of battle,
 when a mother was dashed in pieces with her children.
¹⁵ Just so has Beth-El done to you
 because of your great wickedness.
 At dawn the king of Israel
 will be utterly cut off.

My Son Called Out

11 “When Israel was a youth I loved him,
 and out of Egypt I called My son. ††
² They called out to them
 but they departed from their presence.
 They kept sacrificing to the Baalim
 and burning incense up to idols.
³ Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk.
 I took them on My arms.
 But they never acknowledged
 that I had healed them.
⁴ With human cords I was drawing them,
 with bonds of love,
 and I became to them as One lifting a yoke from their
 jaws.
 I bent down to them and fed them.
⁵ He will not return to the land of Egypt,
 but the Assyrian will be his king—
 because they refused to return.
⁶ So a sword will fall on his cities,
 and destroy and devour his gate bars
 because of their own counsels.
⁷ So My people are bent on turning from Me.
 Although they are being called upwards,
 none will rise up.
⁸ “How can I give you up, Ephraim?
 How can I surrender you, Israel?
 How can I make you like Admah?
 How can I set you as Zeboim?
 My heart is turning over within Me.
 My compassions are kindled.
⁹ I will not vent My fierce anger.
 I will not again destroy Ephraim.

For I am God—not a man—
 the Holy One in the midst of you,
 and I will not come in fury.”
¹⁰ They will walk after *ADONAI*.
 He will roar like a lion.
 Indeed, He will roar
 and the children will come trembling from the west.
¹¹ “They will come trembling
 like a bird out of Egypt,
 like a dove out of the land of Assyria,
 and I will settle them in their houses.”
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Ephraim Multiplies Lies

12 (11:12) “Ephraim surrounded Me with lies
 and the house of Israel with deceit.”
 Though Judah roams restlessly with God,
 yet he is faithful with holy things. ‡
² (1) Ephraim is grazing on wind
 and pursuing the east wind.
 All day he multiplies lies and ruin:
 making †† a pact with Assyria,
 while carrying oil to Egypt.
³ (2) *ADONAI* also has a dispute with Judah:
 He will punish Jacob for his ways,
 repaying him for his deeds.
⁴ (3) In the womb he grasped his brother’s heel,
 and in his vigor he strove with God.
⁵ (4) Yes, he wrestled with the angel and won;
 he wept and sought his favor.
 At Beth-El he will find us,
 and there He will speak with us.
⁶ (5) Even *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot* —
ADONAI is His memorial-Name.
⁷ (6) So you should return to your God,
 keep covenant loyalty and justice,
 and wait for your God continually.
⁸ (7) A merchant loves to extort,
 with deceptive balances in his hand.
⁹ (8) Now Ephraim has said:
 “How rich I have become! I found wealth by myself.
 I won’t be guilty of any sin with any of my property.”
¹⁰ (9) “Yet I have been *ADONAI* your God,
 since the land of Egypt.
 I will yet again make you dwell in tents,
 as in the days of the *moed*.
¹¹ (10) I also spoke through the prophets
 and I multiplied visions.
 Now through the prophets
 I will make parables.
¹² (11) Since Gilead is full of iniquity,
 they are utterly worthless.
 In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls—
 even their altars will become heaps of rocks
 along the furrows of My field.”
¹³ (12) Now Jacob fled to the field of Aram,
 when Israel served for a wife—

† cf. Gal. 6:7-8. †† cf. Matt. 2:15.

‡ Or to the Holy One †† Lit. they are making

yes, he kept watch for a wife.
¹⁴ (13) So by a prophet *ADONAI* brought Israel up out of Egypt,
 and by a prophet he was kept.
¹⁵ (14) Ephraim has provoked bitter anger,
 so his bloodguilt will remain on him—
 his Lord will repay him for his contempt.

No Other Savior

13 When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling.
 He exalted himself in Israel,
 but he became guilty through Baal, and died.
² But now, they sin more and more.
 They made themselves molten images,
 idols skillfully made from their silver,
 all of them the work of the craftsmen.
 They say about them:
 "Let those who sacrifice kiss the calves."
³ Therefore, they will be like morning clouds,
 like dew passing away early,
 like chaff blown from the threshing floor,
 or like smoke from a chimney.
⁴ "Yet, I have been *ADONAI* your God
 since the land of Egypt.
 You should know no God but Me,
 and there is no Savior apart from Me. †
⁵ I Myself knew you in the wilderness,
 in a land of terrible drought.
⁶ While they were fed, they were satisfied.
 Filled, their hearts became haughty.
 Therefore, they forgot Me.
⁷ So I became like a lion to them—
 like a leopard lying in wait by the way.
⁸ I will meet them like a bear robbed of her cubs,
 and I will tear open their chests.
 There I will devour them like a lioness.
 A beast of the field will rip them to shreds.
⁹ It has corrupted you, O Israel,
 for you are against Me—against your Helper!
¹⁰ Where then is your king?
 So, will he save you in all your cities?
 Or your judges, to whom you said:
 'Give me a king and princes!'
¹¹ I give you a king in My anger,
 and take him away in My wrath.
¹² Ephraim is bound by iniquity;
 his sin is treasured up.
¹³ Pains of birth come on him.
 He is not a wise son.
 When the time comes,
 he should not delay at the opening of the womb.
¹⁴ Should I ransom them from the hand of *Sheol*?

Should I redeem them from death?
 O death, where are your plagues?
 O *Sheol*, where is your sting? ††
 Comfort is hidden from My eyes."
¹⁵ Because he is the son of kinsmen,
 he should have been fruitful.
 An east wind will come—the wind from *ADONAI*,
 coming up from the wilderness.
 His spring will become dry,
 and his fountain will dry up.
 He will plunder the treasury
 of every precious vessel.

Salvation Like Dew for Israel

14 (13:16) Samaria will bear her guilt,
 for she has rebelled against her God.
 They will fall by the sword,
 their infants dashed to pieces,
 their pregnant women ripped open.
² (1) Return O Israel, to *ADONAI* your God,
 for you have stumbled in your iniquity.
³ (2) Take words with you and return to *ADONAI*.
 Say to Him: "Take away all iniquity,
 and accept what is good,
 so we may repay with offerings ‡ of our lips:
⁴ (3) 'Assyria will not save us.
 We will not ride on horses,
 and we will never again say, "Our god,"
 to the work of our hands,
 for with You, orphans find mercy."
⁵ (4) "I will heal their backsliding,
 I will love them freely,
 for My anger will turn away from him.
⁶ (5) I will be like dew for Israel.
 He will blossom like a lily,
 and thrust out his roots like Lebanon.
⁷ (6) His tender shoots will spread out.
 His beauty will be like an olive tree
 and his fragrance will be like Lebanon.
⁸ (7) Those dwelling in his shadow will return.
 They will grow grain and bud like a vine.
 His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.
⁹ (8) Ephraim: "What more are idols to me?
 I have responded and observed Him.
 I will be like a luxuriant cypress tree.
 From me will be found Your fruit."
¹⁰ (9) Who is wise? Let him discern these things.
 Who is intelligent? Let him know them. ††
 For the ways of *ADONAI* are straight,
 and the just walk in them,
 but the wicked stumble in them.

† cf. Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:3-6.

†† cf. 1 Cor. 15:55. ‡ Lit. bulls fruit †† cf. Jacob 3:13.

Joel

Joel Introduction

Joel is Hebrew for "is God." It is not exactly known when the book of Joel was written. With a late date, Joel's many mentions of Zion seem to indicate he was writing to the Southern and not the Northern Kingdom. Joel's message to the inhabitants of the land seems to indicate his audience was a pre-exilic one. Finally, Joel's reference of coming "darkness and gloominess" is likely a reference to an imminent judgment and not a past experience—an exile, perhaps. For these reasons it is reasonable to consider Joel as a pre-exilic prophet to the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

With visions of a devastating locust plague approaching that would disrupt people's social life and create an economic upheaval for their agrarian economy, Joel casts the vision of a bad day coming. Farmers were going to be wiped out. God gets people's attention by striking at their purses, does He not? This book has that net effect.

While foretelling economic hardship is material, there is also a language in Joel that is particularly theological. Prominent in Joel's book is the mention of the day of . At least five times, this theological term is used in conjunction with both judgment and restoration. The concept of the day of is a complicated one in Scripture. Used throughout the entire Bible, the day of is somewhat of a composite of all judgment and freedom, a day to fear but also a day to hope for and look forward to.

In Joel, the day of is first presented literally as "doom and gloom." Rather than producing despondency in the life of Israel, these judgments were intended to produce repentance and contrition in the people's hearts. Through the prophet Joel, God is heard inviting the nation of Israel to return to Him. Joel continues with a promise of restoration after a time of darkness. At the end of the book, God famously promises that He will "restore the years that the locust have eaten." The most famous passage is Joel 3:1-2 (2:28-30), where God's is mentioned in conjunction with a then-coming outpouring. This was famously referenced by Luke in Acts 2:17-21 when God's was poured out on the disciples.

The New Covenant continues the idea of the "day of " coming like a "thief in the night." Here, it is as an invitation to personal preparedness and repentance. Like the Kingdom of God, the day of has both already come and is eschatologically said to be soon-coming. Its initial coming has already been inaugurated in the Messiah, and it is yet to be ultimately accomplished at His second coming. It is inaugurated but not yet consummated. May it come speedily and in our days!

Joel Headings

Mourn the Land's Destruction
The Day is Near!
Call for
Blow the
Rain and Restoration
Promise of the
Valley of Jehoshaphat
in Zion

¹ The word of *ADONAI* that came to Joel the son of Pethuel:

Mourn the Land's Destruction

² Hear this, elders!
Give ear, all inhabitants of the land.
Has this ever happened in your days,

or even in the days of your fathers?

³ Tell your children about it—
your children to their children,
their children to another generation.

⁴ What the locust left,
the swarming locust has eaten,
and what the swarming locust left,
the canker-worm has eaten,

and what the canker-worm left,
 the caterpillar has eaten.
⁵ Awake, drunkards, and weep!
 Wail, all you drinkers of wine—
 on account of sweet wine,
 for it is denied to your mouth!
⁶ For a nation has invaded my land.
 Vast—yes, without number!
 Its teeth are lion's teeth,
 with jaw-teeth of a lioness. †
⁷ He has turned my vine to waste
 and my fig tree to splinters.
 He has stripped off all the bark
 and flung it down—
 its branches are left white.
⁸ Wail like a virgin dressed in sackcloth
 for the husband of her youth!
⁹ Grain offering and drink offering
 are cut off from the House of *ADONAI*.
Kohanim —ministers of *ADONAI* —mourn.
¹⁰ The field is ruined, the land grieves,
 for the grain has been devastated,
 new wine is dried up, oil languishes.
¹¹ Be ashamed, O ploughmen;
 wail, O vinedressers,
 over wheat and over barley,
 for the harvest of the field is lost.
¹² The vine withered, the fig tree wilted.
 Pomegranate, palm, and apple tree
 —all trees of the field—are withered,
 for joy has withered away
 from the children of men.
¹³ Gird yourselves and weep, *kohanim* !
 Howl, ministers of the altar!
 Come, lie in sackcloth all night,
 ministers of my God.
 For grain and drink offering are withheld
 from the House of your God.

The Day is Near!

¹⁴ Consecrate a fast.
 Proclaim a solemn assembly.
 Gather elders and all living in the land
 to the House of *ADONAI* your God,
 and cry to *ADONAI*.
¹⁵ Ah, the day!
 The day of *ADONAI* is near!
 As havoc from *Shaddai* it will come.
¹⁶ Is food not cut off before our eyes—
 joy and gladness from God's House?
¹⁷ Seed has shriveled under the dirt clod.
 Storehouses are desolate,
 granaries are torn down,
 for the grain has withered.
¹⁸ How the animals groan!
 The herds of cattle are perplexed,
 because they have no pasture.

The flocks of sheep also suffer.

¹⁹ To You, *ADONAI*, I cry!

For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness,
 and flame has set ablaze all the trees of the field.

²⁰ Also beasts of the field pant toward You.

For the water of wadis are dried up,
 and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

2 Blow the *shofar* in Zion!

Sound an alarm on My holy mountain!

Let all living in the land tremble—

for the day of *ADONAI* is coming—
 surely it is near! ††

² A day of darkness and gloominess,
 a day of clouds and thick darkness,
 as blackness spreads over the mountains.

A great and mighty people—
 from antiquity there was never anything like it,
 nor after it ever again from generation to generation.

‡

³ A fire devours before them
 and behind them flame blazes up.
 Like the Garden of Eden is the land before them,
 and behind them a desolate wilderness.
 Nothing at all ever escapes them.

⁴ Their appearance is like the appearance of horses—
 they gallop like war horses. ‡

⁵ Like the clatter of chariots, ‡
 they leap on the tops of mountains,
 like crackling flame of fire devouring stubble,
 like a mighty horde in battle array.

⁶ Before them peoples are in anguish.

All faces become ashen gray.

⁷ They run like mighty men.

They climb a wall like men of war.

They each march in line,
 never deviating from their ways.

⁸ One does not crowd another.

Each one marches on his own highway.

They plunge through the weapons,
 never breaking off.

⁹ They rush on the city,

they run on the wall,

they climb up into the houses,

coming through the windows like a thief.

¹⁰ Before them land quakes,

heaven trembles,

sun and moon become dark,

stars withdraw their brightness. ‡‡

¹¹ *ADONAI* utters His voice before His army.

For His camp is very vast—

for mighty is it that carries out His word.

For great is the day of *ADONAI* — ‡‡‡

very terrifying!

Who can endure it?

† cf. Rev. 9:7-8.

†† cf. 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 1:10. ‡ cf. Matt. 24:21. ‡† cf. Rev. 9:7.
 ‡‡ cf. Rev. 9:9. ‡‡† cf. Matt. 24:29; Rev. 8:12. ‡‡‡ cf. Rev. 6:17.

Call for *Teshuvah*

¹² "Yet even now"

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
"turn to Me with all your heart,
with fasting, weeping, and lamenting."

¹³ Rend your heart, not your garments,
and turn to *ADONAI*, your God.

For He is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger, abundant in mercy,
and relenting about the calamity due.

¹⁴ Who knows? He may turn and relent,
and may leave a blessing behind Him
—so there may be a grain offering
and a drink offering for *ADONAI*, your God.

Blow the *Shofar*

¹⁵ Blow the *shofar* in Zion!

Sanctify a fast;
proclaim an assembly.

¹⁶ Gather the people;
sanctify the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,

even those nursing at breasts.
Let the bridegroom come out from his bedroom
and the bride from her chamber.

¹⁷ Between the porch and the altar
let the *kohanim*, ministers of *ADONAI*,
weep, and let them say:

"Have pity, *ADONAI*, on Your people.
Don't make Your heritage a scorn,
a byword among the nations.

Why should the peoples say,
'Where is their God?'" [†]

¹⁸ *ADONAI* will be zealous for His land,
and have compassion on His people.

¹⁹ *ADONAI* will answer and say to His people:

"Behold, I will send you the grain,
the new wine, and the fresh oil,
and you will be satisfied with it.

I will no longer make you a mockery among the na-
tions.

²⁰ But I will remove the northern invader far from
you—

yes, I will banish him to a dry and desolate land—
his vanguard into the Eastern Sea
and his rearguard into the Western Sea.

His odor will go up—

Yes, his stench will rise."
For He ^{††} has done great things!

Rain and Restoration

²¹ Do not fear, O land. Be glad! Rejoice!
For *ADONAI* has done great things.

²² Do not be afraid, beasts of the field,

[†] cf. Matt. 23:35. ^{††} Deity pronoun referring to *ADONAI*

for the desert pastures have sprouted,
for the tree bears its fruit.

Fig tree and vine yield their strength.

²³ So be glad, children of Zion,
and rejoice in *ADONAI*, your God.

For He gives you the early rain [‡] for prosperity,
Yes, He will bring down rain for you,
the early and latter rain as before.

²⁴ The threshing floors will be full of grain
and the vats will overflow with new wine and fresh
oil.

²⁵ "I shall restore to you the years
that the locust, the swarming locust,
the canker-worm, and the caterpillar have eaten—
My great army that I sent among you.

²⁶ You will surely eat and be satisfied,
and praise the Name of *ADONAI* your God,
who has dealt wondrously with you.

Never again will My people be shamed

²⁷ You will know that I am within Israel.

Yes, I am *ADONAI* your God—there is no other—
Never again will My people be shamed."

Promise of the *Ruach ADONAI*

3 (^{2:28}) "So it will be afterward,
I will pour out My *Ruach* on all flesh: ^{‡‡}
your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.

² (^{2:29}) Also on the male and the female servants
will I pour out My spirit in those days. ^{‡‡}

³ (^{2:30}) I will show wonders in the heavens and on
the earth—
blood, fire, and pillars of smoke. ^{‡‡‡}

⁴ (^{2:31}) The sun will be turned into darkness
and the moon into blood, before the great and awe-
some day of *ADONAI* comes.

⁵ (^{2:32}) Then all who call on *ADONAI*'s Name ^{‡‡‡} will es-
cape,
for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there will be rescue, as *ADONAI* has said,
among the survivors whom *ADONAI* is calling."

Valley of Jehoshaphat

4 "For behold, in those days and at that time,
when I restore Judah and Jerusalem from exile,

² I will gather all nations
and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.
I will plead [§] with them there on behalf of My people,
even My inheritance, Israel,
whom they scattered among the nations
and they divided up My land.

³ They cast lots for My people,

[‡] i.e., autumn and spring rain ^{‡‡} cf. Mark 1:8;
Acts 2:17-21; Gal. 3:14. ^{‡‡‡} cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28. ^{‡‡†} Cf.
Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:11; Acts 2:19; Rev. 8:7. ^{‡‡‡} He-
brew deliver, save [§] Or enter into
judgment

traded a boy for a prostitute,
and sold a girl for wine, which they drank.”

⁴“Moreover, what are you to Me, Tyre and Sidon † and all regions of Philistia? Did you render retribution for Me? Even if you were rendering retribution for Me, swiftly, speedily, will I return your retribution back on your own head. ⁵ For you took My silver and My gold, and you carried My valuable treasures into your temples.

⁶“The children of Judah and of Jerusalem you sold to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their own territory.

⁷“Behold, I am rousing them from the place where you sold them, and I will return your retribution on your own head. ⁸ I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they will sell them to the men of Sheba ††, to a nation far off—for ADONAI has spoken.”

⁹ Proclaim this among the nations:

Prepare for war.

Stir up the mighty men.

Let the warriors advance and attack.

¹⁰ Beat your plowshares into swords,

and your pruning knives into spears.

Let the weak say, “I am strong.”

¹¹ Rouse yourselves and come,
all nations around, and gather there.

ADONAI, bring Your mighty ones down!

¹²“Let the nations rouse themselves
and go up to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

For there will I sit

to judge all the surrounding nations.”

¹³ Swing the sickle,

for the harvest is ripe.

Come, tread, for the winepress is full

—the vats overflow—

† cf. Matt. 11:21-22. †† Or into captivity

for their wickedness is great! ‡

¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes,
in the valley of decision!

For the day of ADONAI is near
in the valley of decision.

¹⁵ The sun and the moon become dark,
the stars withdraw their brightness.

¹⁶ ADONAI will roar from Zion
and give His voice from Jerusalem.
Heaven and earth will shudder,

Shalom in Zion

but ADONAI will be a refuge for His people,
and a safe place for the children of Israel.

¹⁷“So you will know that I am ADONAI, your God,
dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain.

Then will Jerusalem be holy,
and foreigners will cross through her no more.

¹⁸ It will be in that day,
the mountains will drip sweet wine,

the hills will flow with milk,

and all the wadis of Judah will flow with water. ††

A spring will flow out from the House of ADONAI
and water the Valley of Shittim.

¹⁹ Egypt will become a desolation

and Edom a desert wasteland,

because of the violence against the children of Judah,
because they shed innocent blood in their land.

²⁰ But Judah will be inhabited forever—

Jerusalem from generation to generation.

²¹ I will acquit their bloodguilt that I had not acquitted, ††

for ADONAI dwells in Zion.”

‡ cf. Matt. 13:39; Rev. 14:15-20. †† cf. Rev. 22:1-2. †† cf. Heb. 9:14; 10:22.

Amos

Amos Introduction

The name “Amos” comes from the Hebrew word meaning “burden.” It could be said that Amos was Israel’s most unlikely prophet. He was not a religious professional in the classical sense, but he began his life’s work as a shepherd and grower of figs in the fields around Tekoa. However, God had other plans for him. This common man was called to confront a common problem among middle-class men: affluence, indulgence, and indifference. Amos’ message was given to the nation during a time of relative material prosperity, but when Israel was not committed to spiritually. Living just before the time of Hosea, Amos ministered to apathetic Israel during the kings of Uzziah in the south and Jeroboam in the north.

The first half of the book of Amos contains a series of judgments prophesied first to Israel’s neighbors and then to Israel herself. The resounding message of the first half of Amos is that all people—Israel, and the nations alike—are guilty before God and subject to judgment by God for their spiritual indifference. Apathetic Israel would not be spared God’s judgment because they were chosen from among the nations. Rather, Israel would be held accountable. Many Israelites were lulled to sleep perceiving their affluence to be a sign of God’s favor. This was a delusion, far from the truth. At the very end of the book, Amos reminds of the eternal promise of God: that, though He disciplines, He will not forsake His people outright. This gave encouragement to them and gives encouragement to us; but it certainly does not eclipse the responsibility humans have before God—to be true to Him and walk with Him.

Amos gives a stark and sober reminder to those who live in relative ease: God is far less interested in our activities or accomplishments as He is in knowing the character of our being. Enjoying the ease of life and fruits of our labor can foster a sinister deception. Readers of the first three chapters of Revelation are reminded of the judgments on the different congregations and communities of faith—all at ease in one form or another. With Amos in view, readers do well to remember God’s sharpest accusation and punishment was not on the actively sinful, but on those who were stuck in the vagary of the middle, being themselves neither hot nor cold.

Amos Headings

- The Lion Roars at the Nations
- The Prophet Reveals Destruction
- Word for Worldly Women
- Yet You Have Not Returned
- Prepare to Meet Your God
- Seek and Live
- Sins of Injustice
- Dreadful Day of
- Justice Better than Sacrifices
- At Ease in Zion
- Locusts and the Trial by Fire
- Plumb Line on a Wall
- A Basket of Summer Fruit
- No Escaping His Eyes
- David’s Restored

The Lion Roars at the Nations

¹ The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds from Tekoa. He perceived these words concerning Israel during the days of Uzziah, king of Judah,

and during the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. ² He said:

" *ADONAI* roars from Zion,
From Jerusalem He gives His voice.
The shepherds’ pastures mourn,
and the top of Mount Carmel withers."

³ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Damascus,
even for four, I will not relent.

For they threshed Gilead
with iron threshing sledges,
⁴ I will send fire into Hazael's palace.

It will devour Ben-Hadad's citadels.

⁵ I will break the Damascus gate-bar
and cut off the inhabitant from the Valley of Aven,
wielding Beth-Eden's scepter.

So the people of Aram
will go into exile to Kir.”

ADONAI has said it.

⁶ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Gaza,
even for four, I will not relent.

For they exiled an entire population,
giving them over to Edom.

⁷ So I will send fire on the wall of Gaza
—it will devour its citadels.

⁸ I will cut off Ashdod's inhabitant,
wielding Ashkelon's scepter.

I will turn My hand against Ekron
and the rest of the Philistines will perish.”

My Lord *ADONAI* has said it.

⁹ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Tyre,
even for four, I will not relent.

For they gave an entire population over to Edom,
and did not remember the covenant of brothers.

¹⁰ I will send fire on the wall of Tyre—
it will devour its citadels.”

¹¹ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Edom
even for four, I will not relent.

For he pursued his brother with a sword
and stifled his compassion.

For his anger tore continually,
and he kept his wrath forever.

¹² So I will send fire in Teman—
it will devour Bozrah's citadels.”

¹³ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of the sons of Ammon
even for four, I will not relent.

For they ripped open pregnant women of Gilead
to expand their territory.

¹⁴ I will kindle fire on Rabbah's wall
and it will devour its citadels,

amid shouting on a day of battle,
with storm on a day of whirlwind.

¹⁵ Their king will go into exile,
he and his princes together.”

Thus *ADONAI* has said.

2 Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Moab
even for four, I will not relent.

For he burned the bones of Edom's king to lime,

² So I will send fire upon Moab—

it will devour Kerioth's citadels.

Moab will die in an uproar,
with a shout of alarm
and the sound of the *shofar* .

³ I will cut off the ruler from her midst,
and slay all her princes with him.”

Thus *ADONAI* has said.

As for Judah and Israel

⁴ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Judah
even for four, I will not relent.

For they despise *ADONAI* 's *Torah*
and have not kept His statutes.

Their lies have misled them—
those their fathers walked after.

⁵ So I will send fire upon Judah—
it will devour Jerusalem's citadels.”

⁶ Thus says *ADONAI* :

“For three crimes of Israel
even for four, I will not relent.

For they sell the righteous for silver
and the needy for a pair of shoes.

⁷ They trample the head of the poor
into the dust of the earth

and thwart the way of the humble.

A man and his father go to the same girl, †
to profane My holy Name.

⁸ Upon garments taken in pledge
they stretch out beside every altar,
and drink wine confiscated as fines
in the house of their gods.

⁹ “I destroyed the Amorite before them,
whose height was like cedars

and as strong as oaks—
yes, I destroyed his fruit from above
and his roots from beneath.

¹⁰ It was I also who brought you up from the land of
Egypt

and led you 40 years in the wilderness
to possess the Amorite's land.

¹¹ I raised up prophets from your sons
and Nazirites from your young men.

Is this not so, *Bnei-Yisrael* ?”
declares *ADONAI* .

¹² “But you gave the Nazirites wine to drink,
and you commanded the prophets saying,
'Do not prophesy.'

¹³ Behold! I will cause a tottering beneath you
as a cart totters when full of sheaves.

¹⁴ Then flight will fail for the swift.

The mighty will not strengthen his power,
The warrior will not save his life.

¹⁵ The archer will not stand,
the fleet-footed will not escape,
the horseman will not save himself.

¹⁶ The valiant among the warriors
will flee naked in that day.”

† Or pagan temple prostitute

declares *ADONAI*.

The Prophet Reveals Destruction

3 Hear this word that *ADONAI* has spoken against you, *Bnei-Yisrael*, against the whole family that I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:

²“Only you have I known from among all the families of the earth.

Therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

³Can two walk together unless they meet by appointment?

⁴Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?

Does a young lion growl from his den unless he has taken prey?

⁵Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground if it has no bait?

Will a snare spring up from the ground without taking anything?

⁶If a *shofar* alarm sounds in a city, will people not tremble?

If there is calamity in a city, has not *ADONAI* caused it?

⁷For the Lord *ADONAI*, will do nothing, unless He has revealed His counsel to His servants the prophets. †

⁸A lion has roared, who will not fear? My Lord *ADONAI* has spoken, who shall not prophesy?

⁹Proclaim on the citadels in Ashdod and the citadels in the land of Egypt: “Assemble on Samaria’s mountains: Behold the great tumult within it, even the oppression within it.”

¹⁰“They do not know how to be honest,” —declares *ADONAI* —

“those who are saving up violence and destruction in their citadels.”

¹¹Therefore thus says my Lord *ADONAI*: “An adversary will surround the land! He will bring down your strength. Your citadels will be plundered.”

¹²Thus says *ADONAI*:

“Just as the shepherd snatches out of the mouth of the lion

two legs, or a piece of an ear, so will *Bnei-Yisrael* dwelling in Samaria escape with the corner of a bed or a head of a couch.

¹³Hear, and testify against the house of Jacob.”

It is the declaration of my Lord *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot*.

¹⁴“For in a day I shall punish Israel for the transgressions of Israel, and attend to the altars of Beth-El—the horns of the altar will be cut off

and fall to the ground.

¹⁵I will also strike the winter house together with the summer house.

The houses of ivory will perish,

and great houses will be demolished.”

It is the declaration of *ADONAI*.

Word for Worldly Women

4 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on Samaria’s hill,

who oppress the poor,

who crush the needy,

who say to their masters: “Bring, so we may drink.”

²My Lord *ADONAI* has sworn by His holiness:

“Behold, days are coming upon you when he will drag you away with meat-hooks, the last of you with fishhooks.

³You will go out through breaches— each woman straight ahead,

and you will be cast to Harmon.” ††

It is the declaration of *ADONAI*.

⁴“Come to Beth-El and transgress, in Gilgal multiply transgression.

Every morning bring your sacrifices and your tithes every three days.

⁵Offer up *hametz* as a thank offering, call out about freewill offerings—

boast about it!

For so you love to do, *Bnei-Yisrael*.”

It is the declaration of my Lord *ADONAI*.

Yet You Have Not Returned

⁶“So also, I myself have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities

and lack of bread in all your places— yet you have not returned to Me,”

declares *ADONAI*.

⁷“Also I myself have withheld from you the rain—when three months remain to the harvest,

I caused it to rain on one city,

while on another city I sent no rain;

one piece of ground would get rain,

while the portion not rained on would wither.

⁸So two or three cities go staggering to one city to drink water,

but would not be satisfied—

yet you have not returned to Me,”

declares *ADONAI*.

⁹“I struck you with blight and mildew.

Your many gardens and vineyards,

your fig trees and olive trees the locust has devoured—

yet you have not returned to Me,”

declares *ADONAI*.

¹⁰“I sent among you a plague in the manner of Egypt.

I slew your young men by the sword,

† cf. *John 15:15*.

†† Possibly Mount Hermon a dung heap

with your chariot-horses in captivity.
I made the stench of your camp rise up even to your
own nostrils—
yet you have not returned to Me,”
declares *ADONAI* .
11 I overthrew some of you as God
overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah †.
You became like a firebrand snatched from a blaze—
yet you have not returned to Me,”
declares *ADONAI* .

Prepare to Meet Your God

12 “Therefore here is what I will do to you, Israel.
Because I will do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, Israel!”
13 For behold! He who forms mountains,
who creates the wind,
who declares His thoughts to man,
who makes dawn out of darkness,
who walks above the heights of the earth—
His Name is *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot* !

Seek *ADONAI* and Live

5 Hear this word that I take up as a lament over
you, O house of Israel:
2 “She has fallen, never rising again—virgin Israel—
She is forsaken on her land,
with nobody to lift her up.”
3 For thus says *ADONAI Elohim* :
“The city that sends out a thousand
will have a hundred left,
and one that sends out a hundred
will have ten left for the house of Israel.”
4 For thus says *ADONAI* to the house of Israel:
“Seek Me, and live!
5 But do not seek Beth-El,
do not go to Gilgal,
do not cross over to Beer-Sheba.
For Gilgal will surely go into exile,
and Beth-El will come to trouble.”
6 Seek *ADONAI* , and live—
lest He rush like fire through the house of Joseph.
Yes, it will devour Beth-El,
with no one to quench it. ††

Sins of Injustice

7 You who turn justice to wormwood ,
threw righteousness to the ground.
8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion,
and changes deep darkness to morning,
who darkens the day into night;
who summons the water of the sea
and pours it out on the face of the earth
— *ADONAI* is His Name.
9 He flashes destruction on the mighty,
so destruction will come against a fortress.

10 They despise one who reproves at the gate,
so they detest one who speaks with integrity.
11 Therefore, because you trample on the poor,
exact from him a burden of grain,
you built houses of hewn stone,
but will not dwell in them,
you planted pleasant vineyards,
but will not drink their wine.

12 For I know your crimes are many
and your sins countless—
afflicting the righteous, taking bribes,
and turning the needy aside at the gate.
13 Therefore the prudent keep silent at such a time
—for it is a distressful time.

14 Seek good and not evil,
so you may live,
and so *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot* may be with you
—just as you said!

15 Hate evil, love good,
maintain justice at the gate.
Maybe *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot* will
extend grace to Joseph’s remnant. ‡

16 Therefore thus said *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot* , my Lord:
“There will be wailing in all plazas and in all streets.
They will say: ‘Alas! Alas!’
The farmer will be called to mourning
along with those who know the lamentation song.
17 In all vineyards will be wailing,
for I will pass through your midst”
— *ADONAI* has spoken.

Dreadful Day of *ADONAI*

18 Oy to you—longing for the Day of *ADONAI* ! ††
What would it be for you?
The Day of *ADONAI* will be darkness and not light. ‡
19 It will be as when a man is fleeing from a lion—
and meets a bear!
Or he comes home,
leans his hand on the wall,
and a snake bites him!
20 Will not the Day of *ADONAI* be darkness, not light?
Gloom, not brightness?

Justice Better than Sacrifices

21 “I hate, I despise your festivals!
I take no delight in your sacred assemblies.
22 Even if you offer me burnt offerings and your grain
offerings,
I will not accept them,
nor will I look
at peace offerings of your fattened animals.
23 Take away from Me the noise of your songs!
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
24 But let justice roll like water
and righteousness like an ever-flowing torrent.

† cf. Matt. 10:15; 11:23-24; Luke 17:29. †† cf. Heb. 12:29.

‡ cf. Rom. 12:9. †† cf. 2 Pet. 3:4. †† cf. Acts 2:20.

²⁵ Did you bring sacrifices and offerings to Me in the wilderness
for forty years, O house of Israel?
²⁶ But you lifted up your images
—Siccuth your 'king', and Chiun, † your star gods—
which you made for yourselves, ††
²⁷ So I will send you into exile,
beyond Damascus."
ADONAI has spoken,
Elohei-Tzva'ot is His Name.

At Ease in Zion

6 Oy! You who are at ease in Zion,
trusting in Samaria's hill!
Distinguished ones of the foremost of nations—
to whom the house of Israel comes
² Go over to Calneh and look.
From there go to great Hamath,
go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are you better than these kingdoms?
Or is their territory larger than yours?
³ Dismissing the day of calamity,
you bring near the throne of violence.
⁴ Reclining on beds of ivory,
sprawling on their couches,
dining on lambs from the flock
and calves from amid the stall,
⁵ chanting to the sound of harp like David,
inventing their own instruments of song,
⁶ drinking wine from bowls,
anointing with choice ointments—
yet they are not sickened over the breakdown of
Joseph.
⁷ Therefore now they will go into exile at the head of
the exiles.
Sprawling revelry will cease.
⁸ My Lord *ADONAI* has sworn by Himself
—declares *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot* —
"I loathe the arrogance of Jacob,
I despise his palaces,
so I will shut down the city and everything in it."
⁹ If ten people remain in one house, they will die.
¹⁰ One's beloved—the one burning incense for
him—will lift him up to carry the bones out of the
house, and he will say to one in the innermost recess
of the house: "Is anyone else still with you?" And he
will say: "No one." Then he will say, "Hush! For we must
not mention the Name of *ADONAI*."
¹¹ For behold, *ADONAI* will command,
He will smash the big house to fragments
and the little house to splinters.
¹² Will horses run on the cliff?
Will one plow there with oxen?
Yet you turned justice into venom,
the fruit of righteousness into wormwood.
¹³ You are rejoicing for no reason, saying:

"Haven't we taken two horns for ourselves by our
own strength?"
¹⁴ "For behold, I am raising up against you,
O house of Israel, a nation,
and they will afflict you
from Lebo-Hamath ‡
to the Valley of the Arabah,"
declares *ADONAI*, the God of Hosts.

Locusts and the Trial by Fire

7 This is what my Lord *ADONAI* has shown me: Be-
hold, He was forming locusts at the beginning of
the spring crop—after the cutting of the king's hay.
² When the locust-swarm had finished devouring the
vegetation of the land, I said:
" *ADONAI Elohim*, please pardon!
How can Jacob stand, for he is small?"
³ *ADONAI* relented concerning this.
"It shall not be," *ADONAI* said.
⁴ This is what my Lord *ADONAI* has shown me: Behold,
ADONAI Elohim was calling for the trial by fire, and it
would have devoured the great deep, and it would
have devoured the territory. ⁵ But I said:
"My Lord *ADONAI*, stop, please!
How can Jacob stand, for he is small?"
⁶ *ADONAI* relented concerning this.
"This also shall not happen,"
says my Lord *ADONAI*.

Plumb Line on a Wall

⁷ This is what He has revealed to me: Behold, my
Lord was standing by a vertical wall, and in His hand
was a plumb line. ⁸ Then *ADONAI* said to me: "What do
you see, Amos?"
I said: "A plumb line."
Then my Lord said:
"Behold, I am setting a plumb line among My people
Israel—
I will no longer pass over them.
⁹ So the high places of Isaac will become desolate,
the sanctuaries of Israel will be laid waste,
and I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with
the sword."
¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest of Beth-El, sent word to
King Jeroboam of Israel, saying: "Amos has been con-
spiring against you in the midst of the house of Israel.
The land cannot endure all his words. ¹¹ For this is
what Amos has said: 'Jeroboam will die by the sword,
and Israel will surely go captive from his land.'"
¹² Then Amaziah said to Amos: "Seer, go away! Flee
back to the land of Judah. Eat bread there, and proph-
esy there. ¹³ But at Beth-El you are not to prophesy any
more—for it is a royal sanctuary and a house of the
kingdom."
¹⁴ So Amos responded and said to Amaziah: "I am no
prophet, nor am I a son of a prophet. Rather, I am a

† Or tabernacle of your Moloch Saturn ††
cf. Acts 7:43.

‡ Or the entrance of Hamat

shepherd tending fig trees. ¹⁵ But *ADONAI* took me from following the flock and *ADONAI* said to me: 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.' ¹⁶ So now, hear the word of *ADONAI*: You are saying, 'Do not prophesy against Israel and do not preach against the house of Isaac.' ¹⁷ Therefore, this is what *ADONAI* says: 'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, and your land divided up by a measuring line. Now, as for you—you will die in an unclean land, and Israel will surely be led away captive out of its land.'"

A Basket of Summer Fruit

8 This is what my Lord *ADONAI* has shown me: See, there was a basket of summer fruit. ² He said: "Amos, what do you see?" "A basket of summer fruit," I said. Then *ADONAI* said to me: "The end has come to My people Israel. I will not again pass over them. ³ The songs of the palace will become howls in that day." It is a declaration of my Lord *ADONAI*. "So many corpses flung everywhere! Hush! ⁴ Hear this, you who trample the poor, destroying the afflicted of the land ⁵ saying: 'When will the New Moon be over, so we may sell grain? Or *Shabbat*, so we may open the wheat market? —Let's reduce the ephah measure and increase the shekel, cheat with deceitful balances, ⁶ buy the poor for silver, the needy for a pair of sandals! We'll even sell the refuse of the grain!" ⁷ *ADONAI* swore by the Pride of Jacob: "Never will I forget all their deeds! ⁸ Will not the land tremble over this? Will not all who dwell in it mourn? Yes, it will rise up like all the Nile —it will surge and sink again like the Nile of Egypt." ⁹ "It will be in that day" —declares my Lord *ADONAI* — "I will make the sun go down at noon, yes, I will darken the earth in daylight. ¹⁰ I will turn your festivals into mourning and all your songs into a dirge. † I will pull up sackcloth on every waist and baldness on every head. I will make it like the mourning for an only son— its end a bitter day. †† ¹¹ Behold, days are coming" —declares my Lord *ADONAI* — "when I will send a famine on the land —not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water,

but of hearing the words of *ADONAI*. ‡ ¹² So people will wander from sea to sea and roam from north to east, searching for the word of *ADONAI*, but they will not find it.

¹³ In that day, the fair virgins and the virile young men will faint from thirst. ¹⁴ Those swearing by Samaria's guilt will say, 'As your gods live, Dan!' or 'As the way of Beer-Sheba lives!' But they will fall, never to rise again."

No Escaping His Eyes

9 I saw my Lord standing by the altar, and He said: "Strike the tops of the pillars, so the porches shake! Break all of them off at the head! Then the last of them I will slay with the sword— none of them fleeing will escape and no fugitive will slip away. ² If they should dig down to *Sheol*, from there My hand will take them. If they should go up to heaven, from there will I bring them down. ³ If they should hide themselves at the top of Carmel, I will search them out and take them from there. If they hide themselves from My eyes at the bottom of the sea, from there I will command the sea serpent to bite them. ⁴ If they should go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword to slay them. I will set My eyes upon them for calamity and not for prosperity." ⁵ My Lord is *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*. It is He who touches the land so it melts, and all its inhabitants will mourn. Then it will surge like all the Nile, and sink again like the Nile of Egypt. ⁶ He who builds His upper stories in heaven fitted its vault over the earth. He who summons the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth — *ADONAI* is His Name. ⁷ "Are you not like the children of the Cushites to Me, *Bnei-Yisrael*?" It is the declaration of *ADONAI*. "Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor, and Aram from Kir?" ⁸ Behold, the eyes of my Lord *ADONAI* are on the sinful kingdom. "So I will utterly destroy it from the face of the earth. Nevertheless, I will not annihilate the house of Jacob." It is a declaration of *ADONAI*. ⁹ "For behold, I have commanded,

† cf. *Jacob 4:9*. †† cf. *Luke 23:28*.

‡ cf. *Matt. 4:4*.

and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations,
 like grain being tossed in a sieve,
 without a pebble falling to the ground.
¹⁰ By the sword shall all the sinners
 of My people die,
 those who say:
 "The calamity will not overtake or confront us."

David's *Sukkah* Restored

¹¹ "In that day I will raise up David's fallen *sukkah*. †
 I will restore its breaches,
 raise up its ruins,
 and rebuild it as in days of old
¹² —so they may possess the remnant of Edom

† cf. Acts 15:16-18.

and all the nations called by My Name."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*, the One who will do this.
¹³ "Behold, days are soon coming"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "when the plowman will overtake the reaper
 and the one treading grapes, the one sowing seed.
 The mountains will drip sweet wine
 and all the hills will melt over.
¹⁴ Yes, I will restore the captivity of My people Israel.
 They will rebuild desolated cities and dwell in them.
 They will plant vineyards and drink their wine.
 They will also make gardens and eat their fruit.
¹⁵ Yes, I will plant them on their land,
 and they will never again be plucked up
 out of their land that I have given to them."
ADONAI, your God, has said it.

Obadiah

Obadiah Introduction

Obadiah means “Servant of .” It is the shortest book in the Hebrew Bible. It is not known exactly where Obadiah lived. No explicit kings or time markers are mentioned. It is clear, however, that Obadiah’s message was given to the land of Edom, a kindred but non-Jewish nation located to Israel’s east.

Edom, or “red,” is the shorthand way of referring to the descendants of Esau, the once-estranged brother of Jacob. Located on Israel’s eastern border, Edom had a geographic connection, as well as an ethnic connection to the Jewish people. Given the biological relationship between the nations, higher levels of loyalty were to be expected—but they were ignored. The Edomites were hostile to their Hebrew cousins, forever taking advantage of and forever rejoicing in their misfortune. This prophecy informs that their attacks on Israel were not unnoticed and that they would not go unpunished.

Obadiah’s message of judgment upon Edom reminds the readers that God is not only active in the life of Israel. To be sure He is; it is understood, however, that others outside are held accountable for the way they treat this chosen nation. The wicked and the righteous conflict in every generation—with the wicked seeming to all-too-commonly get the upper hand. Nevertheless, God is the God of all nations. He is the judge of all the earth, and in due time He will arise to render His verdicts. We do well to honor Him as the Savior of all nations now so as not to incur His wrath later.

Obadiah Headings

Edom’s Arrogance and Ruin

The House of Jacob Will Be a Fire

Edom’s Arrogance and Ruin

1 The vision of Obadiah. Thus says *ADONAI Elohim* concerning Edom:

We have heard a report from *ADONAI* — and an envoy has been sent among the nations: “Arise and let us rise up against her in battle.”

² “Behold, I will make you least among the nations, you will be greatly despised.

³ The arrogance of your heart has deceived you— living in the clefts of the rock— his dwelling place is lofty, saying in his heart: ‘Who shall bring me down to the earth?’

⁴ Even if you soar like the eagle, and even if you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down.” declares *ADONAI* .

⁵ “If thieves came to you, if robbers by night— how ruined you would be!— would they keep stealing after they had enough? If grape-gatherers came to you, would they not leave some gleaning?

⁶ How Esau will be ransacked, and how his hidden treasures searched out!

⁷ All your allies will force you to the border.

The men that are at peace with you will deceive you and overpower you.

Those who eat your bread will set a trap under you. (He has no discernment.)

⁸ In that day,”—declares *ADONAI* —

“will I not destroy the wise men from Edom and understanding from the hill country of Esau?

⁹ Then your mighty men, O Teman, will be shattered —so everyone will be cut off from the hill country of Esau by slaughter.

¹⁰ “Because of your violence to your brother Jacob, shame will cover you, and you will be cut off forever.

¹¹ On the day that you stood aloof— on the day that strangers carried away his wealth, while foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem—

you were just like one of them.

¹² You should not look down on your brother on the day of his disaster, nor should you rejoice over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction. You should not speak proudly in the day of their distress.

¹³ Do not enter the gate of My people

In the day of their disaster.
 Yes, you. Do not gloat over their misery
 in the day of their disaster.
 Yes, you—do not loot their wealth
 in the day of their calamity.
¹⁴ Do not stand at the crossroad to cut down his fugi-
 tives,
 and do not imprison his survivors in the day of dis-
 tress.

The House of Jacob Will Be a Fire

¹⁵ “For the day of *ADONAI* is near against all the na-
 tions.
 As you have done, it shall be done to you.
 Your dealing will return on your own head.
¹⁶ For just as you have drunk on My holy mountain,
 so all the nations shall drink continually.
 Yes, they will drink and gulp down,
 and then be as though they had never existed.
¹⁷ But on Mount Zion there will be deliverance,
 and it will be holy.
 Then the house of Jacob will dispossess

those who dispossessed them.
¹⁸ The house of Jacob will be a fire,
 and the house of Joseph aflame,
 while the house of Esau will be straw—
 they will set them on fire and consume them.
 So there will be no survivors of the house of Esau,”
 —for *ADONAI* has spoken.
¹⁹ Then those of the Negev † will possess the hill coun-
 try of Esau,
 and those of the foothills the Philistines.
 Then they will possess the territory of Ephraim
 and the territory of Samaria,
 while Benjamin will possess Gilead.
²⁰ The exiles of this army of *Bnei-Yisrael*
 will possess what belonged to the Canaanites as far
 as Zarephath, while the exiles of Jerusalem, who are in
 Sepharad,
 will possess the cities of the Negev.
²¹ The victorious will go up on Mount Zion
 to judge the hill country of Esau.
 Then the kingdom shall be *ADONAI*’s.

† Negev also known as the South

Jonah

Jonah Introduction

The word Jonah means “dove.” Interestingly, however, the book of Jonah is best known for the prophet’s association with a big fish and for the reluctant prophet being more given to thundering pronouncements of indictments and judgment. He seems anything but a gentle dove.

Jonah lived between 785 and 755 BCE. Assyria was the largest nation in the Middle East at that time; its capital was Nineveh. Assyria was a real and present danger, a threat to and an enemy of Israel and Judah. Jonah’s reluctance to bring them a reconciling message from God was thus understandable but not forgivable. If God wanted to destroy them, great! This was his attitude. “Why prevent that?”, was his logic. In Jonah, we see a foreign and sinful nation responding to God exactly in the way in which Israel should have responded, but she didn’t.

The book of Jonah is told in four acts. Act 1 begins with Jonah receiving a word of God and going in the opposite direction. The prophet’s response to God is not what God had in mind. Regardless of whatever prompted Jonah to run away—to run from God’s plan and not with it—Jonah finally ended up doing what God wanted. With the help of a “giant fish,” Jonah is brought to the shores nearest Nineveh against his will. Act 2 recounts Jonah’s dialogue and prayer in the belly of the whale. Jonah responds to God with faith and reliance, although he doesn’t have much option. Only time will tell whether his repentance is truly a change of heart or just empty words. Act 3 records Jonah actually going to the city of Nineveh. To the prophet’s surprise and dismay, his message was accepted and God’s judgment upon them averted. Act 4 notes Jonah despondent and brooding. He does not rejoice over their repentance, but seems to have gotten into an adolescent funk. The book ends with God reminding Jonah of His compassion and care—for all human beings.

The book of Jonah is highly debated. How could a person be swallowed up in a fish and survive for three days? How could a city so large and so sinful repent from their sins so quickly? Because of these questions and many more, Jonah is often considered an allegory. The Bible, however, gives us no indication that this ought to be read as an allegory. Jonah is mentioned by as a sign. Jonah’s three days in the belly of a great fish, according to , was a sign of what would happen to Him. Jonah’s experience, therefore, is a type of death, burial, and resurrection. God’s charge to Jonah—that the God of Israel isn’t only for Israel—is a charge for all people in all times to remember that God cares about all of humanity.

Jonah Headings

Jonah Runs from His Mission

Jonah’s Prayer of Distress

Nineveh Repents

Jonah’s Displeasure at God’s Mercy

Jonah Runs from His Mission

1 Now the word of *ADONAI* came to Jonah, † son of Amittai, saying: ² “Rise, go to the great city Nineveh and call out to her, for their evil has risen before me.”

³ But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish, from the presence of *ADONAI*. He went down to Jaffa and found a ship going to Tarshish, paid the fee, and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish—away from the presence of *ADONAI*.

⁴ Then *ADONAI* hurled a forceful wind into the sea and there was such a mighty storm on the sea that the ship was about to shatter. ⁵ So the sailors were afraid and cried out, each man to his own god. Then they cast the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest part of the ship, to lay down and fell fast asleep.

⁶ So the chief sailor came near to him and said to him, “What, are you sleeping? Get up! Call out to your god. Perhaps the gods will consider us, so we will not perish!”

⁷ Then each man said to his companion, “Come, let’s cast lots—so we may know because of whom this evil

† cf. Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29-30, 32.

is happening to us." So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. †

⁸ Then they said to him, "Tell us, now! On whose account is this evil happening to us? What is your profession and where did you come from? What is your land and from what nation are you?"

⁹ He said to them, "I am a Hebrew and I fear *ADONAI* God of the heavens, who made the sea and the dry land."

¹⁰ Then the men became afraid with an overwhelming fear and they said to him, "What have you done?" For the men knew that he had fled from the presence of *ADONAI*, because he had told them. ¹¹ So they said to him, "What should we do to you so the sea will become calm for us?"—for the storm was raging on.

¹² "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he said to them, "then the sea will become calm for you. For I know it is because of me that this great storm is upon you."

¹³ Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to the land, but they could not, because the sea kept raging against them. ¹⁴ So they cried to *ADONAI* and said, "Please, *ADONAI*, don't let us perish on account of the soul of this man and don't put innocent blood on us. For you, *ADONAI*, have done as you pleased."

¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea—and the sea stilled from its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men became afraid with an overwhelming fear of *ADONAI*, and they offered a sacrifice to *ADONAI* and made vows.

2 (1:17) Now *ADONAI* prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. †† ‡

Jonah's Prayer of Distress

² (1) Then Jonah prayed to *ADONAI* his God from the belly of the fish, ³ (2) saying:

"From my distress I cried to *ADONAI* and He answered me.

From the belly of *Sheol* I cried for help and you heard my voice. ††

⁴ (3) For you hurled me from the deep into the heart of the seas, and currents swirled around me.

All your waves and your breakers swept over me.

⁵ (4) And I said, 'I have been banished from before your eyes.

Yet I will continue to look toward your holy Temple.'

⁶ (5) Waters surrounded me up to my soul. The deep sea engulfed me—reeds clung to my head.

⁷ (6) To the bottoms of the mountains I went down. The earth with her bars was around me, forever!

Yet You brought my life up from the Pit,

ADONAI my God.

⁸ (7) As my soul was fading from me, I remembered *ADONAI* and my prayer came to You, toward Your holy Temple.

⁹ (8) Those who watch worthless empty things forsake their mercy.

¹⁰ (9) But I, with a voice of thanks will sacrifice to you.

What I vowed, I will pay.

Salvation is from *ADONAI*."

¹¹ (10) Then *ADONAI* spoke to the fish and it vomited Jonah onto the dry land.

Nineveh Repents

3 Now the word of *ADONAI* came to Jonah a second time, saying, ² "Rise and go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry out to it the proclamation that I am telling you."

³ So Jonah rose and went to Nineveh according to the word of *ADONAI*. Now Nineveh was a great city to God—the length of a three day journey. ⁴ So Jonah began to come into the city for one day's journey, and he cried out saying: "Another 40 days and Nineveh will be overthrown!"

⁵ Then the people of Nineveh believed God and called for a fast and wore sackcloth—from the greatest of them to the least of them. ⁶ When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his robe, covered himself in sackcloth, and sat in the ashes. ⁷ He made a proclamation saying:

"In Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his nobles, no man or beast, herd or flock, may taste anything. They must not graze nor drink water. ⁸ But cover man and beast with sackcloth. Let them cry out to God with urgency. Let each one turn from his evil way and from the violence in his hands. ⁹ Who knows? God may turn and relent, and turn back from his burning anger, so that we may not perish."

¹⁰ When God saw their deeds—that they turned from their wicked ways—God relented from the calamity that He said He would do to them, and did not do it.

Jonah's Displeasure at God's Mercy

4 But it greatly displeased Jonah and he resented it. ² So he prayed to *ADONAI* and said, "Please, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my own country? That's what I anticipated, fleeing to Tarshish—for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and full of kindness, and relenting over calamity. ³ So please, *ADONAI*, take my soul from me—because better is my death than my life."

⁴ Yet *ADONAI* said, "Is it good for you to be so angry?"

⁵ So Jonah went out from the city and sat east of the city. There he made a *sukkah* and he sat under it, in the shade, until he saw what would happen in the city.

† cf. Acts 1:26. †† Most translations, 2:1 is 1:17. ‡ cf. Matt. 12:40; 16:4. †† cf. Acts 13:35.

⁶ Then *ADONAI* God prepared a plant and it grew up over Jonah, to give shade over his head to spare him from his discomfort. So Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷ But God at dawn the next day prepared a worm that crippled the plant and it withered away. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint. So he implored that his soul would die, saying, "My death would be better than my life!"

⁹ Then God said to Jonah, "Is it good for you to be so angry about the plant?"

"It is," he said, "I am angry enough to die!"

¹⁰ But *ADONAI* said, "You have pity on the plant for which you did no labor or make it grow, that appeared overnight and perished overnight. ¹¹ So shouldn't I have pity on Nineveh—the great city that has in it more than 120,000 people who don't know their right hand from their left—as well as many animals?"

Micah

Micah Introduction

If Micah was alive in the 21st century, he would be known as the champion of Social justice. His name מִיכָה means “who is like .” Along with his contemporary, Isaiah, Micah lived in an area southwest of Jerusalem and concentrated his prophetic office primarily in that area. In a culture of heathen paganism and idolatry, Micah spoke out vehemently about the need to return to God and worship only Him. He was burdened to bring forth God’s message and purpose of holy living. We would consider Micah a radical, as he even chose to walk naked to communicate his message to return to God (Mic. 1:8). He spoke out against corruption, unruly leaders and their treatment of the poor. He exhorted the people to follow and to embrace true worship. His lament, in Micah 2:1, expressed his heart: “Oy to them who scheme wickedness, who work out evil upon their beds! In the light of the morning, they do it, for the power is in their hands.”

As it is in the 21st century, so it was in the day of Micah. Individuals had a false sense of security: “Her leaders give judgment for a bribe, her priests give direction for a price and her prophets practice divination for money. Yet they lean on the saying, ‘Is not in our midst? No calamity will come upon us.’” Micah had chutzpah: he brought forth truth and called out the wicked rulers. Micah issued a Messianic precursor in chapter 5, verse 1 (chapter 5, verse 2, in Traditional Christian numbering): “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, least among the clans of Judah – from you will come out to Me One to be ruler in Israel, One whose goings forth are from of old, from days of eternity.” Micah’s encouragement proclaimed God’s coming Kingdom and God’s coming Messiah—. Micah announced the birth place of the Messiah, Bethlehem, בֵּית לֶחֶם Beit Lechem , “House of Bread,” the birthplace of , the Living Bread (Matthew 2:4-6).

Micah called Israel into judgment. He was God’s mouthpiece “ has a dispute with His people and He will argue His case with Israel. (Mic. 6:2).” Micah spoke straightforward about what required of His people: “He has told you, humanity, what is good, and what is seeking from you: Only to practice justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” (Mic. 6:8) God wants His people to love mercy, רַחֲמֵי in Hebrew. God’s mercy endures forever and His people should emulate His mercy towards their fellow man. Human efforts attain nothing. Recognizing and personally accepting that God has done everything for us in the efficacious eternal atonement of ‘s death on the cross, we can walk as God wants us to walk: desiring to live holy.

This short book of Micah is a dirge, a lament. “Woe is me! For I am like gatherings of produce in summer, like gleanings of a vineyard. There is no cluster to eat, no first-ripe fig that I crave. The pious have perished from the land, there is none upright among mankind. All of them lie in wait for blood. A man hunts his brother with a net.” (Mic. 7:1-2). Micah’s lament is our lament. He experienced a deep sorrow for the sins of God’s people. Yet, even in the midst of his complaint, he found cause to hope: “But I – I will watch for . I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. So not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I have fallen – I will arise. Though I sit in darkness, is my light.”(Mic. 7:7-8) He closed his lament with a prayer to God to shepherd His people. He proclaimed a reflection of his own name Micah, , מִי־לֵאב רֹמֵךְ יִי, “Who is a God like You?” He concluded with the profession of his own faith in . His profession should be ours as well: to realize that God will indeed give truth and mercy to His people who love and serve Him.

Micah Headings

- Smashing Idols in the High Places
- Covetous Schemers
- Unjust Leaders, False Prophets
- Will Go Forth from Zion
- Eternal Ruler from Beth-Lehem
- The Remnant of Jacob
- Pleads His Case
- What Is Seeking from You?
- None Upright among Mankind

Zion's Vindication
He Will Again Have Compassion

1 The word of *ADONAI* that came to Micah the Morashtite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah—visions he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

Smashing Idols in the High Places

2 Hear, O peoples—all of you!
Attention, O land and everything in it!
ADONAI Elohim will be witness against you—
The Lord from His holy Temple.
3 For behold, *ADONAI* is coming forth out of His place.
He will come down and trample on the high places of the land.
4 The mountains will melt away under Him
and the valleys will split apart
like wax before the fire,
like water being poured down a slope.
5 All this is because of Jacob's transgression
and the sins of the house of Israel.
Who is the transgression of Jacob?
Is it not Samaria?
Who are the high places of Judah?
Are they not Jerusalem?
6 "So I will make Samaria into a ruin in the countryside,
planting places for a vineyard.
I will hurl her stones into the valley
and will lay bare her foundations.
7 All her images will be smashed,
all her prostitute's pay burned with fire,
and all her idols I will make desolate.
For from prostitute's pay she collected them
and to prostitute's pay they will return."
8 Concerning this let me lament and howl.
Let me walk barefoot and naked.
I will make a howl like jackals
and a mourning like ostriches.
9 For her wounds are incurable.
For it has come up to Judah.
It has reached the gate of my people—
even up to Jerusalem!
10 Tell it not in Gath—weep not at all.
At Beth-Le-Aphrah † roll in the dust.
11 Pass on, you who dwell in Saphir
—nakedness and shame—
she who dwells in Zaanan
will not come out.
Wailing of Beth-Ezel ††:
He will take from you its standing-place.
12 For she who dwells in Maroth has languished for something good.
For calamity has come down

from *ADONAI* to Jerusalem's gate.
13 Harness the chariot to the steed,
O inhabitant of Lachish!
It was the beginning of sin
for the Daughter of Zion—
because in you were found
the rebellions of Israel.
14 Therefore you will give parting gifts to Moresheth-Gath—
houses of Achzib as a deception to the kings of Israel.
15 Yet I will bring the possessor to you,
inhabitant of Mareshah.
The glory of Israel will come
as far as Adullam.
16 Shave yourself bald,
yes shear your hair for the children of your delight.
Enlarge your bald spot like a vulture,
for they went from you into exile.

Covetous Schemers

2 Oy to them who scheme wickedness,
who work out evil upon their beds!
In the light of the morning, they do it,
for the power is in their hands.
2 They covet fields, so they seize them,
or houses, and take them away.
So they oppress a man and his house—
a man and his inheritance.
3 Therefore, thus said *ADONAI* :
"Behold, I am scheming a calamity against this family
from which you cannot remove your necks.
Then you will not walk haughtily,
for it will be a time of distress."
4 In that day He will lift up a parable for you,
and there will be wailing lamentation,
saying: "We have been utterly ruined!
He changes the portion of my people.
How He removes it from me!
To the faithless He apportions our fields!"
5 Therefore you will have no one casting for territory
by lot in the congregation of *ADONAI* .
6 "Do not prophesy," they prophesy.
"Unless they prophesy about such things,
He will not turn back reproaches."
7 Is it said, "O house of Jacob,
is the *Ruach ADONAI* short of patience?
Are these His deeds?"
"Do not My words deal well
with one who walks uprightly?"
8 But recently My people arose as an enemy.
You strip off the outer robe of a garment
from those passing through confidently—
those returning from war.

† Meaning House of Dust †† Meaning the house nearby

⁹ The wives of My people you cast out
from their exquisite houses.
From her young children
you take away My splendor, forever.
¹⁰ Arise and go!
For this is not the resting place,
because of uncleanness that destroys—
a grievous destruction.
¹¹ If a man walking in a spirit of falsehood speaks
lies—
‘I will prophesy for you of wine and strong drink’—
Then he would be a spokesman of this people.
¹² “I will surely gather Jacob—all of you!
I will surely gather the remnant of Israel.
I will put them together like sheep in a pen,
like a flock within its pasture.
They will be noisy with people.
¹³ One breaking through will go up before them. †
They will break through,
pass through the gate and go out by it. ††
Their King will pass through before them
— ADONAI at their head!”

Unjust Leaders, False Prophets

3 Then I said:
“Hear, leaders of Jacob, rulers of the house of Israel.
Is it not for you to know justice?
² You haters of good and lovers of evil,
you are robbing their skin from them
and their flesh from their bones.”
³ Now that they have eaten the flesh of my people,
stripped their skin off from them,
and smashed their bones to bits,
they cut it up like flesh in a pot,
or like meat within a caldron.
⁴ Then they will cry out to ADONAI,
but He will not answer them.
Thus He will hide His face from them at that time,
because of their evil deeds.
⁵ Thus said ADONAI, “About the prophets
who are misleading My people,
those who bite with their teeth and cry ‘Shalom’
—a word that He did not put in their mouth—
yet they consecrate war against him:
⁶ Therefore you will have night without vision,
and darkness without divination.
The sun shall set on the prophets,
the day shall become dark upon them.’
⁷ So the seers will be ashamed
and the diviners will be abashed.
Indeed all of them will cover their lips,
for there will be no answer from God.”
⁸ Nevertheless I myself am filled with power—
with the *Ruach* ADONAI —
with judgment, and with might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression,

and to Israel his sin.
⁹ Hear this, leaders of the house of Jacob,
rulers of the house of Israel:
You who abhor justice,
and twist everything upright,
¹⁰ who build up Zion with bloodshed,
and Jerusalem with injustice.
¹¹ Her leaders give judgment for a bribe.
Her priests give direction for a price.
Her prophets practice divination for money.
Yet they lean on ADONAI by saying:
“Is not ADONAI in our midst?
No calamity will come upon us!”
¹² Therefore, because of you
Zion will become a plowed field.
Yes, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins,
and the Temple Mount will become a high place in a
forest.

Torah Will Go Forth from Zion

4 But at the end of days
the mountain of ADONAI’s House will be estab-
lished as chief of the mountains,
and will be raised above the hills.
Peoples will flow up to it.
² Then many nations will go and say:
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of ADONAI,
to the House of the God of Jacob!
Then He will direct us in His ways,
and we will walk in His paths.”
For *Torah* will go forth from Zion,
and the word of ADONAI from Jerusalem.
³ He will judge between many peoples
and decide for mighty nations far off.
They will beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning shears.
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
nor will they learn war again.
⁴ But each man will sit under his vine
and under his fig tree,
with no one causing terror,
for the mouth of ADONAI - *Tzva’ot* has spoken.
⁵ Though all the peoples will walk
each in the name of his god,
so we ourselves will walk ‡ in the Name of ADONAI *Elo-
heinu*,
forever and ever.
⁶ “In that day”
—it is a declaration of ADONAI —
“I will gather her who is limping,
and her who was banished will I collect,
even those whom I have afflicted.
⁷ I will make her who was limping into a remnant,
and her who was banished a mighty nation.
ADONAI will reign over them on Mount Zion
from that time and forever.”
⁸ But you, watchtower of the flock,

† cf. Matt. 11:12. †† cf. John 10:7, 9.

‡ cf. Acts 14:16.

are the hill of the Daughter of Zion.
 To you she will come.
 Even the former dominion will come,
 the kingdom of the Daughter of Jerusalem.
⁹ Why are you crying out aloud now?
 Is there no King within you?
 Has your counselor perished,
 so that agony has gripped you like birth pangs?
¹⁰ Writhe and give birth, Daughter of Zion,
 like a woman in labor.
 For now you will go forth from a city.
 You will dwell in the field,
 and you will come as far as Babylon.
 There you will be rescued.
 There will *ADONAI* redeem you
 from the hand of your enemies.
¹¹ But now many nations
 have assembled against you,
 those who are saying, "Let her be defiled,
 and let our eyes gaze on Zion."
¹² But they do not know *ADONAI*'s thoughts,
 nor understand His plan.
 For He has gathered them
 like grain to a threshing floor.
¹³ "Arise and tread, Daughter of Zion,
 for I will make your horn iron,
 and I will make your hooves bronze.
 You will thresh many peoples."
 I will devote their unjust gain to *ADONAI*,
 their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.
¹⁴ (5:1) Now gather yourself in troops, O Daughter of
 Troops.
 He has laid siege against us.
 With a staff they have struck
 the Judge of Israel on the cheek.

Eternal Ruler from Beth-Lehem

5 (2) "But you, Beth-Lehem Ephrathah †—
 least among the clans of Judah—
 from you will come out to Me
 One to be ruler in Israel,
 One whose goings forth are from of old,
 from days of eternity."
² (3) Therefore He will give them up
 until the time when she who is in labor has given
 birth.
 Then the remnant of His brothers
 will return to *Bnei-Yisrael*.
³ (4) So He will arise and tend His flock
 with the strength of *ADONAI* —
 in the majesty of the Name of *ADONAI* His God.
 And they will live securely,
 for then He will be great to the ends of the earth.
⁴ (5) This One will be *shalom*. ††
 When Assyria invades our land,
 when he treads on our citadels,
 then we will raise up against him seven shepherds

and eight human princes.
⁵ (6) They will devastate the land of Assyria with the
 sword—
 even Nimrod's land with a drawn blade. ‡
 He will deliver us from Assyria,
 when he invades our land,
 when he tramples on our territory.

The Remnant of Jacob

⁶ (7) Now the remnant of Jacob will be
 in the midst of many peoples,
 like dew from *ADONAI*,
 like abundant showers on grass
 that does not wait for a man,
 nor lingers for the sons of men.
⁷ (8) For the remnant of Jacob will be among the na-
 tions,
 in the midst of many peoples,
 like a lion among the forest beasts,
 like a young lion among flocks of sheep,
 who, if he passed through, would trample and tear to
 pieces,
 and there would be no deliverer.
⁸ (9) May your hand be raised up against your adver-
 saries,
 and may all your foes be cut off.
⁹ (10) "Now in that day"
 —it is a declaration of *ADONAI* —
 "I will cut off your horses among you,
 and I will destroy your chariots.
¹⁰ (11) I will cut off the cities of your land,
 and throw down all your strongholds.
¹¹ (12) I will cut off sorceries from your hand,
 and you will have no more diviners.
¹² (13) I will cut off your carved images
 and your sacred pillars from among you,
 so you will no longer bow down
 to the work of your hands.
¹³ (14) I will uproot your Asherah poles from among
 you,
 and destroy your cities.
¹⁴ (15) So I will execute vengeance in anger
 and wrath on the nations that have not listened."

ADONAI Pleads His Case

6 Hear what *ADONAI* is saying:
 "Arise! Contend with the mountains,
 and let the hills hear your voice."
² Hear, *ADONAI*'s dispute, O mountains—
 the enduring foundations of the earth.
 For *ADONAI* has a dispute with His people
 and He will argue His case with Israel.
³ "O My people, what have I done to you?
 Or how have I wearied you? Answer Me!
⁴ When I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
 and redeemed you from the house of bondage,

† cf. Matt. 2:6. †† cf. Luke 2:14; Col. 1:20.

‡ Or at its entrances

I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
⁵ O My people, remember, please:
 What did Balak, king of Moab, propose?
 What did Balaam son of Beor answer him?
 From Shittim as far as Gilgal,
 so that you might acknowledge
 the righteous acts of *ADONAI*."

What Is *ADONAI* Seeking from You?

⁶ With what shall I come before *ADONAI*?
 With what shall I bow myself before God on high?
 Shall I present Him with burnt offerings,
 with year-old calves?
⁷ Will *ADONAI* be pleased with thousands of rams,
 with hordes of rivers of oil?
 Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
 the fruit of my belly for the sin of my soul?
⁸ He has told you, humanity, what is good,
 and what *ADONAI* is seeking from you:
 Only to practice justice, to love mercy, †
 and to walk humbly with your God.
⁹ The voice of *ADONAI* calls to the city—
 it is wisdom to fear †† Your Name—
 "Pay attention to the rod and to the One who ap-
 pointed it.

¹⁰ Does the house of the wicked
 still have treasures of wickedness?
 Or is an undersized *ephah* denounced?
¹¹ Can I be pure with wicked balances?
 Or with a bag of deceptive weights?
¹² For the rich of the city are full of violence
 and its inhabitants speak lies.
 Their tongue in their mouth is deceit.
¹³ So also I will strike you severely,
 desolating you because of your sins.
¹⁴ You will eat but not be satisfied,
 and emptiness will be within you.
 You will try to escape,
 but you will not reach safety.
 Whatever you make safe,
 I will give to the sword.
¹⁵ You will sow but not reap;
 you will tread olives but not anoint yourself with oil,
 and grapes but not drink wine.
¹⁶ Now, you observe the statutes of Omri
 and every practice of the house of Ahab,
 and you walk in their counsels.
 Therefore I will make you a horror,
 and her inhabitants a hissing,
 so you will bear the scorn of My people."

None Upright among Mankind

7 Woe is me! For I am like gatherings of produce in
 summer,
 like gleanings of a vineyard.
 There is no cluster to eat,

no first-ripe fig that I crave.
² The pious have perished from the land,
 there is none upright among mankind.
 All of them lie in wait for blood.
 A man hunts his brother with a net.
³ Both hands are diligent at doing evil.
 The official and the judge ask for a bribe.
 The distinguished man utters a desire of his soul.
 Thus they weave it together.
⁴ The best of them is like a prickly bush,
 the most upright like a thorn hedge.
 The day of your watchmen—of your visitation—is
 coming.
 Then their confusion will occur.
⁵ Do not trust in a friend.
 Do not trust in a close companion.
 Guard the openings of your mouth
 from her who lies on your breast.
⁶ For son treats father with contempt;
 daughter rises up against mother;
 daughter-in-law against mother-in-law:
 a man's enemies are the people of his own house. ‡

Zion's Vindication

⁷ But I—I will watch for *ADONAI*.
 I will wait for the God of my salvation.
 My God will hear me.
⁸ Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy.
 Though I have fallen—I will arise.
 Though I sit in darkness, *ADONAI* is my light.
⁹ I will bear the indignation of *ADONAI*,
 because I have sinned against Him,
 until He pleads my cause,
 and executes judgment for me.
 He will bring me out to the light,
 and I will behold His righteousness.
¹⁰ Then my enemy will see it,
 and shame will cover her—
 she who said to me:
 "Where is *ADONAI*, your God?"
 My eyes will gaze at her—
 now she will be trampled
 like mud in streets.
¹¹ A day to rebuild your walls—
 a day the boundary will be far off,
¹² a day when they will come to you
 from Assyria to the cities of Egypt,
 from Egypt to the River,
 from sea to sea,
 and from mountain to mountain.
¹³ Yet the land will become a wasteland because of
 her inhabitants,
 because of the fruit of their misdeeds.
¹⁴ Tend Your people with Your staff,
 the flock of Your inheritance,
 dwelling alone, in a forest
 in the midst of a fertile garden.

† Or lovingkindness

†† Or perceive

‡ cf. Matt. 10:21, 35-36; Mark 13:12; Luke 12:53.

Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead,
 as in the days of old.
¹⁵ "As in the days of your coming out from the land of
 Egypt
 I will show him wonders."
¹⁶ Nations will see and be put to shame
 despite all their might.
 They will put a hand on their mouth,
 their ears will be deaf.
¹⁷ They will lick dust like a snake.
 Like crawling things of the land,
 they will come trembling out of their hiding places.
 To *ADONAI Eloheinu* they will submit in awe—
 in awe of You.

He Will Again Have Compassion

¹⁸ Who is a God like You
 pardoning iniquity, overlooking transgression,
 for the remnant of His heritage?
 He will not retain His anger forever,
 because He delights in mercy.
¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us.
 He will subdue our iniquities,
 and You will cast all our sins into the depths of the
 sea.
²⁰ You will extend truth to Jacob,
 mercy to Abraham,
 that You swore to our ancestors
 from the days of old.

Nahum

Nahum Introduction

Nahum is the Hebrew word for “comfort” or “consolation.” It seems ironic, however, because Nahum is anything but a prophet of comfort and consolation. Acting as something of a mirror to the book of Jonah, Nahum’s narrative once again draws the attention of those reading the Hebrew Scriptures back to pagan Nineveh and gives an account of what happened since the time Jonah ministered there—one hundred years earlier. The short-term revival, spirited along by Jonah’s ministry among them, had long since run its course. Those interests and energies expended, the people fell back into selfishness and sin and incurred the punishment of God as a result.

The dating of Nahum is somewhat confusing. Though there is not a particular date referenced, there are some clues. Nahum looks forward to the fall of Nineveh in the year 612 BCE; also, in Nahum 3, the prophet looks back to the fall of Thebes in the year 664 BC. The prophet, therefore, must have lived and written somewhere in between these two dates. Importantly, this places Nahum about 100 years after Jonah.

His discomfiting words for Nineveh are some of the sharpest in all of Scripture. There are no words of hope or restoration for Nineveh. The message of the prophet is complete destruction and shame for all who live in the decadent city. The message is clear: God will execute complete and utter judgment on this place. The wicked Assyrians held sway over ancient Near Eastern affairs for quite some time. This time, however, was coming to a close. These oracles of doom actually encouraged the Judeans, minded that their tormentors would soon come to an end at the hands of a sovereign God. He was in control of history: not Assyrians; not mere circumstance. The destruction of Nineveh is a sober reminder of the judgment of God on the wicked. The faithful in all ages have long suffered. Scripture says those who wait upon will be vindicated, when God shows Himself mighty in human affairs. Readers of Nahum, no doubt, took heart in the fact that, though difficult circumstances may beset them for a moment, God will arise in human affairs and exact the retribution so long desired by the disempowered and afflicted.

Nahum Headings

- Judgment of Nineveh
- Devastation of Nineveh
- City of Corpses
- The Harlot Humiliated

Judgment of Nineveh

1 The oracle [†] concerning Nineveh—the book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

² A jealous and avenging God is *ADONAI*.
Yes, *ADONAI* is the avenger and master of wrath.
ADONAI is avenger to His adversaries,
Yes, a keeper of wrath for His foes.

³ *ADONAI* is slow to anger and great in power,
but He will by no means acquit the guilty.
ADONAI’s way is with a whirlwind or with a storm
wind,

Clouds are the dust of His feet.

⁴ Rebuking the sea, He made it dry,
as He has dried up all the rivers.

Bashan and Carmel languished,
Yes, Lebanon’s budding languished.

⁵ Mountains quaked because of Him,
and the hills have melted.
The earth has heaved up at His presence—
yes, the world and everything dwelling in it.

⁶ Before His indignation who can stand?
Who can withstand His burning anger?
His wrath is poured out like fire,
and cliffs break down before Him.

⁷ *ADONAI* is good as
a refuge in the day of distress,
and He knows those
who take refuge in Him.

⁸ But with an overwhelming flood,
He will make that place a total ruin.
Darkness will pursue His enemies.

[†] Or *burden*

9 What can you scheme against *ADONAI*?
He will make a complete destruction.
Distress will not arise twice.
10 For even like tangled thorns they will be consumed,
or like drunkards who are drunk,
or like stubble that is fully dry.
11 Out of you has come a schemer of evil against
ADONAI,
a counselor of Belial. †
12 Thus said *ADONAI*:
"Though they are strong and numerous,
even so they will be mowed down
and pass away.
Although I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more.
13 I will now break his yoke from you,
and tear apart your bonds."
14 *ADONAI* has issued a command against you:
"No more will your name be spread.
From the house of your gods
I will cut off the idol and metal image.
I will prepare your grave—
for you have become worthless."
2 (1:15) Behold, upon the mountains
are the feet †† of him bringing good news, ‡
proclaiming *shalom*.
O Judah, celebrate your festivals!
Fulfill your vows!
For never again will Belial pass through you.
He has been utterly cut off.

Devastation of Nineveh

2 (1) A shatterer has come up against you.
Guard the rampart! Watch the way!
Chazak! Be very courageous!
3 (2) For *ADONAI* turned aside Jacob's pride
like Israel's pride—
for spoilers emptied them out
and ruined their vine branches.
4 (3) He makes the shield of warriors' red—
valiant men are clad in scarlet!
The chariot burns with metal fire
on the day of his preparation,
The fir trees are shaken.
5 (4) The chariots dash madly about through the
streets,
rushing to and fro in the plazas,
their appearance is like torches,
darting like flashes of lightning.
6 (5) He will recall his majestic ones.
They will stumble in their march.
They will hasten to her wall.
Now the siege work is set up.
7 (6) The river gates will be opened,
and the palace will melt away.

† Or worthless one bringing ruin †† Christian texts number
chapter 2:1-14 as chapter 1:15-2:13. ‡ cf. Acts 10:36; Rom. 10:15.

8 (7) What was erected †† will be exiled and carried
away.
Her handmaids are lamenting like the sound of
doves,
beating their breasts.
9 (8) Nineveh was like a pool of water for days
—now they are fleeing.
"Stop, stop!" Yet no one turns back.
10 (9) Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold!
For there is no end of treasure—
glory from everything precious.
11 (10) Emptiness, desolation, waste!
Heart melting, knees buckling, anguish in all the
loins,
all their faces grown pale!
12 (11) Where is the lions' den,
the feeding place for young lions—
where the lion went for a lion's cub—
with nothing to disturb them?
13 (12) The lion rips enough for his cubs,
strangles prey for his lionesses.
Yes, he fills his den with prey,
his lair with torn flesh.
14 (13) "Here I am against you"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* —
"I will burn up her chariots in smoke.
A sword will devour your young lions.
I will cut them off from the land of your prey,
and the voice of your messengers will no longer be
heard."

City of Corpses

3 Oy, bloody city!
Full of deceit, full of plunder.
The prey never departs.
2 Crack of whip,
rattling of wheels,
horse galloping,
chariot jolting,
3 horseman climbing up,
blade of sword and flash of spear,
many slain, a mass of corpses
—no end to the corpses—
they stumble over their corpses!

The Harlot Humiliated

4 "Because of the many fornications of the elegant
prostitute,
the mistress of sorceries,
who sells nations by her fornications,
and clans through her sorceries—
5 Behold, I am against you"
—it is a declaration of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* —
"I will lift your skirts over your face,
I will show nations your nakedness
and kingdoms your disgrace.

†† Or *Hutzav*, queen of Nineveh

⁶ Yes, I will fling filth on you.
 I will treat you with contempt
 and set you up as a spectacle.
⁷ So it will be that all who see you
 will recoil from you and say,
 ‘Nineveh has been ravaged!
 Who will lament for her?’
 Where will I find comforters for you?”
⁸ Are you better than No-Amon †,
 situated among channels of the Nile,
 water surrounding her,
 whose fortress and wall was water? ††
⁹ Cush and Egypt were her might—unlimited.
 Put and Libya were her allies.
¹⁰ Yet she went off to exile among the captives.
 Even her babes were dashed to pieces
 at the head of every street.
 They cast lots for her dignitaries,
 and all her great men were bound with chains.
¹¹ You too will become drunk.
 You will hide yourself.
 You too will seek refuge from an enemy.
¹² All your fortifications will be fig trees with first-
 fruits—
 when shaken, they will fall, into an eater’s mouth.
¹³ See, your people within you are women ‡.
 The gates of your land are wide open to your ene-
 mies—

† Or city of Amon †† Hebrew the sea the Nile
 ‡ i.e., incapable of getting the better of armed adversaries

fire has devoured your gate-bars.
¹⁴ Draw water for a siege.
 Strengthen your fortifications!
 Go into the mud and tread mortar.
 Take hold of the brick mold.
¹⁵ There fire will devour you.
 Sword will cut you off,
 devouring you like the locust.
 Multiply like the locust.
 Multiply like the swarming locust!
¹⁶ You have multiplied your traders
 more than the stars of heaven.
 Locusts have stripped and flown off.
¹⁷ Your princes are like locusts,
 your officials like a locust swarm,
 camping in the walls on a chilly day.
 The sun rises, and they are chased away,
 and where they are is unknown.
¹⁸ Your shepherds have become drowsy,
 king of Assyria, your nobles lie down.
 Your people are scattered on the hills,
 with no one to gather them.
¹⁹ There is no cure for your brokenness,
 your wound is severe.
 All who hear the report about you,
 clap hands over you.
 For over whom has not passed
 your constant cruelty?

Habakkuk

Habakkuk Introduction

The name “Habakkuk” comes from a Hebrew word meaning “embrace.” He served as a prophet to the Southern Kingdom of Judah and gave voice to judgments about to come upon the recalcitrant people. Habakkuk wrote on the eve of the Babylonian exile—while himself both embraced and displaced by visions of imminent destruction. His warning went unheeded, as is often the case. Just a few short years later, the Kingdom of Judah was taken into captivity by the Babylonians—punishment for their perennial disobedience.

The first half of Habakkuk is conversational. The prophet sees destruction coming, and inquires: “How could this be happening to us?” or “God, how could you allow them to do it to us?” he ponders. Noted is that the coming warring nations were mightier than the Israelites and that nothing was going to stop the rush of their military forces. If they were to be God’s judgment upon Judah for her perennial sinfulness, fair enough: the nation deserved it. The prophet wondered, however: since the foreigners were even more wicked than the Hebrews, how could God use them as His agent of justice upon the Jewish people. Why them? A series of woes were then spoken over the people of Judah—expressions of chagrin for years poorly lived in pride and deceit. The question was: Why was this happening to the nation? The answer was simply put: judgment! The way God meets it out being entirely up to Him.

Interestingly, Habakkuk concludes the short book with a psalm of praise. In the face of pending judgment, the prophet was still able to praise God and find hope in Him, though circumstances were abysmal. Difficulties aside, he knew that God was God and that He ultimately wouldn’t abandon His purposes or His people—though He may indeed discipline at a given moment. Habakkuk tapped into the presence of God in the midst of his pain and sorrow. His experience reminds of Paul’s words: “We are hard-pressed in every way, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” (2 Cor. 4:8-9). For those who know the presence of God, there is neither experience too difficult nor despair too dark. This is especially true for those who know the “light of the world.”

Habakkuk Headings

Burden for Justice in Judah

Answer: Chaldeans

Appeal for Justice on Chaldea

Vision for an Appointed Time

Trust, Judgment, and Glory

Habakkuk’s Confidence in

Burden for Justice in Judah

1 The oracle [†] that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

² How long, *ADONAI*, have I cried for help, yet You do not hear?

I cry out to You—“Violence!” yet You do not deliver.

³ Why do You show me wickedness, and why must I behold mischief?

Yes, devastation and violence are before me.

There is strife, and contention arises.

⁴ Therefore, *Torah* has no effect, and justice never goes forth.

[†] Or *burden*

For the wicked encircle the righteous, therefore justice comes out perverted.

ADONAI ’s Answer: Chaldeans

⁵ “Look among the nations! Observe!

Astonish yourself! Be astounded!

For a work is being done in your days.

You will not believe it if it were told. ^{††}

⁶ For I am about to raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter, impetuous nation,

marching all over the land, to seize dwellings not its own.

⁷ Dreadful and terrifying,

^{††} cf. Acts 13:41.

Its justice and dignity derive from itself.

⁸ Its horses are swifter than leopards,
fiercer than wolves at dusk.
Its horsemen come galloping.
Its horsemen are coming from afar.
They fly like a vulture, [†] swooping down to eat.

⁹ All of them come for violence—
an assembling of faces to the east.
He gathers captives like sand.

¹⁰ He scoffs at kings,
and rulers are a joke to him.
He laughs at every stronghold—
he heaps up dirt and takes it.

¹¹ Then a wind sweeps through and passes on.
He is guilty—This, his strength, is his god.”

Appeal for Justice on Chaldea

¹² Are not You from antiquity—
ADONAI my God, my Holy One?
We will not die.

ADONAI, You have ordained him for judgment—
as You, O Rock, have established him to chasten.

¹³ With eyes too pure to see evil
You cannot look at such trouble!

Why do You look at the treacherous?
Why do You remain silent when a wicked one
swallows up those more righteous than him?

¹⁴ You made man like the fish of the sea,
like a creeping thing—with no one ruling over him.

¹⁵ He brings up all with hook in jaw,
drags away in his dragnet,
or gathers with his fishing net.
Therefore he rejoices with glee.

¹⁶ Therefore he sacrifices to his dragnet,
and offers incense to his fishing net.
For through them his portion is rich
and his food abundant.

¹⁷ Will he empty his net for this reason
—continually slaying nations—with no compassion?

2 I will take my stand at my post,
and station myself on the rampart,
and I will watch to see what He will say to me,
and what I will answer regarding my argument.

Vision for an Appointed Time

² Then *ADONAI* answered me and said:

“Write down the vision, ^{††}
make it plain on the tablets,
so that the reader may run with it.

³ For the vision is yet for an appointed time.
It hastens to the end
and will not fail.

If it should be slow in coming, wait for it,
For it will surely come—it will not delay. [‡]

Trust, Judgment, and Glory

⁴ “Behold, the puffed up one—
his soul is not right within him,
But the righteous will live by his trust. ^{‡†}

⁵ Indeed, because this wine betrays,
a proud man never rests.

He enlarges his desire like *Sheol*,
Like death, he is never satisfied.

So he gathers to himself all nations,
and collects all peoples for himself.

⁶ Will not all take up a proverb against him or a scornful riddle about him?

‘Oy to one expanding what isn’t his!
How long?

Oy to one burdening himself with heavy debts!

⁷ Will biting you arise suddenly,
and those shaking you awaken,
as you will become plunder for them?

⁸ Since you looted many nations,
all the survivors will plunder you—
because of human bloodshed
and violence done to the land, the city and all its inhabitants.

⁹ Oy to one surely getting unjust gain for his house—
to set his nest on high,
to escape the reach of calamity!

¹⁰ You schemed shame for your house,
by cutting off many peoples,
so going wrong yourself.

¹¹ For a stone will cry out ^{‡†} from a wall,
and wooden beams will answer.

¹² Oy to him who builds a city by bloodshed,
and establishes a town with injustice!

¹³ Behold, is it not from *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot*
that peoples toil to fuel a fire,
and nations exhaust themselves for emptiness?

¹⁴ For the earth will be filled with knowing the glory of
ADONAI,
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁵ Oy to one who makes his neighbor drink,
who pours out Your fury, and even making him drunk
In order to gaze at his nakedness!

¹⁶ You are filled with disgrace rather than glory.
Drink—you too—and be uncircumcised.

The cup of *ADONAI*’s right hand will surround you,
and disgrace will come upon your glory.

¹⁷ For the violence done to Lebanon will spread over
you,
destruction of beasts terrifying them,
because of human bloodshed and violence done to
the land,
the city and to all its inhabitants.

¹⁸ What use is an idol when its craftsman has carved
it?

Or a metal image—a teacher of lies?

[†] Or eagle ^{††} cf. Rom. 4:24; Rev. 1:19. [‡] cf. Heb. 10:37b.

^{‡†} Or faithfulness
Luke 19:40.

^{‡‡} cf.

For a craftsman has trusted in the image that he created,

to make dumb idols.

¹⁹ *Oy* to one who says to wood: 'Awake!'

To a dumb stone: 'Rouse yourself!' Can it teach?

Look, it is plated with gold and silver,

but it has no spirit within it.

²⁰ But *ADONAI* is in His holy Temple.

Let all the land be silent before Him.

Habakkuk's Confidence in *ADONAI*

3 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, as a passionate song.

² *ADONAI*, I have heard the report about You and I have come to fear.

ADONAI, revive Your work throughout the years, throughout the years make it known,

In wrath remember compassion.

³ God comes from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. *Selah*

His majesty covers the heavens, and His praise fills the earth.

⁴ With brilliance like light, rays emanate from His hand.

There His power was hidden.

⁵ Pestilence goes before Him, a fiery bolt goes forth at His feet.

⁶ He stood, and the earth shook.

He looked, and startled nations. Ancient mountains were shattered,

hills of antiquity sank down.

His ways are everlasting.

⁷ I saw tents of Cushan under calamity.

The curtains of the land of Midian are trembling.

⁸ *ADONAI*, is your wrath against rivers?

Or Your anger at the rivers?

Or is Your fury with the sea?

For You ride on Your horses,

Your chariots of salvation!

⁹ Your bow is laid bare.

Sworn are rods—a decree. *Selah*

You cleave the land with rivers.

¹⁰ The mountains saw You and writhe.

A downpour of water overflows.

The deep gives its voice—

it lifts up hands high.

¹¹ Sun and moon, stand in lofty abode.

At the flash of Your arrows they go,

at the radiance of the lightning of Your spear.

¹² With indignation You pace the land.

With anger You thresh nations.

¹³ You went out for the salvation of Your people—

for the deliverance of Your anointed one. †

You shatter the head of the house of the wicked—

to lay it bare from foundation up to the top. *Selah*

¹⁴ You have pierced his chief rulers with his own staff—

They stormed in to scatter me.

Their exultation is like devouring the weak in secret.

¹⁵ You marched forth,

Your horses in the sea—much water foaming.

¹⁶ I heard, and my belly trembled.

My lips quivered at the sound.

Decay comes into my bones.

I tremble where I stand,

since I must wait quietly for a day of distress

to come up against the people who will invade us.

¹⁷ Though the fig tree does not blossom,

and there is no yield on the vines,

Though the olive crop fail,

and the fields produce no food,

the flock is cut off from the fold,

and there is no cattle in the stalls.

¹⁸ Yet will I triumph in *ADONAI*,

I will rejoice in the God of my salvation! ††

¹⁹ *ADONAI* my Lord, is my strength.

He has made my feet like a deer's,

and will make me walk on my high places.

For the choir director: On my stringed instruments.

† cf. Acts 13:26. †† cf. Luke 1:47; Phil. 4:4.

Zephaniah

Zephaniah Introduction

In Hebrew Zephaniah means “is hidden.” Zephaniah lived during the reign of the revival king Josiah. One of the greatest kings of Judah, Josiah led the nation in a great revival and return to the authorized worship of God. It is not unreasonable to think that Zephaniah played some part in the short-term revival. Tragically, Josiah’s revival seems to have been too short and too late. After his untimely death, the flames of worship flicked out and the torch of wickedness burnt ablaze.

God may indeed have seemed “hidden” to Judah. For, just a few years later, the nation was sacked, the capital was destroyed, and the people were uprooted—with the survivors taken captive to Babylon, far removed from their ancestral homeland. Many may have wondered where was. In this prophetic message, God shows Himself to be anything but hidden. God speaks loud and clear to the nation about the coming judgment. Omnipotent, He is the One who allowed it.

Zephaniah employs some of the same terminology as the prophet Joel. Case in point: the day of . Questions about this day are answered in Zephaniah 1:14-19. Along with the promise of judgment, there is something new. Zephaniah gives the reason for the judgment and captivity. He informs that through the captivity and exile the nation would become purified. All of God’s efforts to get to and through to the nation of Israel failed. Reason, appeals, encouragements, and even threats did not work. Now it was time for action on God’s part. The disciplined nation would be purified, the unrighteous separated out and then a righteous remnant would be returned to the land. At the end of Zephaniah’s prophecy, we see Israel restored and vindicated in the eyes of God and the eyes of the nations. God’s judgment upon the Hebrews thus must not be construed as abandonment, but discipline—temporary and not permanent.

The second half of the book accentuates good news for Jews. God will not always reject His people, and God’s will is, in fact, a general restoration to all nations. Israel’s Messiah will be a principal agent in this restoration. In Him, God has indeed made the way of salvation available to all people—Jews and Gentiles alike.

Zephaniah Headings

Hand of Judgment Upon Idolaters

The Day Is at Hand

Judgment of Nearby Nations

Downfall of Disobedient Jerusalem

The Future Restoration of Israel’s Remnant

Hand of Judgment Upon Idolaters

¹ The word of *ADONAI* that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah:

² “I will totally sweep away everything from the face of the earth,” declares *ADONAI* .

³ “I will sweep away man and beast, I will sweep away the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea—also the stumbling blocks—the wicked.

I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth,” declares *ADONAI* . †

⁴ “I will stretch out my hand upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place—the names of the idolatrous priests along with the *kohanim* ,

⁵ those bowing down on the roofs to the host of the heavens, those bowing down, swearing to *ADONAI* and also swearing by Molech,

⁶ those turning from following *ADONAI* , not seeking *ADONAI* , or consulting Him.”

The Day Is at Hand

⁷ Be silent before *ADONAI* God.

† cf. Matt. 13:41.

For the day of *ADONAI* is at hand! †
ADONAI has prepared a sacrifice,
 He has consecrated his guests.
 8 "On the day of *ADONAI*'s sacrifice,
 I will punish the princes,
 the king's sons
 and all who dress in foreign attire.
 9 In that day I will punish
 all who skip over the threshold
 while filling their master's House
 with violence and deceit.
 10 In that day"—declares *ADONAI* —
 "there will be the sound of screaming from the Fish
 Gate,
 wailing from the second district
 and a loud crash from the heights.
 11 Howl, inhabitants of Maktesh! ††
 For all the people of Canaan ‡ are destroyed.
 All who weigh out silver are cut off.
 12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps
 and punish the men whose spirits have hardened,
 who say in their hearts,
 ' *ADONAI* will do neither good nor evil.'
 13 Their wealth will become plunder,
 their houses a ruin.
 They will build houses
 but not live in them.
 They will plant vineyards
 but not drink their wine."
 14 The great day of *ADONAI* is near—
 near and coming very quickly!
 The sound of the day of *ADONAI* is bitter—
 the shouting of the warrior is there.
 15 That day is a day of wrath,
 a day of trouble and distress,
 a day of devastating storm and desolation,
 a day of darkness and gloom,
 a day of clouds and thick darkness,
 16 a day of *shofar* and alarm
 against the fortified cities
 and against the high corner towers.
 17 "I will bring such distress upon mankind
 that they will walk like the blind—
 for they have sinned against *ADONAI* .
 Their blood will be poured out like dust,
 and their flesh like dung.
 18 Neither their silver nor their gold
 will be able to rescue them
 on the day of *ADONAI*'s wrath."
 With the fire of His passion
 the entire earth will be consumed.
 For He will make a total,
 dreadful annihilation of all the inhabitants of the
 earth.

Judgment of Nearby Nations

2 Gather together! Gather together,
 O shameless nation—
 2 before the decree is brought forth,
 before the day passes away like chaff,
 before *ADONAI*'s burning anger comes upon you,
 before the day of *ADONAI*'s anger comes upon you!
 3 Seek *ADONAI* , all you humble of the land
 who have executed His judgment.
 Seek righteousness; seek meekness! ††
 Perhaps you will be hidden
 on the day of *ADONAI*'s wrath.
 4 For Gaza will be abandoned
 and Ashkelon will be a wasteland.
 Ashdod will be driven out at noon
 and Ekron will be uprooted.
 5 O y to the inhabitants of the seacoast,
 the nation of Cherethites!
 "The word of *ADONAI* is against you,
 Canaan, the land of the Philistines,
 and I will destroy you
 until there is no inhabitant."
 6 The seacoast will become pastures,
 with meadows for shepherds and folds for flocks.
 7 The coast will belong to the remnant of the house of
 Judah,
 upon which they will graze.
 In the houses of Ashkelon
 they will lie down in the evening.
 For *ADONAI* their God will visit them
 and return them from captivity.
 8 "I have heard the taunts of Moab
 and the jeers of the children of Ammon,
 who taunted My people
 and expanded on their border.
 9 Therefore, as I live,"
 declares *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* God of Israel,
 "Moab will be like Sodom
 and Ammon like Gomorrah—
 a possession of weeds and a salt pit,
 a perpetual wasteland.
 The remainder of My people will plunder them.
 The remnant of My nation will dispossess them."
 10 This is what they will get for their pride,
 for they have taunted and expanded
 against the people of *ADONAI* - *Tzva'ot* .
 11 *ADONAI* will be fearsome against them.
 For all the gods of the earth
 He will make waste away.
 To Him will bow, each from its place,
 the islands of the nations.
 12 "You Ethiopians too
 will be slain by My sword."
 13 He will stretch out his hand against the north
 and devastate Assyria
 and make Nineveh as a wasteland—

† cf. 2 Cor. 1:14; 1 Thes. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 1:7, 10. †† A district of Jerusalem for beating mortar. ‡ Or merchant people

†† cf. Matt. 6:3.

dry as a desert.

¹⁴ Flocks will lie down in her midst,
all kinds of beasts—
both the little owl and the great owl
will lodge in her pillars.
A voice will hoot in the window.
Ruin will be in the doorway,
for the cedar beams will be exposed.
¹⁵ This is the exultant city,
dwelling securely,
saying in her heart,
“It’s me—no one else but me!”
How did she become a ruin,
an abode for wild beasts?
Everyone who passes by her
hisses and shakes his fist.

Downfall of Disobedient Jerusalem

3 Oy to the oppressive city—
filthy and defiled!
² She did not obey;
she took no correction.
She did not trust in *ADONAI*.
She did not draw near to her God.
³ Her princes within her are roaring lions.
Her judges are wolves of the night,
leaving nothing but bones for morning.
⁴ Her prophets are reckless,
treacherous men.
Her *kohanim* have profaned what is holy.
They do violence to *Torah*.
⁵ *ADONAI* is righteous in her midst.
He will do no injustice.
Morning by morning He brings His justice to light.
He does not fail.
Yet the unjust knows no shame.
⁶ “I have cut off nations.
Their towers have become desolate.
I have destroyed their streets,
with no one passing by.
Their cities are laid waste,
with no one—none living there.
⁷ I said, ‘Surely you will fear Me,
you will accept correction,
so her dwelling place would not be cut off—
all that I appointed against her.’
But they arose early
and made all their deeds corrupt.
⁸ Therefore, wait for me,” declares *ADONAI*,
“for the day when I rise up for plunder:
for My decision is to assemble nations,
to gather kingdoms, †
to pour out My fury upon them—
all My burning anger.
For in the fire of My wrath
all the earth will be consumed.

The Future Restoration of Israel’s Remnant

⁹ “For then I will restore to the people pure speech,
so that all of them
may call upon the Name of *ADONAI*
and serve Him shoulder to shoulder.
¹⁰ From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,
My worshipers, the daughter of My scattered ones
will bring My offering.
¹¹ On that day you will not be ashamed
because of all your deeds by which you rebelled
against Me.
For then I will remove from your midst
your proud, arrogant ones,
and you will never again be haughty
on My holy mountain.
¹² But I will leave among you
a people meek and humble.
They will take refuge in the Name of *ADONAI*.
¹³ The remnant of Israel will do no injustice
nor will they tell lies,
nor will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouths.
††
For they will graze and lie down
and no one will make them afraid.”
¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion!
Shout in triumph, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult wholeheartedly,
O daughter of Jerusalem!
¹⁵ *ADONAI* has taken away your punishments.
He has turned back your adversary.
The King of Israel, *ADONAI*, is in your midst.
Never again will you fear harm.
¹⁶ On that day, it will be said to Jerusalem,
“Have no fear, O Zion,
do not let your hands fall limp.
¹⁷ *ADONAI* your God is in your midst—
a mighty Savior!
He will delight over you with joy.
He will quiet you with His love.
He will dance for joy over you with singing ‡.”
¹⁸ “I will gather those among you
who grieve over your *moadim* —
it is a burden of shame on you.
¹⁹ Behold, at that time I will deal
with all who oppress you.
I will save the lame and gather the outcast.
I will make them a praise and a name
throughout all the land where they suffered shame.
²⁰ At that time I will bring you in.
At that time I will gather you.
For I will give you renown and glory
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your captives
before your eyes,”
declares *ADONAI*.

† cf. Rev. 16:1.

†† cf. John 1:47; Rev. 14:5. ‡ Or joyful shout

Haggai

Haggai Introduction

Haggai's name means "festival" or "celebration." Haggai was written after the Babylonian exile and likely during the time of the first return of displaced Judean exiles under Zerubbabel in 536 BCE. In 538 BCE, the Babylonian King, Cyrus, issued an edict that all of the Jewish people could return home to Jerusalem—as could other peoples. Soon after, most of the Jewish people began their return back to Israel. The first group of returnees went back under the aforementioned Zerubbabel. Upon their return, the Jewish people found the city of Jerusalem and the Temple in ruins. As they set out to rebuild the Temple, Haggai records how the novelty of the enterprise had run its course, and how the people were then bested by their own sloth and indolence—not to mention perennial problems with the Samaritans. Tired, discouraged, and anxious to attend to their own estates, many of the Jewish people in and around Jerusalem were giving up the task of rebuilding, preferring instead to attend to their own private matters. Haggai's message was one of an encouragement to keep on rebuilding and to not give up on the task at hand.

Haggai's message focuses much of its attention on the purpose of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Temple was to unite people with their God and allow for the reinstatement of the authorized worship of God. The rebuilding of the Temple had been stated as the reason for the return from Babylon. It would be something of a low to have come all the way back to Israel and not rebuild the Temple. Haggai wanted the nation to see the glory of the Temple and all that it could be, envisioning as he did that proper worship was central to their success.

As followers of the Messiah, we are drawn to the New Testament's portrayal of as the dwelling place of God. John 1:14 says, "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. We looked upon His glory, the glory of the one and only from the Father, full of grace and truth..." 's dwelling in us is similar to God's dwelling with Hebrews in the Temple. In , we see the fullness of God dwelling with man. Let us not be sluggish in attending to His development within us.

Haggai Headings

A Call to Build the House of
Glory of This Latter House
Promise to Zerubbabel

A Call to Build the House of *ADONAI*

1 In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of *ADONAI* came through Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, † and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, *kohen gadol*: †† "Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*: 'This people say the time has not come—the time for the House of *ADONAI* to be rebuilt.'"

³ Then the word of *ADONAI* came through Haggai the prophet: ⁴ "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this House lies in ruins?"

⁵ But now," thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*:

"Set your heart on your ways!

⁶ You sowed much but bring in little.

You eat but are never satisfied.

You drink but not enough to get filled.

You put on clothes but no one is warm.

And whoever earns wages works for a bag full of holes."

⁷ Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*: "Set your heart on your ways! ⁸ Go up to the hills, bring wood, and build the House. Then I will delight in it and I will be glorified," says *ADONAI*. ⁹ "You have looked for much, but indeed, there is little. What you have brought home, I have blown away. Why is this?"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*—"because My House lies in ruins, while you are running, each to his own house. ¹⁰ Therefore, because of you, the sky has withheld dew and the earth has withheld its yield. ¹¹ For I have called for drought on the land, the hills and the grain, on the new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on mankind and beast, as well as all labor of hands."

¹² Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Joshua son of Jehozadak, *kohen gadol*, and all the remnant of the

† cf. Matt. 1:13; Luke 3:27. †† Yehoshua Yeshua

people, heeded the voice of *ADONAI* their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, since *ADONAI* their God had sent him. So the people revered *ADONAI*.¹³ Then Haggai, the messenger of *ADONAI*, spoke to the people with the message of *ADONAI*, "I am with you!"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

¹⁴ Then *ADONAI* stirred the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, *kohen gadol*, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and did work on the House of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* their God,¹⁵ on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.

Glory of This Latter House

2 On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of *ADONAI* came through Haggai the prophet:² Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, *kohen gadol*, and to the remnant of the people:³ "Who remains among you who saw this House in its former glory? So how do you see it now? Does it not seem as nothing in comparison in your eyes?⁴ But now, Zerubbabel, *chazak!*"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"and be strong, Joshua son of Jehozadak, *kohen gadol*, and all people of the land, *chazak!*"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"and work! For I am with you!"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.⁵ "According to the word I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. My *Ruach* is standing in your midst. Do not fear!"

⁶ For thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*: "In just a little while I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land,⁷ and I will shake all the nations. The treasures of all the nations will come, and I will fill this House with glory," says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*.⁸ "The silver is mine and the gold is mine!"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.⁹ "The glory of this latter House will be greater than the former," says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*. "In this place, I will grant *shalom*"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*.

ADONAI's Promise to Zerubbabel

¹⁰ On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of *ADONAI* came to

† cf. Heb. 12:26.

Haggai the prophet,¹¹ "Thus says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*: 'Ask now the *kohanim* for a ruling.¹² If a person carries consecrated meat in the corner of his garment, and with his corner he touches bread, stew, wine, oil, or any food, will it become holy too?'"

Then the *kohanim* answered and said, "No."

¹³ So Haggai said, "If one who is unclean by contact with a corpse touches any of these, does it become unclean?"

The *kohanim* answered and said, "It does become unclean."

¹⁴ Then, Haggai answered and said, "So it is with this people. So is this nation before Me"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"and so is every work of their hands. What they were offering there was unclean.¹⁵ But now, set your heart back from this day onward. Before stone was set upon stone in the Temple of *ADONAI*,¹⁶ how were things? When one came to a grain-heap of 20 measures, there were 10; when one came to the wine vat to draw 50 measures, there were 20.¹⁷ I struck you with blight and with mildew and with hail—every work of your hands—so you were nothing to Me"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.¹⁸ "Now, set your heart back from this day on—from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day the Temple of *ADONAI* was founded, set your heart:¹⁹ Is there still seed in the storehouse? Also the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree—are they still bearing fruit? From this day on I am going to bless you."

²⁰ Then the word of *ADONAI* came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month,²¹ "Say to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah: 'I am going to shake the heavens and the earth,²² and I will overturn the throne of kingdoms and destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations. I will overturn the chariot and its rider, so horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother.

²³ "On that day"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*—"I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"and I will set you like a signet ring. For I have chosen you." It is a declaration of *ADONAI -Tzva'ot*.

Zechariah

Zechariah Introduction

In Hebrew, Zechariah's name means "God Remembers." Like Haggai, Zechariah wrote to the returnees coming back from the Babylonian exile. Also similar to Haggai, Zechariah was commissioned by God to encourage the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. Rather than simply tender exhortations, Zechariah used visions and dreams, and in the process, painted a picture of the Messianic future. Throughout the entire book, there is a constant refrain of God remembering His people. Israel is not to be forgotten. Though the torrents of hell may sweep against her ramparts, Jerusalem will not be forgotten. Zechariah tells how a "pierced" Messiah will visit Israel and get the better of the hellish forces bent on her utter demise.

The Book of Zechariah is based on eight visions, four messages, and two burdens. All of the visions, messages, and burdens were given to the nation to help with the process of rebuilding, encourage faithfulness, and reminder of its eventual glorious future. Troubled as they were by hostile people roundabout and mindful that they were smaller and weaker than their ancestors, it is not at all surprising to think that the returning exiles would be doubtful of their prospects for a secure future. God, through the prophet Zechariah, wanted to remind the nation that they were not forgotten or forsaken.

In the central section, Zechariah gives the nation the reason for their previous captivity and exile. Zechariah 7:8-14 is one of the clearest reasons for exile in the entire Scripture. The reason for their redemption is similarly and gloriously noted. Central to Zechariah's message is the promise of a coming Messiah. Many specific prophecies about the Messiah are found dominating the second half of the book of Zechariah. Some of the passages pointing to the Messiah are: the Messiah riding into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey; the reinstitution of the Davidic Kingdom; the re-gathering of the nation back to Israel; Judeans accepting the Messiah; the giving of the Holy Spirit; the final judgment; and the international knowledge and celebration of God at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zechariah Headings

Return to the Lord

Among the Myrtle Trees

Four Horns and Four Craftsmen

Measuring Jerusalem

Joshua the

Two Olive Trees and the Capstone

Flying Scroll and Basket

Four Chariots

Crowns for Joshua

Justice and

Zealous for Zion

Judgment on Israel's Enemies

Zion's Coming King

Good Shepherd Cares for Judah

Devastation of Surrounding Lands

Two Staffs

Jerusalem, a Cup of Reeling

Mourning the Pierced One

Final Cleansing from Sin

Coming to the Mount of Olives

Return to the Lord

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of *ADONAI* came to the prophet Zechariah, † son of Berechiah son of Iddo, saying:
 2 " *ADONAI* has been furious with your fathers.
 3 Therefore tell them, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, 'Return to Me' ††—it is a declaration of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*—'and I will return to you,' says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*. 4 'Do not be like your fathers to whom the former prophets cried out saying,' thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, 'Turn back now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds. But they did not listen or pay attention to Me.' It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
 5 "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? 6 But My words and My decrees, which I commanded My servants the prophets—did they not overtake your fathers? Then they repented and said 'As He determined, *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has dealt with us according to our ways and our deeds.'"

Among the Myrtle Trees

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month *Shevat*, in the second year of Darius, the word of *ADONAI* came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, saying: 8 In the night I saw, and behold, a man riding upon a red horse was standing among the myrtle trees that were in the ravine. Behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses.
 ‡

9 Then I asked, "What are these, my lord?"

Now the angel speaking with me said to me, "I will show you what these are."

10 Then the man standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are the ones *ADONAI* has sent to walk back and forth throughout the earth."

11 They answered the angel of *ADONAI* who stood among the myrtle trees saying, "We have walked throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth sits quietly and is still."

12 Then the angel of *ADONAI* answered and said, " *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, how long will You withhold compassion on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah with whom You have been angry for 70 years?" 13 *ADONAI* answered the angel who was speaking to me with pleasant, comforting words.

14 Then the angel speaking to me said, "Cry out saying, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, 'I am exceedingly zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion 15 and I am infuriated with the haughty nations. I was a little angry with them, but they furthered their own calamity.

16 "Therefore,' thus says *ADONAI*, 'I will return to Jerusalem with compassion. My House will be built there,' declares *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* 'and a measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem.' 17 Again cry out, saying, thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, 'My cities will again

† cf. Matt. 23:35. †† cf. Jacob 4:8. ‡ cf. Rev. 6:2, 4.

overflow with prosperity and *ADONAI* will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem.'"

Four Horns and Four Craftsmen

2 (1:18) Then I lifted up my eyes and behold, I saw four horns! 2 (1:19) I said to the angel speaking with me, "What are these?"

He said to me, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

3 (1:20) Then *ADONAI* showed me four craftsmen. 4 (1:21) I asked, "What are these coming to do?"

He answered, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could raise his head, but the craftsmen have come to frighten them, to cast down the horns of the nations that have lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

Measuring Jerusalem

5 (1) I lifted up my eyes—and behold, I saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. †6 (2) I asked, "Where are you going?"

He answered me, "To measure Jerusalem to see how wide and how long it is." ††

7 (3) Then behold, the angel speaking with me left and another angel went out to meet him, 8 (4) saying to him, "Run, speak to this young man saying: 'Jerusalem will be inhabited as a village without walls because of the great number of men and livestock in it. 9 (5) For I—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—'will be a wall of fire around it and I will be the glory inside it. 10 (6) Oy, oy! Flee from the land of the north'—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—'because I scattered you like the four winds of heaven'—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*. 11 (7) 'Oy, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon.

12 (8) "For thus says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*, He has sent me after glory to the nations that plundered you—because whoever touches you touches the apple of His eye— 13 (9) 'For behold, I will shake My hand against them and they will be plunder to their servants.' Then you will know that *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has sent me.

14 (10) "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will live among you' †††—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*. 15 (11) 'In that day many nations will join themselves to *ADONAI* and they will be My people and I will dwell among you.' Then you will know that *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* has sent me to you. 16 (12) *ADONAI* will inherit Judah as His portion in the holy land and will once again choose Jerusalem. 17 (13) Be silent before *ADONAI*, all flesh, for He has aroused Himself from His holy dwelling."

Joshua the Kohen Gadol

3 Then he showed me Joshua the *kohen gadol* standing before the angel of *ADONAI* and the sa-

†† cf. Rev. 21:23. ††† cf. Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27. †††† cf. John 14:23; 2 Cor. 6:16.

tan, † standing at his right hand to accuse him. †† *ADONAI* said to the *satan*, “*ADONAI* rebukes you, the *satan*. Indeed *ADONAI*, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebukes you. ‡ Is not this man a brand plucked out of the fire?”

3 Now Joshua was wearing filthy garments and standing before the angel 4 who answered and spoke to those standing before him saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Then to Joshua he said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you and will dress you with fine clothing.” ‡

5 Then I said, “Place a clean turban on his head.”

So they put a pure turban on his head and clothed him with garments while the angel of *ADONAI* stood by.

6 The angel of *ADONAI* exhorted Joshua saying:

7 “Thus says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*, ‘If you will walk in My ways and keep My charge, then you will judge My House and watch over My courts and I will give you a place to walk among these standing here. 8 Listen well, Joshua *kohen gadol*, both you and your companions seated before you, because they are men who are a sign—behold, I will bring forth My servant the Branch. 9 For behold! The stone I have laid before Joshua is one stone with seven facets. On it I will engrave an inscription,’ declares *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, ‘that I will remove the iniquity of this land in one day. 10 In that day,’ declares *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*, ‘every man will invite his neighbor to sit under the vine and under the fig tree.’”

Two Olive Trees and the Capstone

4 Then the angel who had been speaking with me returned and woke me—like a man who is wakened from his sleep.

2 He asked me, “What do you see?”

I replied, “Behold, I see a solid gold *menorah* with its bowl at the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven pipes for the lamps that are on the top of it. 3 Also two olive trees are by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on the left side of it.” ‡

4 Then I responded by saying to the angel speaking with me, “What are these, my lord?”

5 The angel who spoke with me responded by asking me, “You do not know what these are?”

I replied, “No, my lord.”

6 Then he responded to me by saying, “This is the word of *ADONAI* to Zerubbabel saying: ‘Not by might, nor by power, but by My *Ruach*!’ says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot*. 7 ‘What are you, great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain. He will bring out the capstone with shouts of “Grace, grace” to it.’”

8 Again the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: 9 “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this House. His hands will also finish it. Then you will know that *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* has sent me to you. 10 For who despises the day of small things? These seven—which

† Meaning the accuser the adversary †† cf. Matt. 4:10; Rev. 12:9-10. ‡ cf. Jude 9, 23. †† cf. Rev. 19:8. ‡‡ cf. Rev. 11:4.

are the eyes of *ADONAI* that run back and forth throughout the whole earth—will rejoice when they see the plumb line in Zerubbabel’s hand.”

11 Then I responded by asking him, “What are these two olive trees, on the right and on the left of the *menorah*?” 12 Again I asked him, “What are these two olive branches beside the two golden pipes that empty the golden oil out of them?”

13 He said to me, “You do not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.”

14 So he said, “These are the two anointed ones, who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”

Flying Scroll and Basket

5 Once again I lifted up my eyes and behold, I saw a flying scroll!

2 Then the angel asked me, “What do you see?”

I replied, “I see a flying scroll 20 cubits long and 10 cubits wide.”

3 He said to me: “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land: everyone who steals will be swept away from here according to it, and everyone who swears will be swept away from here according to it. 4 I will send it out”—it is a declaration of *ADONAI -Tzva’ot*—“and it will enter into the house of the thief and into the house of the one who swears falsely by My Name and will reside inside his house destroying it, both its wood and its stones.”

5 Then the angel speaking with me came forward, and said to me, “Now lift up your eyes and see what is appearing.”

6 I asked, “What is it?”

He replied, “This is the measuring basket ‡‡ that goes out.” He continued, “This is their eye in all the land.” 7 Then behold, a lead cover was lifted and a woman was sitting in the middle of the measuring basket. 8 The angel exclaimed, “This is Wickedness!” Then he shoved her back inside the measuring basket, throwing the lead weight over its mouth.

9 After this I lifted up my eyes and behold, I saw two women emerging with the wind in their wings (they had wings like the wings of a stork) and they raised the measuring basket between the earth and the heaven.

10 I asked the angel who was speaking with me, “Where are they taking the measuring basket?”

11 He said, “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar. When it is prepared, she will live there in her own place.”

Four Chariots

6 Again I lifted up my eyes, and behold, I saw four chariots emerging from between the two mountains—mountains of bronze! 2 The first chariot had red horses, the second chariot black horses, 3 the third

‡‡ Hebrew *ephah*

chariot white horses, and the fourth chariot had strong dappled horses. †

⁴ Then I responded by saying to the angel speaking with me, "What are these, my lord?"

⁵ The angel answered me saying, "These are the four winds of heaven that go forth from the presence of the Lord of all the earth. ††⁶ The chariot with the black horses is going to the land of the north and the white ones have gone out after them, but the dappled ones have gone out to the land of the south." ⁷ When the strong ones went out, they requested to go to walk throughout the earth. He said, "Go! Walk throughout the earth." So they walked throughout the earth.

⁸ Then he called and spoke to me saying, "Look! Those going toward the land of the north have given rest to My *Ruach* in the north country."

Crowns for Joshua

⁹ And the word of *ADONAI* came to me saying: ¹⁰ "Take from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah who have come from Babylon, and go the same day, go to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah! ¹¹ Take silver and gold, make crowns and set on the head of Joshua son of Johozadak, the *kohen gadol*. ¹² Then speak to him saying, 'Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*: Behold, a man whose Name is the Branch will branch out from his place and build the Temple of *ADONAI*. ¹³ He will build the Temple of *ADONAI*. He will bear splendor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus He will be a *kohen* on His throne. So a counsel of *shalom* will be between them both. ¹⁴ The crowns will be in the Temple of *ADONAI* as a memorial to Helem, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, and to Chen son of Zephaniah. ¹⁵ Those who are far off will come and build in the Temple of *ADONAI*.' Then you will know that *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* has sent me to you. It will come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of *ADONAI* your God."

Justice and *Chesed*

⁷ In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of *ADONAI* came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, in *Kislev*. ² Now Beth-El sent Sarezzer and Regem-Melech together with his men to seek the favor of *ADONAI*, ³ and to speak to the *kohanim* of the House of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* and to the prophets saying, "Should I mourn and consecrate myself in the fifth month as I have done for so many years?"

⁴ Then the word of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* came to me saying: ⁵ "Speak to all the people of the land and to the *kohanim* saying, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh months for the past 70 years, did you really fast for Me? ⁶ When you eat and drink, are you not eating and drinking for yourself? ⁷ Are not these the words that *ADONAI* proclaimed through the former prophets when Jerusalem with its surrounding

cities were inhabited and prosperous, when the Negev and the lowland were inhabited?"

⁸ Again the word of *ADONAI* came to Zechariah saying, ⁹ "Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*: 'Administer true judgment and practice mercy and compassion each to his brother. ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the outsider or the poor. Furthermore, do not let any of you devise evil against one another in your heart.'

¹¹ "But they refused to pay attention. They stubbornly turned their backs and stopped their ears from hearing. ¹² Indeed, they made their hearts as hard as flint preventing them from hearing the *Torah* or the words that *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* sent by His *Ruach* through the former prophets. Consequently, great wrath came from *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*. ¹³ It came about that just as He called and they did not listen, so they would call and I would not listen, says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*. ¹⁴ I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations they have not known. Thus the land was left so desolate behind them that no one passed through or returned, for they made the pleasant land desolate."

Zealous for Zion

⁸ Then the word of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* came saying: ² "Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, 'I am exceedingly zealous for Zion, I am burning with jealousy for her.' ³ Thus says *ADONAI*, 'I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth and the mountain of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* will be called the Holy Mountain.' ⁴ Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, "Once again old men and old women will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with his staff in his hand because of his age. ⁵ The streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing in its streets."

⁶ "Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, 'It may seem difficult in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, but will it also be difficult in My eyes?'—it is a declaration of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*. ⁷ Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, 'Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west. ⁸ I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem. They will be My people and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness.' ⁹ Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, 'Let your hands be strong—you who hear these words spoken by the prophets who were there the day the foundation of the House of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot* was laid—so that the Temple may be rebuilt. ¹⁰ Before those days there were no wages for man or animal, nor was there any *shalom* from adversity for those who came or went because I set every one against his neighbor. ¹¹ But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days'—it is a declaration of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*.

¹² 'For there will be a sowing of *shalom*: the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its increase, and the heavens will give their dew. I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things. ¹³ It will

† cf. Rev. 6:2, 4-5. †† cf. Matt. 24:31; Rev. 7:1.

‡ cf. Heb. 8:10.

happen that just as you were a curse among the nations, house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you and you will be a blessing. Fear not! Let your hands be strong!

¹⁴“For thus says *ADONAI- Tzva’ot*, ‘Just as I determined to harm you when your fathers provoked Me to anger,’ says *ADONAI- Tzva’ot*, ‘and I did not relent, ¹⁵ so I have again determined in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Fear not!

¹⁶These are the things that you are to do: speak the truth one to another; administer the judgment of truth and *shalom* in your gates; ¹⁷do not let any of you devise evil in your hearts against your neighbor; and do not love false oaths, for I hate all these things,—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.”

¹⁸Again the word of *ADONAI- Tzva’ot* came saying: ¹⁹“Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva’ot*, ‘The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth month will become joy, gladness, and cheerful *moadim*. Therefore, love truth and *shalom*!’ ²⁰Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva’ot*, ‘Peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will again come. ²¹The inhabitants of one city will go to another saying “Let us go to entreat the favor of *ADONAI* and to seek *ADONAI- Tzva’ot*. I also am going.” ²²Indeed, many peoples and powerful nations will come to seek *ADONAI- Tzva’ot* in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of *ADONAI*.’ ²³Thus says *ADONAI- Tzva’ot*, ‘In those days it will come to pass that ten men from every language of the nations will grasp the corner of the garment of a Jew saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”’”

Judgment on Israel's Enemies

9 The burden ^{††} of the word of *ADONAI* is against the land of Hadrach and will rest upon Damascus. For the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are toward *ADONAI* —
²and also upon Hamath bordering it, and upon Tyre and Sidon, though they are very shrewd.
³Tyre built herself a fortress and heaped up silver like dust and fine gold like dirt in the streets.
⁴Behold, the Lord will impoverish her and destroy her power on the sea, while she will be devoured by fire.
⁵Ashkelon will see it and fear. Gaza will writhe in pain as will Ekron because her hope will dry up. The king will perish from Gaza and Ashkelon will be uninhabited.
⁶A mongrel people will live in Ashdod and I will cut off the Philistines’ pride.
⁷I will remove the blood from his mouth, forbidden food from between his teeth. Whoever is left will be a remnant for our God.

† cf. Eph. 4:25. †† Or weighty oracle

He will be like a leader in Judah, and Ekron will be like a Jebusite.
⁸But I will camp around My House against marauding forces. No oppressor will overrun them again—for now I watch with My own eyes.

Zion's Coming King

⁹Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you, a righteous one bringing salvation. He is lowly, riding on a donkey— on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ‡
¹⁰I will banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem, and the war bow will be broken. He will speak *shalom* to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth.
¹¹As for you also, by the blood of your covenant, † I will release your prisoners from the waterless Pit.
¹²Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope! Today I declare that I will restore twice as much to you.
¹³I will bend Judah as my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion against your sons, O Greece. I will wield you like a warrior’s sword.
¹⁴Then *ADONAI* will be seen over them as His arrow flashes like lightning. *ADONAI Elohim* will blow the *shofar* and march in whirlwinds of the south. ††
¹⁵*ADONAI- Tzva’ot* will defend them. They will consume and conquer with sling stones. They will drink and roar as with wine and be filled like a bowl, like the corners of the altar.
¹⁶*ADONAI* their God will save them on that day as the flock of His people. They will be like gems of a crown sparkling over His land.
¹⁷How good and beautiful it will be! Grain will make the young men thrive and new wine the virgin women.

Good Shepherd Cares for Judah

10 Ask *ADONAI* for rain in spring! *ADONAI* makes the storm clouds and will give rain showers and plants of the field to everyone.
²The idols utter deceit and diviners see lies. They relate false dreams

‡ cf. Matt. 21:5; John 12:15. † cf. Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:20.
 †† cf. Matt. 24:31.

and comfort in vain.
 Therefore the people wander like sheep,
 afflicted because there is no shepherd. †
 3 "My anger burns against the shepherds
 and I will punish the leaders. ††
ADONAI- *Tzva'ot* cares for His flock,
 the house of Judah.
 He will make them His valiant steed in battle.
 4 From Judah will come the cornerstone, ‡
 from him the tent peg,
 from him the battle bow
 and from him every leader together.
 5 They will be like mighty men
 treading down muddy streets in war.
 They will fight, because *ADONAI* is with them
 and will put horsemen to shame.
 6 I will strengthen the house of Judah
 and save the house of Joseph.
 I will bring them back,
 for I have compassion on them.
 They will be as though
 I had never spurned them,
 for I am *ADONAI* their God
 and I will answer them!
 7 The Ephraimites will be like a warrior.
 Their hearts will be glad as with wine.
 Their children will see and be glad.
 Their hearts will rejoice in *ADONAI*.
 8 I will signal for them and gather them.
 Surely I will redeem them
 and they will be as numerous as before.
 9 Though I scatter them among the peoples,
 they will remember Me in distant places.
 They and their children will survive and return.
 10 I will restore from the land of Egypt
 and gather them from Assyria.
 I will bring them into the land of Gilead and
 Lebanon
 till there is no room for them.
 11 He will cross the turbulent sea
 and calm its raging waves.
 All the depths of the Nile will dry up,
 the pride of Assyria brought down,
 the scepter of Egypt removed.
 12 So I will strengthen them in *ADONAI*
 and they will walk in His Name."
 It is a declaration of *ADONAI*.

Devastation of Surrounding Lands

11 Open your gates, Lebanon—
 fire will devour your cedars!
 2 Wail, cypress tree! For the cedar has fallen.
 Those majestic ones are devastated.
 Wail, oaks of Bashan!
 For the thick forest is cut down!
 3 Listen to the wailing of the shepherds,

† cf. Matt. 9:36; Mark 6:34; John 10:12. †† Lit. male goats
 ‡ cf. Acts 4:11.

for their glory is destroyed!
 Listen to the roaring of young lions,
 for Jordan's thickets are ruined!

Two Staffs

4 Thus said *ADONAI* my God: "Shepherd the flock
 marked for slaughter! 5 Their buyers slay them and go
 unpunished. Those who sell them say, 'Blessed be
ADONAI, for I am rich!' Their own shepherds do not
 spare them. 6 I will no longer have compassion on the
 inhabitants of the land"—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*.
 "Behold, I will hand everyone over to his neighbor and
 his king. They will devastate the land, and I will not de-
 liver them from their hand."

7 So I pastured the flock for the slaughter, especially
 the afflicted of the flock. Then I took two staffs—one I
 called Favor and the other I called Union—and I pas-
 tured the flock. 8 Next I disposed of the three shep-
 herds in one month—for my soul was impatient with
 them and their soul also detested me. 9 Then I said, "I
 will not shepherd you! Let the dying die, let the perish-
 ing perish, and let those who are left eat one another's
 flesh!" 10 So I took my staff called Favor and broke it to
 pieces, in order to break my covenant that I made with
 all people. 11 It was broken on that day. The afflicted of
 the flock that were watching me knew that this was
 the word of *ADONAI*.

12 Then I said to them, "If it seems good to you, pay
 me my wages, but if not, don't bother!" So they
 weighed out my wages—30 pieces of silver. ††

13 Then *ADONAI* said to me, "Throw it to the pot-
 ter—that exorbitant price at which they valued Me!" So
 I took the 30 pieces of silver and threw them into the
 House of *ADONAI*, to the potter. †

14 Then I broke my second staff called Union, in order
 to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.
 15 Again *ADONAI* said to me, "Once more take up the
 equipment of a foolish shepherd! 16 For behold, I am
 going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not
 care for the dying, seek out the young, or heal the in-
 jured, or nourish the healthy. Instead he will eat the
 meat of the choice sheep, even tearing off their hoofs.

17 "Woe to the worthless shepherd
 who deserts the flock! †††

May a sword fell his arm and his right eye!
 May his arm be all withered
 and his right eye totally blinded!"

Jerusalem, a Cup of Reeling

12 The burden of the word of *ADONAI* concerning
 Israel.

A declaration of *ADONAI*, who stretched out the
 heavens, laid the foundation of the earth and formed
 the spirit of man within him: 2 "Behold, I will make
 Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the surrounding peo-

†† cf. Matt. 26:15. ††† cf. Matt. 27:9-10; Acts 1:18-19. †††† cf.
 Heb. 1:10.

ples when they besiege Jerusalem as well as Judah. ³ Moreover, in that day I will make Jerusalem a massive stone for all the people. All who try to lift it will be cut to pieces. Nevertheless, all the nations of the earth will be gathered together against her. ⁴ In that day—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—"I will strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness. I will keep My eyes on the house of Judah but will blind every horse of the peoples. ⁵ Then the leaders of Judah will say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength through *ADONAI*- *Tzva'ot* their God.'

⁶ "In that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a burning torch among sheaves. They will devour on the right and on the left all the surrounding peoples, yet Jerusalem will remain in her place, in Jerusalem. ⁷ *ADONAI* also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the honor of the house of David and the honor of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not exceed that of Judah. ⁸ In that day *ADONAI* will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the weakest among them that day will be like David and the house of David will be like God—like the angel of *ADONAI* before them. ⁹ It will happen in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Mourning the Pierced One

¹⁰ "Then I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, when they will look toward Me whom they pierced. [†] They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son and grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves for a firstborn. ¹¹ In that day there will be a great mourning in Jerusalem, mourning like Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo. ¹² The land will mourn clan by clan. The clan of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves, the clan of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves, ¹³ the clan of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves, the clan of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves. ¹⁴ Each of the remaining clans will mourn by itself and their wives by themselves."

Final Cleansing from Sin

13 "In that day a spring will be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity. [‡] It will happen in that day—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*-*Tzva'ot*—"that I will erase the names of the idols from the land and they will no longer be remembered. Furthermore, I will remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. ³ If anyone still prophesies, his father and his mother to whom he was born will say to him, 'You cannot live because you tell lies in the Name of *ADONAI*.' When he prophesies, his own father and mother, the ones who bore him, will pierce him

[†] cf. *John* 19:34, 37; *Rev.* 1:7. [‡] cf. *Heb.* 9:4; *1 John* 1:9.

through. ⁴ Therefore, in that day each 'prophet' will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. He will no longer wear a hairy mantle in order to deceive ⁵ but will say, 'I am not a prophet. I am a farmer—I have been a bondservant from my youth.' ⁶ Then someone will ask him, 'What are these wounds between your hands?'—and he will answer, 'Those that I received in the house of my friends.'

⁷ "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, against the man who is My companion!"

It is a declaration of *ADONAI*- *Tzva'ot*.

"Strike the shepherd

and the sheep will be scattered! [‡]

I will turn My hand against the little ones.

⁸ Then it will happen"

—it is a declaration of *ADONAI*—

"that in the entire land

two-thirds will be cut off and die,

but a third will be left in it.

⁹ This third I will bring through the fire.

I will refine them as silver is refined,

and will test them as gold is tested.

They will call on My Name

and I will answer them.

I will say, 'They are My people,'

and they will answer, '*ADONAI* is my God.'" [‡]

Coming to the Mount of Olives

14 Behold, a day of *ADONAI* is coming when your plunder will be divided in your midst. ² I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to wage war. The city shall be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women ravished. Half of the city will be exiled but the remainder of the people will not be cut off from the city. ³ Then *ADONAI* will go forth and fight against those nations as He fights in a day of battle. ⁴ In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which lies to the east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a huge valley. Half of the mountain will move toward the north and half of it toward the south. ⁵ Then you will flee through My mountain valley because the mountain valley will reach to Azel. Yes, you will flee like you fled from the earthquake in the days of king Uzziah of Judah. Then *ADONAI* my God will come and all the *kedoshim* with Him. [‡]

⁶ In that day there will be no light, cold, or frost. ⁷ It will be a day known only to *ADONAI*, neither day nor night—even in the evening time there will be light. ^{‡‡} Moreover, in that day living waters will flow from Jerusalem, half toward the eastern sea and half toward the western sea, both in the summer and in the winter. ^{‡‡‡} *ADONAI* will then be King over all the earth. In that day *ADONAI* will be *Echad* and His Name *Echad*. [§]

[‡] cf. *Matt.* 26:31; *Mark* 14:27. ^{‡‡} cf. *Rom.* 9:25; *1 Pet.* 2:10.

^{‡‡} cf. *Matt.* 16:27; 25:31; *Jude* 14; *Rev.* 19:14. ^{‡‡‡} cf. *Rev.*

21:23-25; 22:5. ^{‡‡‡} cf. *John* 7:38; *Rev.* 22:1-2. [§] cf. *1 Cor.* 8:4;

Eph. 4:6; *Rev.* 11:15.

¹⁰ The whole land, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem, will become like the Arabah. Jerusalem will be raised up and occupy her place, from the Benjamin Gate to the place of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine-presses. ¹¹ People will dwell in her, and no longer will there be a ban of destruction—Jerusalem will live in security.

¹² Now this is the plague with which *ADONAI* will strike all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are standing on their feet; their eyes will rot in their sockets; and their tongues will rot in their mouths. ¹³ It will happen in that day that a great panic from *ADONAI* will be among them. Each person will seize the hand of his neighbor and they will attack each other. ¹⁴ Even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding peoples will be gathered together—an abundance of gold, silver, and apparel. ¹⁵ A similar plague will strike the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey, and all the animals in that camp.

¹⁶ Then all the survivors from all the nations that attacked Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, and to celebrate *Sukkot*. ¹⁷ Furthermore, if any of the nations on earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, they will have no rain. ¹⁸ If the Egyptians do not go up and celebrate, they will have no rain. Instead, there will be the plague that *ADONAI* will inflict on the nations that do not go up to celebrate *Sukkot*. ¹⁹ This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate *Sukkot*. ²⁰ In that day "Holy to *ADONAI*" will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the pots in the House of *ADONAI* will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar. ²¹ In fact every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*, so that everyone who comes to sacrifice will take them, and cook in them. In that day there will no longer be a Canaanite [†] in the House of *ADONAI- Tzva'ot*. ^{††}

† Or merchant

†† cf. Rom. 14:6-7; 1 Cor. 10:13.

Malachi

Malachi Introduction

Malachi can be translated from the Hebrew as “my messenger” or “my angel.” And what a message he had! Chronologically, Malachi appeared at the end of the post-exilic era and is understood to have been the last of Judah’s prophets. Written to Judean exiles who had returned from the Babylonian captivity to rebuild the Temple, the messenger called these Judean returnees to return to God and repent of their lackluster resolve to serve Him properly.

Malachi was a contemporary of Nehemiah, who also spoke to the newly reconstituted community in the land of Judea. For Malachi’s part, he exhorted the people to build up the ancestral capital, and make necessary religious and social amends. Sacrifices had restarted in the prophet’s day, prompting him to address matters associated with their utilization. Both priestly and civil leaders were in place at the time of his writing, causing him to address issues associated with their poor performances.

From the very first chapter, Malachi reminds the nation that they are loved, valued and not forgotten by God—though they began neglecting Him. With an understanding that religious negligence prompted God to withdraw His protection from their fathers who incurred the previous judgment of exile, it is indeed tragic to discover their offspring slipping back into similar wayward ways.

Here, the Temple priests are accused of taking shortcuts with their worship. The people, in general, are represented as moving into different forms of worship, going after other gods, and neglecting the God of Israel with their hearts, their minds, and their resources. Significant in the book of Malachi is the mention again of marriage. Mirroring the marriage themes discussed in the book of Hosea, Malachi uses this relationship to remind the nation of His commitment to the covenant He made with Abraham. Malachi records that “God hates” divorce.

The book ends with a promise that a forerunner of the Messiah will yet come, Elijah the prophet. He, we are told, will turn people’s hearts back to God. Since this time, on Passover tables around the world, Jews set a place for Elijah, hoping that the prophecy made at the end of Malachi would soon come true. It has. In the New Covenant, when the angel Gabriel spoke to Elizabeth and Zachariah about the birth of their son, it was this passage the Angel quoted. We can have confidence that Elijah has returned.

Malachi Headings

Jacob Loved
 Despicable Sacrifices
 Warning to the and Levites
 Covenant with Your Wife
 My Messenger is Coming
 Bring the Whole Tithe
 The Day Is Coming

Jacob Loved *ADONAI*

1 An oracle: † The word of *ADONAI* to Israel by Malachi. ††

²“I loved you,” says *ADONAI* .

But you say: “How have You loved us?”

“Was Esau not Jacob’s brother?”

—it is the declaration of *ADONAI* —

“Yet I loved Jacob ³ and Esau I hated.

† Or *burden* †† Or *My messenger* My *angel*

I made his hills a wasteland
 and gave his inheritance to jackals of the wilderness.”

⁴ For Edom may say,

“We have been beaten down,
 but we will return and rebuild the ruins.”

Thus *ADONAI* - *Tzva’ot* says:

“They may rebuild but I will tear down.

They will be called a wicked territory,
 the people *ADONAI* denounced forever.

⁵ So you will see, and you will say:

'May *ADONAI* be magnified beyond the border of Israel!'

Despicable Sacrifices

⁶"A son honors his father, and a servant his master. So if I am Father, where is My honor? If I am Master, where is My reverence?"—says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot*—"you, *kohanim* who despise My Name!"

"But you say, 'How did we despise Your Name?'

⁷"By offering defiled bread on My altar. But you say, 'How did we defile You?' When you say, 'The table of *ADONAI* is despicable.'

⁸"When you bring a blind one as sacrifice, is it not wrong? Or when you bring a lame or sick one, is it not wrong? Offer them now to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Or will he acknowledge you favorably?" says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* .

⁹"So now, implore God's favor! Then, will He be gracious to us? Since this has come from your hands, will He accept any of it from you?" says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* .

¹⁰"If just one of you would shut the doors, and not light My altar uselessly! I have no delight in you," says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* . "Nor will I accept any offering from your hand.

¹¹"For from sunrise to its setting † My Name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to My Name with a pure grain offering, for My Name will be great among the nations," says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* .

¹²"But you are profaning it when you say, 'The table of *ADONAI* is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food—despicable!' ¹³You also say, 'It's so tedious!'

"And you sniff at it," says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* . "So you bring plunder, the lame, and the sick. Then you bring them as the offering. Should I accept this from your hand?" says *ADONAI* .

¹⁴"Moreover, cursed is a deceiver who has in his flock a male, but makes a vow and sacrifices something blemished to my Lord. For I am a great King," says *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* , "and My Name shall be revered among the nations."

Warning to the *Kohanim* and Levites

2 "So now, *kohanim* , this commandment is for you. ²If you will not listen, and if you will not take to heart to give glory to My Name"

—says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* —

"then I will send the curse on you, and I will curse your blessings.

Yes, indeed I have cursed them, because you did not take it to heart.

³Behold, I am rebuking the seed on account of you, and will spread dung on your faces—the dung of your festivals—and take you away together with it.

⁴Then you will know that I have sent this command to you, to be My covenant with Levi," says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* .

⁵"My covenant was with him for life and *shalom* , and I gave them to him for reverence. So he revered Me, and he was awestruck by My Name.

⁶Instruction of truth was in his mouth. Injustice was not found on his lips.

In *shalom* and uprightness he walked with Me, and he turned many from iniquity.

⁷For a *kohen's* lips should guard knowledge, and instruction must be sought from his mouth. For he is a messenger of *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* .

⁸But you have turned from the way. You caused many to stumble in *Torah* by the instruction,

You corrupted the covenant of the Levites," —says *ADONAI -Tzva'ot* .

⁹"So I also have made you despised and lowly to all the people, because you are not keeping My ways but show favoritism in *Torah* ."

¹⁰Do we not all have one Father?

Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously—a man against his brother—defiling the covenant of our fathers?

¹¹Judah has dealt treacherously, an abomination done in Israel, even in Jerusalem! For Judah has defiled *ADONAI* 's Sanctuary, which He loves,

and married the daughter of a foreign god.

¹² *ADONAI* will cut off the man who does this, until he is cast from the tents of Jacob, and from offering a gift to *ADONAI - Tzva'ot* .

Covenant with Your Wife

¹³Secondly, you do this: Tears cover the altar of *ADONAI* — you are weeping and groaning because He no longer accepts the offering or receives it favorably from your hand.

¹⁴Yet you say, "Why?"

Because *ADONAI* bears witness between you and the wife of your youth, whom you have treated deceitfully. Yet she had been your companion and your wife by covenant.

¹⁵Did the One not make her with a remnant of *Ruach* ?

Then what is the One seeking?

Offspring of God!

So protect your spirit—do not betray the wife of your youth.

¹⁶"For I hate †† divorce,"

† cf. Matt. 8:11.

†† Lit. He hates

—says *ADONAI* the God of Israel—
 “and the one who covers his garment with injustice,”
 says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* .
 So protect your spirit—do not act treacherously.
¹⁷ You wearied *ADONAI* with your words.
 Yet you say: “How did we weary Him?”
 When you say: “Everyone doing evil is good in the
 sight of *ADONAI*, and He delights in them.” Or, “Where
 is the God of justice?”

My Messenger is Coming

3 “Behold, I am sending My messenger †,
 and He will clear the way before Me. ††
 Suddenly He will come to His Temple
 —the Lord whom you seek—
 and the Messenger of the covenant
 —the One whom you desire—
 behold, He is coming,”
 says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* .
² But who can endure the day of His coming?
 Or who can stand when He appears? ‡
 For He will be like a refiner’s fire, ††
 and like soap for cleaning raw wool.
³ And He will sit as a smelter or a purifier of silver,
 and He will cleanse the sons of Levi,
 and purify them like gold or silver.
 Then they will become for *ADONAI*
 those who present an offering in righteousness.
⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be
 pleasing to *ADONAI*,
 as in days of antiquity and years of old.
⁵ “Then I will draw near to you in judgment,
 and I will be a swift witness against sorcerers, adul-
 terers, perjurers,
 those who extort a worker’s wage,
 or oppress the widow or an orphan,
 those who mislead a stranger.
 They do not fear Me,”
 says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* .
⁶ “For I am *ADONAI* . I do not change,
 So you, children of Jacob, are not consumed.

Bring the Whole Tithe

⁷ “From the days of your ancestors you have turned
 aside from My statutes, and have not kept them. Re-
 turn to Me, and I will return to you,” says *ADONAI - Tz-
 va’ot* .
 “Yet you say: ‘How should we return?’
⁸ “Will a man rob †† God? For you are robbing Me!”
 “But you say: ‘How have we robbed You?’
 “In the tithe and the offering. ⁹ You have been cursed
 with the curse, yet you keep robbing Me—the whole
 nation! ¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse.
 Then there will be food in My House. Now test Me in
 this”—says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* —“if I will not open for you

† Hebrew Malachi †† cf. Matt. 3:3; 11:10. ‡ cf. Rev. 6:17.
 †† cf. Matt. 3:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:13-15. †† Or hold back defraud

the windows of heaven, and pour out blessing for you,
 until no one is without enough. ¹¹ I will rebuke the de-
 vouring pest for you, so it will not destroy the fruit of
 your land, nor will your vine be barren in the field,”
ADONAI - Tzva’ot says. ¹² “All the nations will call you
 blessed. For you will be a land of delight,” says *ADONAI*
 - *Tzva’ot* .

¹³ “Your words against Me are grievous,” says *ADONAI*

“Yet you say: ‘What did we say against You?’

¹⁴ “You say: ‘Serving God is worthless.’ Also: ‘What
 good is it that we kept His service or that we walked as
 mourners before *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* ?’ ¹⁵ So now we are
 calling the proud blessed. Those who practice iniquity
 are built up. Indeed, they have tested God, and es-
 caped!”

¹⁶ Then those who revere *ADONAI* spoke with each
 other, and *ADONAI* took notice and heard, and a scroll
 of remembrance ††† was written before Him, for those
 who revere *ADONAI*, even those who esteem His
 Name.

¹⁷ “So they shall be Mine,”—says *ADONAI - Tzva’ot* —
 in the day I make My own special possession. So I will
 spare them, as one spares his son serving him. ¹⁸ Then
 you will return and distinguish between the righteous
 and the wicked, between one who serves God and one
 who does not serve Him.”

The Day Is Coming

¹⁹ (4:1) “For behold, the day is coming
 —it will burn like a furnace—
 when all the proud and every evildoer will become
 stubble.

The day that is coming will set them ablaze”

—says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* —
 “leaving them neither root nor branch.

²⁰ (4:2) “But for you who revere My Name,
 the sun of righteousness will rise,
 with healing in its wings.

Then you will go forth and skip about
 like calves from the stall.

²¹ (4:3) You will trample on the wicked,
 for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet
 in the day that I am making,”

says *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* .

²² (4:4) “Remember the *Torah* of Moses My servant,
 whom I commanded at Horeb—statutes and ordi-
 nances for all Israel.

²³ (4:5) “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the
 prophet †††, before the coming of the great and terri-
 ble day of *ADONAI* . ²⁴ (4:6) He will turn the hearts of fa-
 thers to the children, and the hearts of children to
 their fathers—else I will come and strike the land with
 utter destruction.”

††† cf. Luke 10:20; Rev. 3:5; 20:11-15. ††† cf. Matt. 11:14;
 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17; John 1:21.

Matthew

Introduction

None of the Gospels originally came with titles, but the Gospel of Matthew was most likely written by Matthew, also called Levi. He was a tax collector and one of the twelve emissaries. The Gospel was written sometime around 70–85 C.E.

Matthew is one of the two most “Jewish” Gospels, along with John. With a first-century Jewish audience in mind and drawing richly on references to the , it paints a picture of as the fulfillment of the Messianic hope, the promised Messiah, and the King of Israel (whose kingdom is both future, yet begun now). In this way Matthew shows that ’s coming, His person, and His work of atonement is the fulfillment of God’s promises given in the Hebrew Bible—the promises of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Matthew also emphasizes as the One who fulfills the . And as a Jew, Matthew has significant things to say about the Jewish leadership of his day and their attitude toward , as relevant today as in the first century. Though Jewish in its orientation, the Gospel ends with a call to make disciples of nations, thereby showing the worldwide implications of ’s coming. Whereas the shorter Gospel of Mark focuses on ’s deeds, Matthew is richer in giving us ’s teaching and in portraying as the authoritative teacher of Israel. There are five teaching sections, each ending with “when had finished ...” Chief among these are the Sermon on the Mount, the large number of parables, and ’s teaching on the end of the age. Matthew, along with Luke, also tells of the events surrounding ’s virgin birth. The breadth of Matthew’s Gospel makes it suitable for Jewish people willing to study what God has promised in the concerning the Messiah, and also for anyone who wants to learn something about , His relation to the Hebrew Bible, and the dynamics of faith in within the Jewish community.

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Forefathers of *Yeshua* the Messiah

1 The book of the genealogy [†] of *Yeshua ha-Mashiach*, *Ben-David*, ^{††} *Ben-Avraham*: ² Abraham fathered Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob, Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers, ³ Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar, [‡] Perez fathered Hezron, Hezron fathered Ram, ⁴ Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, ⁵ Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, ^{††} Obed fathered Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse fathered David the king.

David fathered Solomon by the wife of Uriah, ^{##7} Solomon fathered Rehoboam, Rehoboam fathered Abijah, Abijah fathered Asa, ⁸ Asa fathered Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat fathered Joram, Joram fathered Uzziah, ⁹ Uzziah fathered Jotham, Jotham fathered Ahaz, Ahaz fathered Hezekiah, ¹⁰ Hezekiah fathered Manasseh, Manasseh fathered Amon, Amon fathered Josiah, ¹¹ and Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

¹² After the Babylonian exile Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel, Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel, ¹³ Zerubbabel fathered Abiud, Abiud fathered Eliakim, Eliakim fathered Azor, ¹⁴ Azor fathered Zadok, Zadok fathered Achim, Achim fathered Eliud, ¹⁵ Eliud fathered Eleazar, Eleazar fathered Matthan, Matthan fathered Jacob, ¹⁶ and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Miriam, from whom was born *Yeshua* who is called the Messiah. ¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David are 14 generations, from David until the Babylonian exile are 14 generations, and from the Babylonian exile until the Messiah are 14 generations.

The Miraculous Birth of *Yeshua*

¹⁸ Now the birth of *Yeshua* the Messiah happened this way. When His mother Miriam was engaged to Joseph but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ¹⁹ And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not

[†] The Greek term is *genesis* ^{††} cf. 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 89:4-5(3-4); Isa. 9:5-6(6-7). [‡] cf. Gen. 38:24-30. ^{††} cf. Ruth 4:12-17. ^{##} cf. 2 Sam. 12:24.

wanting to disgrace her publicly, made up his mind to dismiss her secretly. ²⁰ But while he considered these things, behold, an angel of *ADONAI* appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Miriam as your wife, for the Child conceived in her is from the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ²¹ She will give birth to a son; and you shall call His name *Yeshua*, for He will save His people from their sins."

²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by *ADONAI* through the prophet, saying, ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and give birth to a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which means "God with us." ^{##†}

²⁴ When Joseph woke up from his sleep, he did as the angel of *ADONAI* commanded him and took Miriam as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not know her intimately until she had given birth to a Son. And he called His name *Yeshua*.

Wise Men Follow His Star

2 Now after *Yeshua* was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him." ^{##}

³ When King Herod heard, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ And when he had called together all the ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars, he began to inquire of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ So they told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel." ^{##§}

⁷ Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the Child. And when you have found Him, bring word back to me so that I may come and worship Him as well."

^{##†} Isa. 7:14; 8:8, 10. ^{##†} cf. Isa. 9:5-6(6-7); Jer. 23:5; 30:9. [§] Mic. 5:1(2); cf. 2 Sam. 5:2.

⁹ After listening to the king, they went their way. And behold, the star they had seen in the east went on before them, until it came to rest over the place where the Child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great gladness. ¹¹ And when they came into the house, they saw the Child with His mother Miriam; and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another way.

The Angel of *ADONAI* Appears

¹³ Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of *ADONAI* appears to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the Child, to kill Him." ^{††}

¹⁴ So he got up, took the Child and His mother during the night, and went to Egypt. ¹⁵ He stayed there until Herod's death. This was to fulfill what was spoken by *ADONAI* through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My son." [‡]

¹⁶ Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became furious. And he sent and killed all boys in Bethlehem and in all its surrounding area, from two years old and under, according to the time he had determined from the magi. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

¹⁸ "A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud wailing,
Rachel sobbing for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more." ^{‡†}

¹⁹ But when Herod died, behold, an angel of *ADONAI* appears in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ saying, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and go to the land of Israel, for those seeking the Child's life are dead."

²¹ So he got up, took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But hearing that Archelaus was king of Judea in place of his father Herod, he became afraid to go there. Then after being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of the Galilee. ²³ And he went and lived in a city called *Natzeret*, ^{‡‡} to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets, that *Yeshua* shall be called a *Natzrati*.

John's Witness to Israel's Leaders

³ In those days, John the Immerser came proclaiming in the wilderness of Judea, ² "Turn away from your sins, for the kingdom of heaven is near!" ^{‡‡‡} For he is the one Isaiah the prophet spoke about, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

[†] cf. Ps. 72:10-11. ^{††} cf. Exod. 1:16. [‡] Hos. 11:1. ^{‡†} Jer. 31:14(15). ^{‡‡} From netzer shoot branch
^{‡‡†} cf. Dan. 2:44.

'Prepare the way of *ADONAI*, and make His paths straight.'" ^{‡‡‡}

⁴ Now John wore clothing from camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts [§] and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were being immersed by him in the Jordan River.

⁷ But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his immersion, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore produce fruit worthy of repentance; ⁹ and do not think that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father!' For I tell you that from these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ Already the axe is laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire!

¹¹ "As for me, I immerse you in water for repentance. But the One coming after me is mightier than I am; I am not worthy to carry His sandals. He will immerse you in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He shall clear His threshing floor and gather His wheat into the barn; but the chaff He shall burn up with inextinguishable fire." ^{§†}

The Heavens Open at *Yeshua's Mikveh*

¹³ Then *Yeshua* came from the Galilee to John, to be immersed by him in the Jordan. ¹⁴ But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be immersed by You, and You are coming to me?"

¹⁵ But *Yeshua* responded, "Let it happen now, for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." So John yielded to Him.

¹⁶ After being immersed, *Yeshua* rose up out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the *Ruach Elohim* ^{§††} descending like a dove and coming upon Him. ¹⁷ And behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased!" ^{§†}

Overcoming Temptation with God's Word

⁴ Then *Yeshua* was led by the *Ruach* into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After He had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, He was hungry. ³ And when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are *Ben-Elohim*, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴ But He replied, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" ^{§††}

⁵ Then the devil took Him into the holy city and placed Him on the highest point of the Temple. ⁶ "If You are *Ben-Elohim*," he said, "throw Yourself down. For it is written,

"He shall command His angels concerning you," ^{§†}

^{‡‡‡} Isa. 40:3. [§] cf. Lev. 11:22. ^{§†} cf. Ps. 1:4; Jer. 7:20. ^{§††} cf. Gen. 1:2. ^{§‡} cf. Ps. 2:7; Prov. 30:4. ^{§‡†} Deut. 8:3. ^{§†} Ps. 91:11.

and 'upon their hands they shall lift you up, so that you may not strike your foot against a stone.'"[†]

⁷ *Yeshua* said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put *ADONAI* your God to the test.'" ^{††}

⁸ Again, the devil takes Him to a very high mountain and shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

¹⁰ Then *Yeshua* says to him, "Go away, *satan*! For it is written, 'You shall worship *ADONAI* your God, and Him only shall you serve.'" ^{†††} Then the devil leaves Him. And behold, angels came and began to take care of Him.

Yeshua Withdraws to Seek God

¹² Now when *Yeshua* heard that John had been handed over, He withdrew to the Galilee. ¹³ Leaving *Natzeret*, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali.

¹⁴ This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations—

¹⁶ the people sitting in darkness have seen a great light,

and those sitting in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned."^{††}

¹⁷ From then on, *Yeshua* began to proclaim, "Turn away from your sins, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Raising up Fishers of Men

¹⁸ Now as *Yeshua* was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter and Andrew his brother. They were casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

²¹ Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his brother. They were in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him.

²³ *Yeshua* was going throughout all the Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴ News about Him spread throughout all Syria. And they brought to Him all the sick—those tormented by various diseases and afflictions, those plagued by demons, the epileptics, the paralyzed—and He healed them. ²⁵ And large crowds followed Him from the Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

[†] Ps. 91:12. ^{††} Deut. 6:16. [‡] Deut. 6:13. ^{†††} Isa. 8:23-9:1(9:1-2).

Drash on the Mountain

⁵ Now when *Yeshua* saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain. And after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. ² And He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy.

⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.

¹² "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great! For in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."[‡]

Called to Be Salt and Light

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt should lose its flavor, how shall it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

Filling the Law to the Fullest

¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to abolish the *Torah* or the Prophets! I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. ¹⁸ Amen, I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or serif ^{†††} shall ever pass away from the *Torah* until all things come to pass. ¹⁹ Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps and teaches them, this one shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you that unless

^{‡‡} cf. 2 Chron. 36:16. ^{†††} Lit. one iota yod

your righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees and *Torah* scholars, you shall never enter the kingdom of heaven!

²¹ "You have heard it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, † and whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.' ²² But I tell you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be subject to judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ' *Raca* ' shall be subject to the council ††; and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be subject to fiery Gehenna.

²³ "Therefore, if you are presenting your offering upon the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

²⁵ "Make friends quickly with your opponent while you are with him on the way. Otherwise, your opponent may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the assistant, and you will be thrown into prison.

²⁶ Amen, I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid back the last penny! ‡

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ††²⁸ But I tell you that everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ And if your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away! It is better for you that one part of your body should be destroyed, than that your whole body be thrown into Gehenna. ††³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away! It is better for you that one part of your body should be destroyed, than that your whole body go into Gehenna.

³¹ "It was said, 'Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' †††³² But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³ "Again, you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall carry out your oaths to *ADONAI* .' †††³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear at all—not by heaven, for it is the throne of God; ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; [§] or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. ^{§†}³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷ But let your word 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No,' 'No'—anything more than this is from the evil one."

Overcoming Evil with Good

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' ^{§††}³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist

† *Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17.* †† *Lit. Sanhedrin* ‡ *Lit. quadrans* ††† *Exod. 20:13(14); Deut. 5:18.* †† *cf. Isa. 66:24; for more, see Glossary.* ††† *Hebrew get*
 ††† *Lev. 19:12. § cf. Isa. 66:1(LXX). §† cf. Ps. 48:3(2).*
 §†† *Exod. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21.*

an evildoer. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him also the other. ⁴⁰ And the one wanting to sue you and to take your shirt, let him also have your coat. ⁴¹ Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor ^{§†} and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors do the same, don't they? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than anyone else? Even the pagans do that, don't they? ⁴⁸ Therefore be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Righteous Living

6 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before others to be seen by them; otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² So whenever you do *zedakah*, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Amen, I tell you, they have their reward in full! ³ But when you do *zedakah*, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your *zedakah* may be in secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, shall reward you.

⁵ "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Amen, I tell you, they have their reward in full! ⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your inner room; and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, shall reward you. ⁷ And when you are praying, do not babble on and on like the pagans; for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

⁹ "Therefore, pray in this way:

"Our Father in heaven,
 sanctified be Your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
 Your will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from the evil one.' ^{§††}

§† *Lev. 19:18.* §†† *Some mss. add: For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.*

¹⁴ “For if you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

¹⁶ “And whenever you fast, do not become sad-faced like the hypocrites, for they neglect their faces to make their fasting evident to men. Amen, I tell you, they have their reward in full! ¹⁷ But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that your fasting won’t be evident to men, but to your Father who is in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you. †

¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust †† destroy and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in or steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, if your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is bad, your body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick by one and look down on the other. You cannot serve God and money.” ‡

Overcoming Worry with Trust

²⁵ “So I say to you, do not worry about your life—what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing?

²⁶ “Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your Father in heaven feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ††²⁸ And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ††³⁰ Now if in this way God clothes the grass—which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow—will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

³¹ “Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² For the pagans eagerly pursue all these things; yet your Father in heaven knows that you need all these. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

† cf. Isa. 58:3-6. †† Lit. act of eating, devouring. ‡ Lit. mammon wealth, property

†† Or a cubit to his height. †† cf. 1 Kings. 10:4-7.

Measuring Your Measure

7 “Stop judging, so that you may not be judged. ² For with the judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³ “Why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the beam in your own eye? ⁴ Or how will you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and look, the beam is in your own eye? ⁵ Hypocrite, first take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

⁶ “Do not give what is holy to dogs or throw your pearls before pigs; otherwise they will trample them under their feet, then turn and rip you to shreds.

⁷ “Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened.

⁹ “For what man among you, when his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or when he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! ¹² So in all things, do to others what you would want them to do to you—for this is the *Torah* and the Prophets.

¹³ “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. ¹⁴ How narrow is the gate and difficult the way that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

Judging the Fruit

¹⁵ “Watch out for false prophets, ††† who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruit. Grapes aren’t gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree produces good fruit, but the rotten tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ So then, you will recognize them by their fruit.

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?’ ²³ Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness!’” †††

††† cf. Deut. 18:20-22; Isa. 28:7-13; Jer. 5:30-31; 6:13-15; 14:13-15; Ezek. 13; Mic. 3:5-8. ††† cf. Ps. 6:9(8).

Building on a Firm Foundation

²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house; and yet it did not fall, for its foundation had been built on the rock. ²⁶ Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.”

²⁸ Now when *Yeshua* had finished these words, the crowds were astounded at His teaching, ²⁹ for He was teaching them as one having authority and not as their *Torah* scholars.

Healing Those who Trust

8 When He came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him. ² And a man with *tzara’at* came to Him and bowed down before Him, saying, “Master, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

³ *Yeshua* stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing. Be cleansed.” Immediately his *tzara’at* was cleansed. ⁴ And *Yeshua* said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go show yourself to the *kohen* and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” †

⁵ Now when *Yeshua* came into Capernaum, a centurion came begging for help. ⁶ “Master,” he said, “my servant is lying at home paralyzed, horribly tormented.”

⁷ *Yeshua* said to him, “I’ll come and heal him.”

⁸ But the centurion said, “Master, I’m not worthy to have You come under my roof. But just say the word and my servant will be healed. ⁹ For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, ‘Go!’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”

¹⁰ Now when *Yeshua* heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, “Amen, I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith! ¹¹ Moreover, I tell you that many will come from the east and the west, and they will recline at table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹² But the sons of the kingdom will be driven out into the outer darkness; in that place will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

¹³ Then *Yeshua* said to the centurion, “Go. As you have believed, let it be done for you.” And the servant was healed in that same hour.

¹⁴ And when *Yeshua* came into Peter’s house, He saw Peter’s mother-in-law lying down, sick with a fever. ¹⁵ *Yeshua* touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and began to take care of Him.

† cf. Lev. 14:2.

¹⁶ When evening came, the people brought to Him many who were afflicted by demons. He forced out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ So was fulfilled what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

“He Himself took our sicknesses
and carried away our diseases.” ††

Following the Call

¹⁸ Now when *Yeshua* saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to go to the other side of the sea. ¹⁹ Then a *Torah* scholar came to Him and said, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”

²⁰ *Yeshua* tells him, “Foxes have dens and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

²¹ Then another of the disciples said, “Master, first let me go and bury my father.”

²² But *Yeshua* tells him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Master of the Storm

²³ As He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴ Suddenly a great storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves. But *Yeshua* kept on sleeping. ²⁵ So they came and woke Him up, saying, “Master, save us! We’re perishing!”

²⁶ He said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became totally calm.

²⁷ The men were amazed, saying, “What kind of person is this? Even the winds and the sea obey Him!”

Freedom from Demons

²⁸ When He came to the other side, into the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-plagued men coming from the graveyard ‡ met Him. They were so violent that no one could pass by that way. ²⁹ And they screamed, “What’s between You and us, †† *Ben-Elohim*? Have You come here to torment us, before the appointed time?”

³⁰ Now a large herd of pigs was feeding some distance away from them. ³¹ The demons kept begging Him, “If You drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.”

³² And He told them, “Go!” So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the cliff into the sea and drowned. ³³ The herdsmen ran away, went into the town, and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-plagued men. ³⁴ The whole town came out to meet *Yeshua*. And when they saw him, they begged Him to leave their region.

†† Isa. 53:4. ‡ Lit. tombs †† A Hebrew idiom, lit. What to us and you?

Authority to Pardon Sins

9 After getting into a boat, *Yeshua* crossed over and came to His own town. ² Just then, some people brought to Him a paralyzed man lying on a cot. And seeing their faith, *Yeshua* said to the paralyzed man, "Take courage, son! Your sins are forgiven."

³ Then some of the *Torah* scholars said among themselves, "This fellow blasphemes!"

⁴ And knowing their thoughts, *Yeshua* said, "Why are you entertaining evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk?' ⁶ But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to pardon sins..." Then He tells the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your cot, and go home." ⁷ And he got up and went home. ⁸ When the crowd saw it, they were afraid and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

A Physician for Sinners

⁹ As *Yeshua* was passing by from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. He said to him, "Follow Me." And he got up and followed Him.

¹⁰ Now it happened that when *Yeshua* was reclining at the table in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with *Yeshua* and His disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why does this Teacher of yours eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² But when He heard this, *Yeshua* said, "Those who are healthy have no need for a doctor, but those who are sick do. ¹³ Now go and learn what this means: 'Mercy I desire, and not sacrifice.' [†] For I didn't come to call the righteous, but the sinful."

Teaching New Ways

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" ^{††}

¹⁵ And *Yeshua* said to them, "The guests of the bridegroom cannot mourn while the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

¹⁶ "And no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch pulls away from the garment and a worse tear happens. ¹⁷ Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, and the wine spills out and the skins are ruined. But they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

Compassion in the Shepherd's Touch

¹⁸ Just as He was saying these things to them, a synagogue leader came and began to bow before Him,

[†] Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8. ^{††} Some mss. add much often

saying, "My daughter has just died, but come lay Your hand on her and she will live." ¹⁹ And *Yeshua* got up and began to follow him, with His disciples.

²⁰ Just then a woman, losing blood for twelve years, [‡] came from behind and touched the *tzitzit* of His garment. ²¹ For she kept saying to herself, "If only I touch His garment, I will be healed."

²² But then *Yeshua* turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," He said, "your faith has made you well." That very hour the woman was healed.

²³ When *Yeshua* came into the synagogue leader's house and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, ²⁴ He said, "Go away, for the girl isn't dead, but sleeping." And they began jeering at Him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been cleared out, He went in and took her hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶ And news of this spread all around that region.

²⁷ As *Yeshua* went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "*Ben-David*, have mercy on us!"

²⁸ When He went into the house, the blind men came to Him. And *Yeshua* said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

"Yes, Master," they said to Him.

²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith, let it be done for you." ³⁰ And their eyes were opened. And *Yeshua* warned them sternly, "See that no one knows." ³¹ But they went out and spread the news about Him all around that region.

³² As they were going out, a mute man plagued by a demon was brought to Him. ³³ After the demon was driven out, the mute man started speaking. The crowds were astounded, saying, "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel!" ³⁴ But the Pharisees were saying, "By the prince of demons He drives out demons."

³⁵ Now *Yeshua* was going around all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness. ³⁶ When He saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ^{‡‡37} Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers into His harvest field."

Instructions to the Twelve

10 *Yeshua* summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, so they could drive them out and heal every kind of disease and sickness. ² Now these are the names of the twelve emissaries: first, Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew; Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; Jacob, the son of Alphaeus,

[‡] cf. Lev. 15:25. ^{‡†} cf. Num. 27:17; 2 Chron. 18:16.

and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, [†] and Judah the man from Kriot, ^{††} the one who also betrayed Him.

⁵ *Yeshua* sent out these Twelve and ordered them, "Do not go to the Gentiles, and do not enter into any Samaritan town. ⁶ But go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ As you go, proclaim, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near!' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with *tzara'at*, drive out demons. Freely you received, freely give. ⁹ Do not get gold or silver or copper for your money belts, ¹⁰ or a bag for the journey, or two shirts, [‡] or sandals, or a walking stick; for the worker is entitled to his food.

¹¹ "Whatever town or village you shall enter, find out who in it is worthy and stay there until you leave. ¹² As you come into the house, greet it. ¹³ If the household is worthy, let your *shalom* come upon it. But if it's not worthy, let your *shalom* return to you. ¹⁴ And whoever will not receive you or listen to your words, as you leave that house or that town, shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁵ Amen, I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah ^{††} on the Day of Judgment than for that town.

¹⁶ "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and flog [‡] you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You will be brought before governors and kings because of Me, as a witness to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you should say, for it shall be given to you in that hour what you should say. ²⁰ For it is not you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

²¹ "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against their parents and have them put to death. ²² And you will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end shall be saved. ²³ Whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next. Amen, I tell you, you will never finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴ "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the disciple to become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶ "So do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed and nothing hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in your ear, proclaim from the housetops! ²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the One who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. ^{‡‡}

[†] *Lit. Cananean* *zealot, enthusiast*

^{††} *Judas*

Isariot (Hebrew Yehudah Ish Kriot

[‡] *Lit. tunics undershirts* ^{‡†} *cf. Gen. 19:24, 27-28.*

²⁹ "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? ^{‡‡‡} Yet not one of them shall fall to the ground apart from your Father's consent. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So do not fear; you are worth more than many sparrows.

³² "Therefore, whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge him before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

³⁴ "Do not think that I came to bring *shalom* on the earth; I did not come to bring *shalom*, but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set

"a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother, and
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
³⁶ and a man's enemies will be the members of his household." [§]

³⁷ "He who loves father or mother more than Me isn't worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me isn't worthy of Me. ³⁸ And whoever does not take up his cross and follow after Me isn't worthy of Me. ³⁹ He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

⁴⁰ "He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives the One who sent Me. ⁴¹ He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he who receives a *tzaddik* in the name of a *tzaddik* shall receive a *tzaddik's* reward. ⁴² And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, amen I tell you, he shall never lose his reward."

Signs and Wonders Bear Witness

11 When *Yeshua* had finished instructing His twelve disciples, He went on from there to teach and preach in their towns. ² Now when John heard in prison about the works of the Messiah, he sent word through his disciples ³ and said to *Yeshua*, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

⁴ *Yeshua* replied, "Go report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind see and the lame walk, those with *tzara'at* are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised and the poor have good news proclaimed to them. ⁶ Blessed is the one who is not led to stumble because of Me." ^{§†}

A Prophet without Honor

⁷ Now as they were leaving, *Yeshua* began to talk to the crowd concerning John. "What did you go out to the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

⁸ No? So what did you go out to see? A man dressed in finery? Look, those who wear finery are in the palaces of kings! ⁹ Then what did you go out to see? A

^{‡‡} *cf. Deut. 25:2-3.* ^{‡‡†} *Lit. the Valley of Hinnom*

^{‡‡‡} *Lit. assarion*

[§] *cf. Mic. 7:6.* ^{§†} *cf. Isa. 35:5-6; 26:19; 29:18-19; 61:1.*

prophet? Yes, I tell you, even more than a prophet.

¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

“Behold, I send My messenger before You,
who will prepare Your way before You.”[†]

¹¹ “Amen, I tell you, among those born of women,
none has arisen greater than John the Immerser. Yet
the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.
¹² From the days of John the Immerser until now, the
kingdom of heaven is treated with violence, and the vi-
olent grasp hold of it. ¹³ For all the prophets and the
Torah prophesied until the time of John. ¹⁴ And if you
are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.

¹⁵ He who has ears, let him hear!

¹⁶ “But to what shall I compare this generation? It’s
like children sitting in the marketplaces who call to
one other, saying,

¹⁷ “We played the flute for you,
but you did not dance.

We wailed,
but you did not mourn.”

¹⁸ “For John came neither eating nor drinking, and
they say, ‘He has a demon!’ ¹⁹ The Son of Man came
eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton
and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet
wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”^{††}

²⁰ Then *Yeshua* began to denounce the towns where
most of His miracles had happened, because they did
not turn from their sins. ²¹ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe
to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had
been done in Tyre and Sidon, † they would have turned
long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² Nevertheless I tell
you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the
Day of Judgment than for you. ²³ And you, Caper-
naum? Will you be lifted up to heaven? No, you will go
down to *Sheol*! For if the miracles done in you had
been done in Sodom, it would have remained to this
day. ²⁴ Nevertheless I tell you that it will be more bear-
able for the land of Sodom on the Day of Judgment
than for you.”

Yeshua Teaches the Ways of His Father

²⁵ At that time *Yeshua* said in response, “I praise You,
Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, that You have hid-
den these things from the wise and discerning and re-
vealed them to infants. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this way was
pleasing to You.

²⁷ “All things have been handed over to Me by My Fa-
ther. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no
one knows the Father except the Son^{††} and anyone to
whom the Son chooses to reveal Him. ²⁸ Come to Me,
all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you
rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon 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.”

[†] Exod. 23:20; Mal. 3:1, 23(4:5). ^{††} Some mss. say children
[‡] cf. Jer. 47:4; Ezek. 26-28. ^{††} cf. Ps. 2:7; Prov. 30:4.
^{‡‡} Jer. 6:16.

The Lord of *Shabbat*

¹² At that time *Yeshua* went through the grain
fields on *Shabbat*. His disciples became hungry
and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. ² But
when the Pharisees saw this, they said to Him, “Look,
Your disciples are doing what is not permitted on
Shabbat.”

³ But He said to them, “Haven’t you read what David
did when he became hungry, and those with him?

⁴ How he entered into the house of God, and they ate
the showbread, which was not permitted for him to
eat, nor for those with him, but only for the *kohanim*?
^{‡‡} Or haven’t you read in the *Torah* that on *Shabbat*
the *kohanim* in the Temple break *Shabbat* and yet are
innocent? ⁶ But I tell you that something greater than
the Temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what this
means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’^{‡‡‡} you wouldn’t
have condemned the innocent. ⁸ For the Son of Man is
Lord of *Shabbat*.”

⁹ Leaving from there, He went into their synagogue.
¹⁰ A man with a withered hand was there. And so that
they might accuse Him, they questioned *Yeshua*, say-
ing, “Is it permitted to heal on *Shabbat*?”

¹¹ He said to them, “What man among you will not
grab his sheep and lift it out, if it falls into a pit on
Shabbat? ¹² How much more valuable then is a man
than a sheep! Therefore it is permitted to do good on
Shabbat.”

¹³ Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.”
And he stretched it out and it was restored, as healthy
as the other. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and plotted
against Him, how they might destroy Him.

God’s Chosen Servant Brings Hope

¹⁵ Knowing this, *Yeshua* went away from there. And
large crowds followed Him, and He healed them all.

¹⁶ And He sternly warned them not to make Him
known. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through
Isaiah the prophet, saying,

¹⁸ “Here is My servant whom I chose,
the One I love, in whom My soul takes delight.
I will put My *Ruach* upon Him,
and He shall proclaim justice to the nations.

¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry out,
nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.

²⁰ A crushed reed He will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
until He brings forth justice to victory.

²¹ And in His name the nations shall hope.”[§]

Whose Power Will Rule?

²² Then a demon-plagued man, who was blind and
mute, was brought to *Yeshua*; and He healed him, so

^{‡‡‡} cf. Lev. 24:5-9; 1 Sam. 21:5-7(4-6). ^{‡‡‡} Hos. 6:6. [§] Isa.
42:1-4.

that he spoke and saw. ²³ All the crowds were astounded and saying, "This can't be *Ben-David*, can it?"

²⁴ But hearing this, the Pharisees said, "This fellow drives out demons only by beelzebul, the ruler of demons."

²⁵ Knowing their thoughts, *Yeshua* said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.

²⁶ If *satan* drives out *satan*, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ And if I drive out demons by beelzebul, by whom do your sons drive them out? For this reason, they will be your judges.

²⁸ But if I drive out demons by the *Ruach Elohim*, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ Or how can one enter a strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he will thoroughly plunder his house. ³⁰ He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

³¹ "For this reason I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but blasphemy against the *Ruach* will not be forgiven. ³² Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* will not be forgiven, neither in this age nor in the one to come.

³³ "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree rotten and its fruit rotten; for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers! How can you who are evil say anything good? For from the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good man from his good treasury brings forth good, and the evil man from his evil treasury brings forth evil. ³⁶ But I tell you that on the Day of Judgment, men will give account for every careless word they speak. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

A Sign Greater than Jonah

³⁸ Then some of the *Torah* scholars and Pharisees answered Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

³⁹ But *Yeshua* replied to them, "An evil and adulterous generation clamors for a sign, yet no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. ⁴⁰ For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great 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 at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah. And behold, something greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² The Queen of the South †† will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

† *Jonah 2:1(1:17)*. †† *cf. Queen of Sheba; 1 Kings 10:1-10; 2 Chron. 9:1-12.*

⁴³ "Now when an unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places looking for rest and doesn't find it. ⁴⁴ Then it says, 'I'll go back home where I came from.' And when it comes, it finds the house vacant, swept clean, and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there. And that man's last condition becomes worse than the first. So also will it be for this evil generation."

Embrace and Refrain

⁴⁶ While *Yeshua* was still speaking to the crowds, His mother and brothers were standing outside, trying to speak to Him. ⁴⁷ Someone said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, trying to speak to You." ‡

⁴⁸ But to the one telling Him this, *Yeshua* responded, "Who is My mother? And who are My brothers?" ⁴⁹ Stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers. ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."

Simple Stories, Profound Truths

13 On that day after *Yeshua* left the house, He was sitting by the sea. ² And large crowds gathered around Him; so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood on the shore. ³ And He told them many things in parables, saying, "Behold, a sower went out to spread some seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some seeds fell by the road; and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they didn't have much soil. They sprang up immediately, because the soil wasn't deep. ⁶ But when the sun came up, they were scorched; and because they had no roots, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew and choked them out. ⁸ But others fell on good soil and were producing fruit. They yielded a crop—some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears, †† let him hear."

¹⁰ Then the disciples came to Him and said, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

¹¹ And He replied to them, "To you has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For whoever has, to him more will be given and he will have plenty. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ¹³ For this reason I speak to them in parables,

"because seeing they do not see,
and hearing they do not hear nor do they understand.

¹⁴ "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,

"You will keep on hearing

‡ *Some mss. omit this verse.* †† *Some mss. add to hear*

but will never understand;
you will keep looking,
but will never see.

¹⁵ For the heart of this people has become dull,
their ears can barely hear, and they have shut their
eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears, and understand with their
hearts.

Then they would turn back,
and I would heal them.[†]

¹⁶ "But blessed are your eyes because they see, and
your ears because they hear. ¹⁷ Amen, I tell you, many
a prophet and *tzaddik* longed to see what you are see-
ing and did not see, and to hear what you are hearing
and did not hear."

Parable of the Sower Explained

¹⁸ "You then, hear the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When
anyone hears the word of the kingdom and doesn't
understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away
what was sown in his heart. This is the one having
been sown along the road.

²⁰ "The one sown on rocky ground, this is the one
who hears the word and immediately receives it with
joy. ²¹ Yet he has no root himself but lasts only a short
while; and when trouble or persecution comes be-
cause of the word, immediately he falls away.

²² "But the one sown among the thorns, this is the
one who hears the word; and the worries of the world
and the seduction of wealth choke the word, and it be-
comes unfruitful.

²³ "Now the one sown on the good soil, this is the
one who hears the word and understands. He indeed
bears fruit, yielding a hundredfold, some sixty, some
thirty times what was sown."

Yeshua Tells More Parables

²⁴ He presented to them another parable, saying,
"The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed
good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while the men were sleep-
ing, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the
wheat and went away. ²⁶ Now when the stalk sprouted
and produced grain, then the weeds also appeared.
²⁷ So the slaves of the landowner came and said to
him, 'Master, didn't you sow good seed in your field?
Then where did the weeds come from?' ²⁸ But he
replied, 'An enemy did this.' Now the slaves say to him,
'Do you want us, then, to go out and gather them up?'
²⁹ But he says, 'No, for while you are gathering up the
weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let
both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time, I
will tell the reapers, "First, gather up the weeds and tie
them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the
wheat into my barn."

[†] Isa. 6:9-10.

³¹ He presented to them another parable, saying,
"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which
a man took and planted in his field. ³² It's the smallest
of all seeds; yet when it's full grown, it's greater than
the other herbs. It becomes like a tree, so that the
birds of the air come and nest in its branches."^{††}

³³ He told them another parable, "The kingdom of
heaven is like *hametz*, which a woman took and hid in
three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

³⁴ All these things *Yeshua* spoke to the crowds in
parables. And apart from a parable, He wasn't speak-
ing to them, ³⁵ in order to fulfill what was spoken
through the prophet, saying,

"I will open My mouth in parables,
I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the
world."[‡]

³⁶ Then He sent the crowds away and went into the
house. His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to
us the parable of the weeds of the field."

³⁷ He answered, "The one sowing the good seed is
the Son of Man, ³⁸ and the field is the world. And the
good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the
weeds are the sons of the evil one. ³⁹ The enemy who
sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the
age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore just as
the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so
shall it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will
send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His
kingdom all stumbling blocks^{‡†} and those who prac-
tice lawlessness. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery
furnace^{‡‡}; in that place will be weeping and gnashing
of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine forth as the
sun^{‡‡‡} in the kingdom of their Father. He who has
ears, let him hear!

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden
in the field, which a man found and hid. And because
of his joy, he goes out and sells all that he has and
buys that field.

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant
searching for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ Upon finding a pearl of
great value, he went out and sold all that he had and
bought it.

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet
that was cast into the sea, gathering things of every
kind. ⁴⁸ When it was filled, they pulled it ashore; and
they sat down and gathered up the good into contain-
ers, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end
of the age. The angels will come forth and separate
the wicked from among the righteous⁵⁰ and throw
them into the fiery furnace; ^{‡‡‡} in that place will be
weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ "Have you understood all these things?"

They said to Him, "Yes."

⁵² Then He said to them, "Therefore every *Torah*
scholar disciplined for the kingdom of heaven is like the

^{††} Ps. 104:12 (103:12 LXX). [‡] Ps. 78:2. ^{††} cf. 1 Cor. 1:23.
^{‡‡} Dan. 3:6. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Dan. 12:3. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Dan. 3:6.

master of a household who brings out of his treasure both new things and old.”

Unbelief in the Hometown Synagogue

⁵³ Now when *Yeshua* had finished these parables, He left that place. ⁵⁴ Coming into His hometown, He began to teach them in their synagogue so that they were amazed. “Where did this fellow get this wisdom and these mighty works?” they said. ⁵⁵ “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t His mother called Miriam, and His brothers Jacob and Joseph and Simon and Judah? ⁵⁶ And His sisters, aren’t they all with us? So where does He get all these things?” ⁵⁷ And they took offense at Him.

But *Yeshua* said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own house.” ⁵⁸ And He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Yeshua’s Cousin Beheaded

14 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about *Yeshua*. ² He said to his servants, “This is John the Immerser—he has risen from the dead! Because of this, these powers are at work in Him.” ³ For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, ⁴ because John had been telling him, “It is not permitted for you to have her.” ⁵ Although Herod wanted to kill John, he feared the crowd because they considered John a prophet.

⁶ But when Herod’s birthday celebration came, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod, ⁷ so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. ⁸ Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me the head of John the Immerser, here on a platter!” ⁹ The king became sorrowful; but because of his oaths and those reclining with him, he commanded it to be given. ¹⁰ And he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. ¹¹ His head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. ¹² John’s disciples came forth and took the body and buried it. Then they went and reported to *Yeshua*.

Feeding Hungry Followers

¹³ Now when *Yeshua* heard this, He went away from there privately by boat to an isolated place. But when the crowds heard, they followed Him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ As *Yeshua* came ashore, He saw a large crowd and felt compassion for them and healed their sick. ¹⁵ When it became evening, the disciples came to Him, saying, “This place is isolated, and the hour is already late. Send the crowds away so they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”

¹⁶ But *Yeshua* said to them, “They don’t need to leave—you give them something to eat.”

¹⁷ “We have nothing here except five loaves and two fish,” they said to Him.

¹⁸ “Bring them here to Me,” He said.

¹⁹ Ordering the crowd to recline on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish; and looking up to heaven, He offered the *bracha*. After breaking the loaves, He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve baskets full of broken pieces left over. ²¹ Now those eating were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Testing Peter’s Faith to Walk on Water

²² Right away, *Yeshua* made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. ²³ After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the hillside by Himself to pray. And when evening came, He was there alone. ²⁴ But the boat was already a long way †† from land, tossed around by the waves, for the wind was against it.

²⁵ Now in the fourth watch ‡ of the night, *Yeshua* came to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It’s a ghost!” And they cried out with fear.

²⁷ But immediately, *Yeshua* spoke to them, saying, “Take courage! I am. Don’t be afraid.”

²⁸ Answering, Peter said to Him, “Master, if it’s You, command me to come to You on the water.”

²⁹ And He said, “Come!”

And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water to go to *Yeshua*. ³⁰ But seeing the wind, he became terrified. And beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, “Master, save me!”

³¹ Immediately *Yeshua* reached out His hand and grabbed him. And He said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

³² When they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

³³ And those in the boat worshiped Him, saying, “You really are *Ben-Elohim*!” ††

³⁴ After they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. ³⁵ And when the men of that place recognized *Yeshua*, they sent word into all the surrounding region. And they brought to Him all those who were in bad shape ³⁶ and kept begging Him that they might just touch the *tzitzit* of His garment—and all who touched it were cured.

Religious Leaders Quiz *Yeshua*

15 Then some Pharisees and *Torah* scholars came to *Yeshua* from Jerusalem. They said, ² “Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not do the ritual handwashing when they eat bread.”

† cf. Lev. 18:16; 20:21.

†† Lit. many stadia
3-6 a.m. †† Prov. 30:4.

‡ Roman time,

³ And answering, He said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? ⁴ For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' [†] and 'He who speaks evil of father or mother must be put to death.' ^{††5} But you say, 'Whoever tells his father or mother, "Whatever you might have gained from me is a gift to God," ^{††6} he need not honor his father.' On account of your tradition, you made void the word of God. ⁷ Hypocrites! Rightly did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying,

⁸ "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

⁹ And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."^{††}

¹⁰ Then *Yeshua* called the crowd and said to them, "Hear and understand. ¹¹ It's not what goes into the mouth that makes the man unholy; but what comes out of the mouth, this makes the man unholy."^{††}

¹² Then the disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard this saying?"

¹³ But He replied, "Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Leave them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

¹⁵ Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Explain this parable to us."

¹⁶ "Are you also still lacking understanding?" *Yeshua* said. ¹⁷ "Don't you grasp that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and then is ejected into the sewer? ¹⁸ But the things that proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and those things make the man unholy. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, and slander. ^{†††20} These are the things that make the man unholy; but to eat with unwashed hands does not make the man unholy."

A Reward for a Humble Woman

²¹ Now *Yeshua* left from there and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² And behold, a Canaanite woman from that district came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, O Master, *Ben-David*! My daughter is severely tormented by a demon."

²³ But He did not answer her a word. And when His disciples came, they were urging Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us."

²⁴ But He responded, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

²⁵ So she came and got down on her knees before Him, saying, "Master, help me!"

²⁶ And answering, He said, "It's not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

²⁷ But she said, "Yes, Master, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

[†] *Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16. †† Exod. 21:17; Lev. 20:9. ‡ cf. M. Ned* ^{††} *Isa. 29:13. ††† cf. Lev. 10:10. †††† cf. Jer. 17:9.*

²⁸ Then answering, *Yeshua* said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed in that very hour.

²⁹ After *Yeshua* left there, He went along the Sea of Galilee. Then He went up on a mountainside and was sitting there. ³⁰ And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them the lame, blind, disabled, mute, and many others. And they laid them at His feet, and He healed them. ³¹ So the crowd marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the disabled made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. ^{†††} And they praised the God of Israel.

Feeding More Hungry Followers

³² *Yeshua* called His disciples and said, "I have compassion for the crowd, because they've stayed with Me for three days now and have nothing to eat. I don't want to send them away hungry, because they might pass out on the way."

³³ The disciples said to Him, "Where in this wasteland is enough bread to satisfy such a large crowd?"

³⁴ *Yeshua* said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"

"Seven," they said, "and a few small fish."

³⁵ After directing the crowd to recline on the ground, ³⁶ He took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks, He broke them. And He began giving them to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowds. ³⁷ And they all ate and were satisfied. And they picked up the broken pieces left over—seven baskets full. ³⁸ And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. ³⁹ And after sending away the crowds, *Yeshua* got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

Religious Leaders Demand Signs

16 Now the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing *Yeshua*, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. ² But He replied to them, "When evening comes, you say, 'Fair weather is coming, for the sky is red,' ³ and in the morning, 'Stormy weather today, for the sky is red and gloomy.' You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times! ⁴ An evil and adulterous generation clamors for a sign, yet no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." ⁵ And leaving them behind, He went away.

⁵ Now when the disciples came to the other side of the sea, they had forgotten to take bread. ⁶ "Watch out," *Yeshua* said to them, "and beware of the *hametz* of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

⁷ And they began to discuss among themselves, saying, "We didn't bring any bread."

⁸ But knowing this, *Yeshua* said, "O you of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread? ⁹ You still don't get it? Don't you remember

^{†††} *cf. Isa. 35:5-6. § cf. Jonah 2:1(1:17).*

the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets of leftovers you gathered? ¹⁰ Or how about the seven loaves for the four thousand and all the baskets of leftovers you gathered? ¹¹ How is it that you don't understand that I wasn't talking to you about bread? Now beware of the *hametz* of the Pharisees and Sadducees!" ¹² Then they understood that He wasn't talking about the *hametz* in the bread, but about the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

The Father Reveals His Son

¹³ When *Yeshua* came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴ They answered, "Some say John the Immerser, others say Elijah, and still others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

¹⁵ He said, "But who do you say I am?"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷ *Yeshua* said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven! ¹⁸ And I also tell you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My community [†]

; and the gates of *Sheol* will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will have been forbidden in heaven and what you permit on earth will have been permitted in heaven." ²⁰ Then He ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that He was the Messiah.

First Prediction: Death and Resurrection

²¹ From that time on, *Yeshua* began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars, and be killed, and be raised on the third day.

²² Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Never, Master! This must never happen to You!"

²³ But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, *satan*! You are a stumbling block to Me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but the things of men."

²⁴ Then *Yeshua* said to His disciples, "If anyone wants to follow after Me, he must deny himself, 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 will it profit a man if he gains the whole world but forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then 'He will repay everyone according to his deeds.' ^{††28} Amen, I tell you, there are some

standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Two Witnesses and a Voice from Heaven

17 After six days, *Yeshua* takes with Him Peter and Jacob and John his brother, and brings them up a high mountain by themselves. ² Now He was transfigured before them; His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with *Yeshua*. ⁴ Peter responded to *Yeshua*, "Master, it's good for us to be here! If You wish, I will make three *sukkot* here—one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." [‡]

⁵ While He was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice from out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!" ^{‡†}

⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell face down, terrified. ⁷ But *Yeshua* came and touched them. "Get up," He said. "Stop being afraid." ⁸ And lifting their eyes, they saw no one except *Yeshua* alone.

⁹ As they were coming down from the mountain, *Yeshua* commanded them, saying, "Do not tell anyone about the vision until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."

¹⁰ The disciples questioned Him, saying, "Why then do the *Torah* scholars say that Elijah must come first?"

¹¹ *Yeshua* replied, "Indeed, Elijah is coming and will restore all things. ^{‡†2} I tell you that Elijah already came; and they didn't recognize him, but did to him whatever they wanted. In the same way, the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands." ¹³ Then the disciples understood that He was speaking to them about John the Immerser.

See What Faith Can Do

¹⁴ When they came to the crowd, a man came to *Yeshua*, falling on his knees before Him and saying, ¹⁵ "Master, have mercy on my son, for he has seizures and suffers badly. For he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶ I brought him to Your disciples, but they couldn't heal him."

¹⁷ And answering, *Yeshua* said, "O faithless and twisted generation! ^{‡††} How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." ¹⁸ *Yeshua* rebuked the demon and it came out of him, and the boy was healed from that very hour.

¹⁹ Then the disciples came to *Yeshua* in private and said, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

²⁰ And He said to them, "Because you trust so little. Amen, I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." ^{(21) ‡††}

[†] Greek *ekklesia* ^{††} *kahal* ^{†††} *Prov. 24:12; cf. Ps. 62:13(12); Dan. 12:2.*

[‡] *cf. Exod. 40:34. †† cf. Ps. 2:7; Prov. 30:4; Isa. 9:5(6); Deut. 18:15. ‡†† cf. Mal. 3:23(4:5). ‡††† cf. Deut. 32:5. ‡††† Most manu-*

Second Prediction: Death and Resurrection

²² Now while they were gathering in the Galilee, *Yeshua* said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men; ²³ and they will kill Him, and on the third day He will be raised." And the disciples became greatly distressed.

²⁴ When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the Temple tax came to Peter and said, "Your teacher pays the Temple tax, † doesn't He?"

²⁵ "Yes," Peter said.

Now when Peter came into the house, *Yeshua* spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? The kings of the earth, from whom do they collect tolls or tax? From their sons or from strangers?"

²⁶ After Peter said, "From strangers," *Yeshua* said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷ But so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw out a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. And when you open its mouth, you'll find a coin. †† Take that, and give it to them, for Me and you."

Childlike Humility

18 At that hour the disciples came to *Yeshua*, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

² And He called a child to Himself, set him in the midst of them, ³ and said, "Amen, I tell you, unless you turn and become like children, you shall never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever then shall humble himself like this child, this one is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in My name, welcomes Me.

⁶ "But whoever causes one of these little ones who trust in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck and to be sunk in the depth of the sea! ⁷ Woe to the world because of snares! For snares must come, but woe to that man through whom the snare comes!

⁸ "And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. It's better for you to enter into life crippled or lame than, having two hands or two feet, to be thrown into fiery Gehenna. ⁹ If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It's better for you to enter into life with one eye than, having two eyes, to be thrown into fiery Gehenna.

Parable of the Lost Sheep

¹⁰ "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father in heaven. (¹¹) ‡

scripts omit verse 21: But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting † Greek double drachma half-shekel
†† Lit. stater

‡ Some manuscripts add verse 11: For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost

¹² "What do you think? If a certain man has 100 sheep and one of them goes astray, won't he leave the 99 on the mountains and go looking for the one that is straying? ¹³ And if he finds it, amen I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the 99 that didn't stray.

¹⁴ Even so, it's not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost."

Restoring a Lost Brother

¹⁵ "Now if your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault while you're with him alone. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take with you one or two more, so that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand.' ††¹⁷ But if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to Messiah's community. And if he refuses to listen even to Messiah's community, let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector.

¹⁸ "Amen, I tell you, whatever you forbid on earth will have been forbidden in heaven and what you permit on earth will have been permitted in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst."

Lessons about Forgiveness

²¹ Then Peter came to Him and said, "Master, how often shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

²² *Yeshua* said to him, "No, not up to seven times, I tell you, but 70 times seven! ††²³ Therefore, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he had begun to settle up, a man was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ††²⁵ But since he didn't have the money to repay, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ Then the slave fell on his knees and begged him, saying, 'Be patient with me, and I'll repay you everything.' ²⁷ And the master of that slave, filled with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ "Now that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him 100 denarii. And he grabbed him and started choking him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe!'

²⁹ "So his fellow slave fell down and kept begging him, saying, 'Be patient with me, and I'll pay you back.' ³⁰ Yet he was unwilling. Instead, he went off and threw the man into prison until he paid back all he owed.

³¹ "So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply distressed. They went to their master and reported in detail all that had happened.

³² Then summoning the first slave, his master said to

†† Deut. 19:15. ‡ Lit. 77 ††† One talent was worth 6000 denarii, or about 16 years' wages.

him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Wasn't it necessary for you also to show mercy to your fellow slave, just as I showed mercy to you?' ³⁴ Enraged, the master handed him over to the torturers until he paid back all he owed.

³⁵ "So also My heavenly Father will do to you, unless each of you, from your hearts, forgives his brother."

Marriage and Covenant Faithfulness

19 Now when *Yeshua* had finished these words, He moved on from the Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. ² Large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. ³ Pharisees came up to *Yeshua*, testing Him and saying, "Is it permitted for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?"

⁴ "Haven't you read?" He answered. "He who created them from the beginning 'made them male and female' ¹⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' ¹⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate."

⁷ They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to 'give her a certificate of divorce and put her away?'" [‡]

⁸ *Yeshua* said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹ Now I tell you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery." ^{††}

¹⁰ The disciples said to Him, "If that's the case for a man and his wife, it's better not to marry!"

¹¹ But He said to them, "Not everyone can accept this saying—only those to whom it has been given. ¹² For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made that way by men; and there are eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who can accept this, let him accept it."

Receiving the Kingdom of Heaven

¹³ Then little children were brought to *Yeshua* so that He might lay hands upon them and pray. Then the disciples rebuked those who brought them. ^{†††} ¹⁴ But *Yeshua* said, "Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." ¹⁵ After laying His hands upon them, He went on from there.

¹⁶ Now behold, one came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good shall I do to have eternal life?"

† Gen. 1:27. †† Gen. 5:2; 2:24. ‡ Deut. 24:1, 3. †† Some mss. add: and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery except for sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery
 †† Lit. But the disciples rebuked them

¹⁷ "Why do you ask Me about what is good?" *Yeshua* said to him. "There is only One who is good; but if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

¹⁸ "Which ones?" he said.

Yeshua said, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ¹⁹ honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" ^{‡††}

²⁰ "All these I've kept," the young man said to Him. "What do I still lack?"

²¹ *Yeshua* said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you own, and give to the poor; and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me." ²² But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving, for he had much property.

²³ Then *Yeshua* said to His disciples, "Amen, I tell you, it is hard 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 utterly astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?"

²⁶ And looking, *Yeshua* said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." ^{‡†††}

²⁷ Then Peter said to Him, "Look, we've left everything to follow You! So what will we have?"

²⁸ And *Yeshua* said to them, "Amen, I tell you, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne in the new world, [§] you who have followed Me shall also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for My name's sake, will receive a hundred times as much, and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Parable of the Day Laborers

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household, who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ² Now when he had agreed with the workers for a denarius per day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing in the marketplace, idle. ⁴ And to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and I'll give you whatever is right.' ⁵ So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour and did the same. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour, he went out and found others standing around. And he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle the whole day?'

⁷ "Because no one hired us," they said to him.

"He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard, too.'

⁸ "Now when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning from the last to the first.'

††† Exod. 20:12-13(12-16); Deut. 5:16-17(16-20); Lev. 19:18b.
 ‡†† cf. Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:17. § Lit. regeneration

⁹ And those who had come about the eleventh hour each received a denarius. ¹⁰ And when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; yet they too received a denarius.

¹¹ "But when they received it, they began to grumble against the master of the house, ¹² saying, 'These last guys did one hour, and you've made them equal to us, who bore the burden and scorching heat of the day!'

¹³ "But answering, he said to one of them, 'Friend, I'm doing you no wrong. Didn't you agree with me on a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what is yours and go. But I want to give this last guy the same as you. ¹⁵ Am I not permitted to do what I want with what belongs to me? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'

¹⁶ "So the last will be first, and the first last."

Third Prediction: Death and Resurrection

¹⁷ Now as *Yeshua* was going up to Jerusalem, He took the Twelve aside privately; and on the way he told them, ¹⁸ "Look, we're going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars. They will condemn Him to death ¹⁹ and hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify. Yet on the third day, He will be raised up." †

Leading by Serving

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came with her sons to *Yeshua*, and she was kneeling down and asking something from Him.

²¹ "What do you want?" He said to her.

She said to Him, "Declare that these two sons of mine might sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your kingdom."

²² But *Yeshua* replied, "You don't know what you're asking! Are you able to drink the cup I am about to drink?"

"We are able," they say to Him.

²³ He said to them, "You shall indeed drink My cup. But to sit on My right and left, this isn't Mine to grant. Rather, it's for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

²⁴ Now when the ten heard, they became indignant with the two brothers. ²⁵ But *Yeshua* called them over and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them, and their great ones play the tyrant over them. ²⁶ It shall not be this way among you. But whoever wants to be great among you shall be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

What Do You Want Me to Do for You?

²⁹ Now as they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. ³⁰ And here two blind men sitting by the

† cf. Ps. 22; Isa. 52:12-53:12.

roadside, when they heard that *Yeshua* was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Master, *Ben-David!*" ³¹ The crowd warned them to be quiet, but they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Master, *Ben-David!*" ††

³² *Yeshua* stopped and called out to them. "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said.

³³ They said to Him, "Master, let our eyes be opened!"

³⁴ Moved with compassion, *Yeshua* touched their eyes. Instantly they regained their sight and followed Him. ‡

Baruch Ha-Ba! Blessed Is He Who Comes!

21 Now as they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then *Yeshua* sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go into the village before you. Right away, you'll 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 Master needs them.' And right away he will send them."

⁴ This happened to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵ "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'See, your King is coming to you, humble and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" ††

⁶ The disciples went and did as *Yeshua* had directed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and colt and put their clothing on them, and He sat on the clothing. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their clothing on the road, and others began cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. ⁹ The crowds going before Him and those following kept shouting, saying, "*Hoshia-na* to *Ben-David!*"

Baruch ha-Ba b'Shem ADONAI!

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the *LORD!* *Hoshia-na* in the highest!" ††

¹⁰ When He entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" ¹¹ And the crowds kept saying, "This is the prophet *Yeshua*, from *Natzeret* in the Galilee."

¹² Then *Yeshua* entered the Temple ††† and drove out all those selling and buying in the Temple. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers ††† and the seats of those selling doves. ¹³ And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' ¹⁴ †† but you are making it 'a den of thieves!'" †††

¹⁴ The blind and lame came to Him in the Temple, and He healed them. ¹⁵ But when the ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars saw the wonders He performed, and the children crying out in the Temple and saying, "*Hoshia-na* to *Ben-David!*," they became indignant.

¹⁶ And they said to Him, "Do You hear what these chil-

†† cf. Isa. 61:1(LXX); Luke 4:18. ‡ cf. Isa. 35:5; 42:6-7. †† Isa. 62:11; Zech. 9:9(9:9 LXX); cf. Gen. 49:10-11. †† cf. Ps. 118:25-26. ††† Some mss. add of God ††† cf. Deut. 14:24-26. § cf. Lev. 1:14; 5:7; 12:8. †† Isa. 56:7. ††† Jer. 7:11.

dren are saying?" "Yes," *Yeshua* said to them. "Haven't you ever read,

"Out of the mouth of babes and nursing toddlers
You have prepared praise for Yourself?" †

¹⁷ Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He spent the night there.

Faith Moves Mountains

¹⁸ Now early in the morning, as He was returning to the city, He became hungry. ¹⁹ Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came up to it and found nothing on it except leaves only. And He said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree shriveled up at once.

²⁰ When the disciples saw it they were astonished. "How did the fig tree shrivel on the spot?" they asked.

²¹ *Yeshua* answered them, "Amen, I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. ²² And whatever you ask in prayer, trusting, you shall receive."

Questions about *Yeshua's* Authority

²³ Now when He entered the Temple, the ruling *kohanim* and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, saying, "By what authority are You doing these things? Who gave You this authority?"

²⁴ *Yeshua* replied to them, "I also will ask you one question. If you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ John's immersion, where was it from? From heaven or from men?"

They began to dialogue among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ²⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the crowd, for all hold up John as a prophet." ²⁷ So answering *Yeshua*, they said, "We don't know."

Then He said to them, "Neither am I telling you by what authority I do these things."

A Parable about Intentions and Actions

²⁸ "Now what do you think? A man had two sons, and he went to the first and said, 'Son, go work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ The son answered, 'I won't,' but afterward he had a change of heart and went. ³⁰ The man went to the second son and said the same thing. But he answered, 'I will, sir,' and didn't go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of the father?"

"The first," they said.

Yeshua said to them, "Amen, I tell you, the tax collectors and prostitutes are going ahead of you into the kingdom of God. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and even after you saw this, you had no change of heart to believe him."

† Ps. 8:3(2).

Parable of the Vineyard

³³ "Listen to another parable. There was a master of a household who planted a vineyard. He put a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a tower. † Then He leased it to some tenant farmers and went on a journey. ³⁴ Now when fruit season drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. ³⁵ But grabbing his servants, the tenants beat up one, killed another, and stoned still another. ³⁶ Again the master sent other servants, even more than the first, and they did the same thing to them. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

³⁸ "But when the tenants saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir! Come on, let's kill him and get his inheritance!' ³⁹ So grabbing him, they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. ⁴⁰ Therefore when the master of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"

⁴¹ "He will bring those miserable men to a miserable end," they said to Him, "and will lease the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the fruits in their seasons." ⁴² *Yeshua* said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures †?

"The stone which the builders rejected,
this has become the chief cornerstone.

This came from *ADONAI*,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.' ††

⁴³ "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to people producing its fruits. ⁴⁴ Whoever falls on this stone will be shattered; but the one upon whom it falls, it will crush him." ††

⁴⁵ When the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees heard *Yeshua's* parables, they realized He was talking about them. ⁴⁶ Although they were trying to seize Him, they feared the crowds, because they regarded Him as a prophet.

Invitation to the Wedding Feast

22 *Yeshua* answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying, ² "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who made a wedding feast for his son. ³ He sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they wouldn't come. ⁴ Again he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who were invited, "Look, I've prepared my meal. My oxen and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!"'

⁵ "But paying no attention, they went away, one to his own farm, another to his business. ⁶ And the rest grabbed his servants, humiliated them, and killed them. ⁷ Now the king became furious! Sending his troops, he destroyed those murderers and set fire to their city.

†† cf. Isa. 5:1-2. † Lit. Writings †† Ps. 118:22-23 (117:22-23 LXX). †† cf. Isa. 28:16; Dan. 2:34, 44-45. Some manuscripts omit verse 44.

⁸ “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. ⁹ So go into the highways and byways, and invite everyone you find to the wedding feast.’ ¹⁰ And those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was filled with guests.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to look over the guests, he saw a man there who wasn’t dressed in wedding clothes. ¹² ‘Friend,’ he said to him, ‘how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ But the man was silent. ¹³ Then the king said to his servants, ‘Tie him up hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

A Trap about Paying Taxes

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might trap Him with a word. ¹⁶ And they sent to Him some of their disciples, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are honest and teach the way of God in truth. And what others think doesn’t concern You, for You do not look at men’s appearance. ¹⁷ Tell us therefore, what do You think? Is it permitted to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

¹⁸ But *Yeshua*, knowing their wickedness, said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show Me the tax money.”

So they brought Him a denarius.

²⁰ And He said to them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

²¹ “Caesar’s,” they said to Him.

Then He said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²² And hearing this, they were amazed. So they left Him and went away.

Religious Leaders Ask a Tricky Question

²³ On that day, Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to *Yeshua* and questioned Him, saying, ²⁴ “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If someone dies having no children, his brother as next of kin shall marry his widow and father children for his brother.’ ²⁵ Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died; and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. ²⁶ In the same way also the second, and the third, down to the seventh. ²⁷ Last of all, the woman died. ²⁸ So in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had married her.”

²⁹ But answering, *Yeshua* said to them, “You’ve gone astray, because you don’t understand the Scriptures or the power of God. ³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹ But concerning the resurrection of the dead, haven’t you read what was spoken to you by God, saying, ³² ‘I am the God of Abraham, and 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 heard this, they were astounded at His teaching.

The Greatest *Mitzvot*

³⁴ But the Pharisees, when they heard that *Yeshua* had silenced the Sadducees, gathered together in one place. ³⁵ And testing Him, one of them, a lawyer, asked, ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the *Torah*?”

³⁷ And He said to him, “‘You shall love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ^{††40} The entire *Torah* and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Yeshua Overturns the Arguments

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, *Yeshua* asked them a question, ⁴² saying, “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose Son is He?” ^{††}

“David’s,” they say to Him.

⁴³ “Then how is it,” He says to them, “that David by the *Ruach* calls him ‘Lord’?”

⁴⁴ “For he says, ‘*ADONAI* said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand,

until I put Your enemies under Your feet.’” ^{†††}

⁴⁵ “If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?”

⁴⁶ No one was able to answer Him a word. Nor did anyone dare from that day on to question Him any longer.

Seven Woes

23 Then *Yeshua* spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, ² saying, “The *Torah* scholars and Pharisees sit on the seat of Moses. ³ So whatever they tell you, do and observe. But don’t do what they do; for what they say, they do not do. ⁴ They tie up heavy loads, hard to carry, ^{†††} and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves aren’t willing to lift a finger to move them. ⁵ All their works they do to be noticed by men. They make their *tefillin* wide and their *tzitziyot* long. ⁶ They love the place of honor at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷ greetings in the market-places, and to be called rabbi by men.

⁸ “But you are not to be called rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. ⁹ And call no man on earth your father; for One is your Father, who is in heaven. ¹⁰ Nor are you to be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Messiah. ¹¹ But the greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹² Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

†† cf. Exod. 3:6. ‡ cf. Deut. 6:5, *v’ahavta* †† Lev. 19:18b, *v’ahavta l’reiacha kamocho* †† cf. Ps. 110:1; Ps. 109:1 (LXX). ††† Ps. 110:1. ††† Some mss. omit hard to carry § cf. Exod. 13:9, 16; Deut. 6:8; 11:18; Num. 15:37-41.

† Lit. raise up seed for his brother

¹³ “But woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not enter yourselves, nor do you let those enter who are trying to go in.”⁽¹⁴⁾ †

¹⁵ “Woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel over land and sea to make one convert. And when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of Gehenna as yourself.

¹⁶ “Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘Whoever swears by the Temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the Temple, he is obligated.’¹⁷ O fools and blind ones! Which is greater, the gold or the Temple that made the gold holy?^{††18} And you say, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the offering on it, he is obligated.’¹⁹ O blind ones! Which is greater, the offering or the altar that makes the offering holy?^{‡20} Therefore, whoever swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and everything on it.²¹ And whoever swears by the Temple, swears both by the Temple and by Him who dwells in it.²² And whoever swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

²³ “Woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! You tithe †† mint and dill and cumin, yet you have neglected the weightier matters of *Torah*—justice and mercy and faithfulness. It is necessary to do these things without neglecting the others.²⁴ O blind guides, straining out a gnat while swallowing a camel!

²⁵ “Woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and uncontrolled desire.²⁶ O blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, so that the outside may become clean as well.

²⁷ “Woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean.²⁸ In the same way, you appear righteous to men on the outside, but are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹ “Woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the monuments of the *tzaddikim*.³⁰ And you say, ‘If we’d been alive in the days of our forefathers, we wouldn’t have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’³¹ So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers!³³ O snakes, you brood of vipers! How will you escape the condemnation of Gehenna?

³⁴ “Because of this, behold, I’m sending you prophets and wise men and *Torah* scholars. Some of them you will kill and execute at the stake, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute

† Some manuscripts add v. 14: Woe to you, *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, while praying at length as a show. Therefore, you will receive greater condemnation †† cf. Exod. 30:29. ‡ cf. Exod. 29:37. †† cf. Lev. 27:30; Deut. 12:6, 17; 14:22-23; Mal. 3:8-10.

from city to city.³⁵ And so, upon you shall come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berechiah, ††† whom you murdered between the Temple and the altar. †††36 Amen, I tell you, all these things will come upon this generation.”

Holy Temple to Be Destroyed

³⁷ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!³⁸ Look, your house is left to you desolate! †††39 For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say, ‘*Baruch ha-Ba b’Shem ADONAI*. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’”[§]

24 Now when *Yeshua* went out and was going away from the Temple, His disciples came up to point out to Him the Temple buildings.² “Don’t you see all these?” He responded to them. “Amen, I tell you, not one stone will be left here on top of another—every one will be torn down!”

Signs of the End of Time

³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things happen? What will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?”

⁴ *Yeshua* answered them, “Be careful that no one leads you astray!⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will lead many astray.⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must happen but it is not yet the end.⁷ For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.^{§†}

And there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.⁸ But all these things are only the beginning of birth pains.

⁹ “Then they will hand you over to persecution and will kill you. You will be hated by all the nations because of My name.¹⁰ And then many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one other.¹¹ Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.¹² Because lawlessness will multiply, the love of many will grow cold.¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved.¹⁴ This Good News of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

¹⁵ “So when you see ‘the abomination of desolation,’^{§††} which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy Place (let the reader understand),¹⁶ then those in Judea must flee to the mountains.¹⁷ The one on the roof must not go down to take what is in his house,¹⁸ and the one in the field must not turn back to get his coat.¹⁹ Woe to those who are

†† Some mss. omit son of Berechiah ††† cf. Gen. 4:8; Zech. 1:1; 2 Chron. 24:21. †††† cf. Jer. 12:7; 22:5. § Ps. 118:26. §† cf. Isa. 19:2; 2 Chron. 15:6. §†† Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11.

pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ Pray that your escape will not happen in winter, or on *Shabbat*. ²¹ For then there will be great trouble, † such as has not happened since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. ²² And unless those days were cut short, no one would be delivered. But for the sake of the chosen, those days will be cut short.

²³ "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here's the Messiah,' or 'There He is,' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up †† and show great signs and wonders so as to lead astray, if possible, even the chosen. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand.

²⁶ "So if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out. Or, 'Look, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. ²⁷ For just as lightning comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸ For wherever the carcass is, there the vultures will gather.

²⁹ "But immediately after the trouble of those days, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken." ‡

³⁰ "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' †† with power and great glory. ³¹ He will send out His angels with a great *shofar*, and they will gather together His chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." ‡

Watching for Messiah's Return

³² "Now learn the parable from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the door. ³⁴ Amen, I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things happen. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. ††³⁶ But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, ††† except the Father alone.

³⁷ "For just as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in those days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. ³⁹ And they did not understand until the flood came and swept them all away. § So shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field, one taken and one left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill, one taken and one left. §†⁴² Therefore stay alert; for you do not know what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of

the house had known what time the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and not let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

The Faithful Servant

⁴⁵ "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master put in charge of his household to give them food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whose master finds him so doing when he comes. ⁴⁷ Amen, I tell you, his master will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But if that wicked servant says in his heart, 'My master is taking a long time,' ⁴⁹ and he begins to beat his fellow servants, and he eats and drinks with drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know. ⁵¹ And he will cut him in two and assign his place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 "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 the foolish ones took their lamps, they took no oil with them. ⁴ But the wise ones took oil in jars along with their lamps.

⁵ "Now while the bridegroom was taking a long time, they all got drowsy and started falling asleep. ⁶ But in the middle of the night there was a shout, 'Look, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' ⁷ Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ Now the foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, since our lamps are going out.' ⁹ But the wise ones replied, 'No, there won't be enough for us and for you. Instead, go to those who sell, and buy some for yourselves.'

¹⁰ "But while they were going off to buy, the bridegroom came. And those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut.

¹¹ Now later, the other virgins came, saying, 'Sir, Sir, open up for us!'

¹² "But he replied, 'Amen, I tell you, I do not know you.' ¹³ Therefore stay alert, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Parable of the Talents

¹⁴ "For it is like a man about to go on a journey. He called his own servants and handed over his possessions to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, §† to another two, and to another one, each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey.

¹⁶ "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them and gained five

† *Dan. 12:1; cf. Jer. 30:7; Joel 2:1-2.* †† *cf. Deut. 13:1ff.; 18:14ff.* ‡ *cf. Isa. 13:10; 34:4 (LXX); Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10; 3:4(2:31); Zeph. 1:15.* ††† *Dan. 7:13.* †††† *cf. Isa. 11:12; 27:13; Zech. 9:14.* ††††† *cf. Isa. 40:8; 55:9-11.* †††††† *Some mss. omit nor the Son* § *cf. Gen. 6:17-24.* §† *cf. Exod. 11:5.*

§†† *Some mss. add and the bride* §†† *One talent was worth 6000 denarii, or about 16 years' wages.*

more. ¹⁷ In the same way, the one with two gained two more. ¹⁸ But the one who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹ "Now 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 up and brought another five talents, saying, 'Master, you handed me five talents. Look, I've gained five more.'

²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful with a little, so I'll put you in charge of much. Enter into your master's joy!'

²² "The one who had received the two talents also came up and said, 'Master, you handed me two talents. Look, I've gained two more.' ²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful with a little, so I'll put you in charge of much. Enter into your master's joy!'

²⁴ "Then the one who had received the one talent also came up and said, 'Master, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you didn't sow and gathering where you scattered no seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'

²⁶ "But his master responded, 'You wicked, lazy servant! You knew that I reap where I didn't sow and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷ Then you should have brought my money to the brokers, and when I came I would have received it back with interest. ²⁸ Therefore take the talent away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to the one who has, more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance. But from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. ³⁰ Throw the worthless servant out, into the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

The Righteous Judge

³¹ "Now when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them from one another, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And He will put the sheep on His right, but the goats on His left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you invited Me in; ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ††

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You? Or thirsty and give You something to drink? ³⁸ And when did we see You a stranger and invite You in? Or naked and clothe You? ³⁹ When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'

† cf. Ezek. 34:17. †† cf. Isa. 58:7.

⁴⁰ "And answering, the King will say to them, 'Amen, I tell you, whatever you did to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' ††† Then He will also say to those on the left, 'Go away from Me, you cursed ones, into the everlasting fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite Me in; naked and you did not clothe Me; sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

⁴⁴ "Then they too will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not care for You?' ⁴⁵ Then He will answer them, saying, 'Amen, I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me.' ⁴⁶ These shall go off to everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life." ††

The Conspiracy Grows

26 Now it happened that when *Yeshua* had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, ² "You know that Passover comes in two days, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be executed."

³ Then the ruling *kohanim* and elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the *kohen gadol* named Caiaphas. ⁴ They plotted together in order that they might seize *Yeshua* by stealth and kill Him. ⁵ "But not during the festival," they were saying, "so there won't be a riot among the people."

A Woman Anoints *Yeshua* for Burial

⁶ Now while *Yeshua* was in Bethany at the house of Simon *ha-Metzora*, ⁷ a woman came up to Him with an alabaster jar of very expensive oil. And she poured it on His head as He was reclining at the table. ⁸ But when the disciples saw this, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? ⁹ It could have been sold for a lot, and the money given to the poor!"

¹⁰ But *Yeshua*, knowing this, said to them, "Why do you cause trouble for this woman? She's done Me a *mitzvah*. ¹¹ You always have the poor with you, †† but you won't always have Me. ¹² For when she poured this oil on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. ¹³ Amen, I tell you, wherever this Good News is proclaimed in all the world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her."

Betrayed and Sold for Silver

¹⁴ Then one of the Twelve, the one called Judah of Kriot, went to the ruling *kohanim* ¹⁵ and said, "What are you willing to give me if I hand Him over to you?" And they weighed out thirty shekels ††† of silver for him. ¹⁶ From then on, Judah began looking for a chance to hand Him over.

‡ cf. Prov. 19:17. †† cf. Dan. 12:2. ††† cf. Deut. 15:11. ††† cf. Exod. 21:32; Zech. 11:12.

¹⁷ Now on the first day of *matzah*, [†] the disciples came to *Yeshua*, saying, "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 time is near; at your house I am to keep the Passover with My disciples."'" ¹⁹ The disciples did as *Yeshua* had ordered them, and they prepared the Passover. ^{††}

²⁰ Now when it was evening, *Yeshua* was reclining at the table with the Twelve. ²¹ As they were eating, He said, "Amen, I tell you, one of you will betray Me."

²² And being very sorrowful, they began, each one, to say to Him, "I'm not the one, am I, Master?"

²³ And He replied, "The one who dipped his hand in the bowl with Me, he's the one who will betray Me.

^{‡24} The Son of Man indeed goes, just as it is written about Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! ^{‡†} It would have been better for that man if he had not been born!"

²⁵ And Judah, the one betraying Him, replied, "I'm not the one, am I, Rabbi?"

Yeshua said to him, "You've said it yourself."

²⁶ Now while they were eating, *Yeshua* took *matzah*; ^{‡†} and after He offered the *bracha*, He broke and gave to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

²⁷ And He took a cup; and after giving thanks, He gave to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the removal of sins. ^{‡††29} But I say to you, I will never drink of this fruit of the vine from now on, until that day when I drink it anew with you in My Father's kingdom."

³⁰ After singing the *Hallel*, ^{‡††} they went out to the Mount of Olives. ³¹ Then *Yeshua* said to them, "This night you will all fall away because of Me; for it is written,

"I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered." [§]

³² "But after I am raised up, I will go before you to the Galilee."

³³ But Peter replied to Him, "Though all fall away because of You, I'll never fall away."

³⁴ *Yeshua* said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

³⁵ "Even if I must die with You," Peter says to Him, "I'll never deny You!" And so said all the disciples.

"Your Will Be Done"

³⁶ Then *Yeshua* comes with them to a place called Gethsemane, and He tells the disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ And He took along Peter and Zebedee's two sons, and He began to be sorrow-

[†] cf. Exod. 12:15. ^{††} cf. Deut. 16:5-8. [‡] cf. Exod. 12:8; Ps. 41:10(9). ^{‡†} cf. Ps. 41:10(9). ^{‡††} Lit. bread

^{‡††} cf. Exod. 24:8; Jer. 31:31; Heb. 9:22; 10:16-18.

Some mss. say new covenant ^{‡†††} Ps. 113-118; Ps. 115-118 was sung after the last cup. [§] Zech. 13:7.

ful and troubled. ³⁸ Then He tells them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me." ³⁹ Going a little farther, He fell face down and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me! Yet not as I will, but as You will."

⁴⁰ Then He comes to the disciples and finds them sleeping; and He tells Peter, "So couldn't you keep watch with Me for one hour? ⁴¹ Keep watching and praying, so that you won't enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴² Again for a second time He went away and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, let Your will be done." ⁴³ And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So He left them again and prayed a third time, saying the same words once more. ⁴⁵ Then He comes to the disciples and says to them, "Still sleeping? Taking your rest? Look, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Get up, let's go! Look, My betrayer is near."

Taken into Custody

⁴⁷ While *Yeshua* was still speaking, here came Judah, one of the Twelve, and with him a big crowd with swords and clubs, from the ruling *kohanim* and elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The One I kiss, He's the One—seize Him!' ⁴⁹ And immediately Judah drew near ^{§†} to *Yeshua* and said, "Shalom, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

⁵⁰ "Friend," *Yeshua* said to him, "do what you've come to do." Then they came up and threw their hands on *Yeshua* and seized Him. ⁵¹ And suddenly, one of those with *Yeshua* stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and he struck the *kohen gadol's* servant and cut off his ear.

⁵² Then *Yeshua* said to him, "Put your sword back in its place! For all who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. ^{§††53} Or do you suppose that I cannot call on My Father, and at once He will place at My side twelve legions ^{§‡} of angels? ⁵⁴ How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"

⁵⁵ At that hour *Yeshua* said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs, to capture Me as you would a revolutionary? ^{§††} Every day I sat teaching in the Temple, and you didn't seize Me. ⁵⁶ But all this has happened so that the writings of the prophets would be fulfilled." Then all the disciples fled, abandoning Him.

⁵⁷ Now those who had seized *Yeshua* led Him away to Caiaphas, the *kohen gadol*, where the *Torah* scholars and elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ Peter was following Him from a distance as far as the courtyard of the *kohen gadol*. And after going inside, he was sitting with the guards, to see the outcome.

^{§†} cf. Gen. 44:18. ^{§††} cf. Gen. 9:6. ^{§‡} 1 legion = 6000 soldiers. ^{§††} Or robber

Yeshua's Trial Begins

⁵⁹ Now the ruling *kohanim* and all the Sanhedrin kept trying to get false testimony against *Yeshua* so they could put Him to death. ⁶⁰ But they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹ and said, "This fellow said, 'I'm able to destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days!'"

⁶² The *kohen gadol* stood up and said to *Yeshua*, "Have You no answer? What's this they're testifying against You?" ⁶³ But *Yeshua* kept silent.

The *kohen gadol* said to Him, "I charge You under oath by the living God, tell us if You are *Mashiach Ben-Elohim*!" †

⁶⁴ "As you have said," replied *Yeshua*. "Besides that, I tell you, soon after you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ††

⁶⁵ Then the *kohen gadol* tore his clothes and said, "Blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, you've heard the blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What's your verdict?" ‡

"Guilty," they answered. "He deserves death!" ⁶⁷ Then they spat in His face and pounded Him with their fists. †† Others slapped Him and demanded, ⁶⁸ "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Which one hit You?"

Peter Denies Yeshua

⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Peter was sitting in the courtyard. A servant girl came over to him and said, "You also were with *Yeshua* of the Galilee."

⁷⁰ But he denied it before everyone, saying, "I don't know what you're talking about!"

⁷¹ When he went onto the porch, another servant girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with *Yeshua ha-Natzrati*."

⁷² Again he denied it with an oath: "I don't know the Man!"

⁷³ A little while later, some of the bystanders approached Peter and said to him, "Surely you're one of them, too—your accent gives you away."

⁷⁴ Then he began to curse ‡ and to swear an oath: "I do not know the Man!" Right then, a rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ Then Peter reminded himself of the word *Yeshua* had said: "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went away and wept bitterly.

Judah's Remorse

27 When daybreak came, the ruling *kohanim* and elders of the people conspired against *Yeshua* to put Him to death. ² And they tied Him up, led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate, the governor. ³ Then Judah, His betrayer, saw that *Yeshua* had been condemned. Feeling remorse, he brought the 30 silver

pieces back to the ruling *kohanim* and elders, ⁴ saying, "I've sinned, betraying innocent blood!"

But they said, "What's that to us? You see to it yourself!" ⁵ After tossing the silver into the Temple sanctuary, he left. Then he went off and hanged himself. ⁶ But the ruling *kohanim* took the silver pieces and said, "It is not permitted to put these in the treasury, since it is blood money." ⁷ So after they conferred, they bought with them the potter's field, as a cemetery for strangers. ⁸ For this reason that field has been called the "Field of Blood" to this day. ⁹ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty silver pieces, the price of Him on whom a price had been set by *Bnei-Yisrael*; ¹⁰ and they gave them for the potter's field, just as *ADONAI* arranged for me." †††

"Kill the King!"

¹¹ Now *Yeshua* stood before the governor. The governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

"You say so," *Yeshua* said. ¹² And while He was accused by the ruling *kohanim* and elders, He did not answer.

¹³ Then Pilate said to Him, "Don't You hear how many things they testify against you?" ¹⁴ *Yeshua* did not answer, not even one word, so the governor was greatly amazed.

¹⁵ Now during the feast, the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner, anyone they wanted. ¹⁶ At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called *Yeshua Bar-Abba*. ¹⁷ So when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Which one do you want me to release for you? *Yeshua* who is *Bar-Abba*, or *Yeshua* who is called Messiah?" †††¹⁸ For he knew that they had handed Him over out of envy.

¹⁹ While Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, "Don't have anything to do with that righteous Man, for today I've suffered many things in a dream because of Him."

²⁰ Now the ruling *kohanim* and elders persuaded the crowds that they should ask for *Bar-Abba* and destroy *Yeshua*. ²¹ But the governor responded, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?"

And they said, " *Bar-Abba*!"

²² Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with *Yeshua*, who is called Messiah?"

"Execute Him!" all of them say.

²³ But Pilate said, "Why? What evil has He done?"

But they kept shouting all the more, saying, "Let Him be executed!"

²⁴ When Pilate saw he was accomplishing nothing, but instead a riot was starting, he took some water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this blood," ²⁵ he said. "You see to it yourselves!"

† cf. John 20:31. †† cf. Dan. 7:13; Ps. 110:1; Isa. 9:6(7). ‡ cf. Lev. 24:16. ††† cf. Isa. 50:6. †† cf. Mark 14:71.

††† cf. Zech. 11:12-13; Jer. 18:2-6; 32:6-15; 19:1-13. ††† Most mss. omit *Yeshua Bar-Abba. Bar-Abba Son of*

²⁵ All the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children!" †

²⁶ Then he released to them *Bar-Abba*. And after he had *Yeshua* scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

Nailed to a Stake

²⁷ Then the governor's soldiers took *Yeshua* into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around Him. ²⁸ They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe around Him. ²⁹ And after braiding a crown of thorns, they placed it on His head and put a staff in His right hand. And falling on their knees before Him, they mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰ They spat on Him, and they took the staff and beat Him over and over on the head. ³¹ When they finished mocking Him, they stripped the robe off Him and put His own clothes back on Him. And they led Him away to crucify Him.

³² As they came out, they found a man from Cyrene, Simon by name. They forced him into service, to carry *Yeshua's* crossbeam. †³³ And when they came to a place called Golgotha (that is to say, Place of a Skull), ³⁴ they offered Him wine mixed with gall to drink; ‡ but after tasting, He was unwilling to drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified Him, they divided His clothing among themselves by casting lots. †³⁶ And they sat down and kept guard over Him there. ³⁷ Over His head they put the charge against Him, which read: "THIS IS YESHUA, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

³⁸ Then two outlaws were executed with Him, one on the right and one on the left. ³⁹ Those passing by were jeering at Him, †† shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who are going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If you are *Ben-Elohim*, come down from the stake!"

⁴¹ Likewise the ruling *kohanim*, along with the *Torah* scholars and elders, were also mocking Him. ⁴² "He saved others," they were saying, "but He can't save Himself? He's the King of Israel! Let Him come down now from the stake, and we'll believe in Him!" ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God rescue Him now, if He wants Him. ††† For He said, 'I am *Ben-Elohim*.'" ⁴⁴ Even the outlaws who were executed with Him were ridiculing Him in the same way. †††

Yeshua Lays down His Life

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour, darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ About the ninth hour *Yeshua* cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" †† that is, "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?"

the Father § Some mss. say *this righteous blood this righteous Man's blood* † cf. Josh. 2:19. †† Probably the patibulum

‡ cf. Ps. 69:22(21). †† Ps. 22:19(18). ††† cf. Ps. 22:8(7). †††† cf. Ps. 22:8. †††† cf. Isa. 53:3. § From noon until 3 p.m.; cf. Job 5:14; Ps. 105:28. †† Ps. 22:2(1); cf. Deut. 32:20.

⁴⁷ When some of those standing there heard it, they began saying, "This Man is calling for Elijah." ⁴⁸ Right away one of them ran and took a sponge. He filled it with sour wine and put it on a stick, and was offering it to *Yeshua* to drink. ††⁴⁹ But the rest were saying, "Leave Him alone! Let's see if Elijah comes to save Him." ⁵⁰ And *Yeshua* cried out again with a loud voice and gave up His spirit.

⁵¹ And behold, the curtain †† of the Temple was split in two, from top to bottom. And the earth quaked and rocks were split apart. ⁵² And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the *kedoshim* who were sleeping were raised to life. ⁵³ And coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

⁵⁴ Now the centurion, and those with him keeping guard over *Yeshua*, when they saw the earthquake and what was happening, they became terribly frightened and said, "This really was the Son of God!"

The Tomb Is Sealed

⁵⁵ Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed *Yeshua* from the Galilee, serving Him. ⁵⁶ Among them were Miriam from Magdala, Miriam the mother of Jacob and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

⁵⁷ Now when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had also become a disciple of *Yeshua*. ⁵⁸ This man went to Pilate and asked for *Yeshua's* body. Then Pilate ordered it to be given up. ⁵⁹ And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. ⁶⁰ And he laid it in his own new tomb, ††† which he had cut in the rock. Then he rolled a large stone up to the door of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Now Miriam from Magdala was there, and the other Miriam, sitting opposite the tomb.

Guarding the Tomb

⁶² Now on the next day, which is after the preparation, the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees were gathered before Pilate. ⁶³ "Sir," they said, "we remember how that deceiver said while He was still alive, 'After three days I'm to be raised.'" ⁶⁴ Therefore, order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, so His disciples do not come and steal Him away. They will tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first!"

⁶⁵ "You have a guard," Pilate said to them. "Go, make it as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone along with the soldiers of the guard.

The Son Is Risen!

28 Now after *Shabbat*, as it began to dawn on the first day of the week, Miriam of Magdala and

††† cf. Ps. 69:22(21). ††† Hebrew *parokhet*, veil inner curtain †††† cf. Isa. 53:9.

the other Miriam came to look at the tomb. ² And suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of *ADONAI* descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, † and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴ And those keeping watch were shaken for fear of him and became like dead men.

⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know you are looking for *Yeshua* who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He †† was lying. ⁷ Go quickly now and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead. And behold, He's going before you to the Galilee. There you will see Him. See, I have told you!" ⁸ They quickly left the tomb, with fear yet with great joy, and ran to bring news to His disciples.

The Good News Cannot Be Hidden

⁹ And behold, *Yeshua* met them. " *Shalom!*" He said. They drew near, grasped his feet, and worshiped Him. ¹⁰ "Don't be afraid," *Yeshua* said to them. "Go tell My brothers to head for the Galilee, and there they will see Me."

† cf. Dan. 10:6. †† Some mss. say the Lord

¹¹ Now while they were going, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the ruling *kohanim* all that had happened. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of silver to the soldiers, ¹³ saying, "Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we were sleeping.'" ¹⁴ And if this is heard by the governor, we'll appease him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story was spread among the Judeans to this day.

Authority to Make Disciples Everywhere

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to the Galilee, to the mountain *Yeshua* had designated. ¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshiped; but some wavered. ¹⁸ And *Yeshua* came up to them and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. †¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And remember! I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

‡ cf. Isa. 9:5-6(6-7); Dan. 7:14.

Mark

Introduction

Mark, the shortest of the four Gospels, is dated as early as the 40s C.E., though many scholars think it was more likely written in the 50s or 60s. Matthew and Luke may have used Mark's Gospel when constructing their own accounts. John Mark, who traveled with both Barnabas and Paul, authored this account. Though not an eyewitness himself, early tradition tells us that his Gospel was based on the eyewitness testimony of Simon Peter, one of the twelve emissaries. Therefore, this writing becomes another apostolic testimony to the message of the Good News. The Gospel of Mark focuses less on 's teaching than on His deeds, especially His miracles. Events are recounted in an almost breathless fashion. Note the frequent use of "immediately" or equivalent expressions as one event leads into another.

Mark's Gospel issues a strong call to discipleship, often placing the suffering of alongside that call, as in chapters 8-10. As Matthew ends his Gospel with the Great Commission to bring the Good News to all nations, this second Gospel addresses itself to Gentiles, perhaps those living in Rome, the empire's capital. Mark does not display the fullness of theological reflection on the life of that the other Gospels do. Nevertheless, Mark's compact directness carries a significant message in itself. The fulcrum is found in Mark 8:29, when asks, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answers, "You are the Messiah!" Before Peter's confession, the emphasis is on miracles. Afterward, it is on His suffering and death. It is as though once we come to recognize that is the Messiah, we must learn what kind of Messiah He is, something even the disciples could not easily grasp. He is the Messiah who suffers and dies on our behalf—One whose followers must be prepared for costly discipleship as well.

A Look Inside Mark

- The Kingdom Is Coming Now
- The Spirit Rests on
- Fishermen Follow Him
- Demons Flee at His Command
- The Hurting Become Whole
- Power to Pardon the Paralyzed
- Fellowship with Sinners
- Feasting in His Presence
- Restoration
- A on
- Crowds Clamor for
- Appointing the Twelve
- Binding the Strong Man
- A Spiritual Family Begins
- Storytelling Opens Hearts
- Reaping What You Sow
- What Is the Kingdom of God Like?
- Power Over Nature
- Power Over Demons
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 Tell the World!

The Kingdom Is Coming Now

¹ The beginning of the Good News of *Yeshua ha-Mashiach*, *Ben-Elohim*. ² As Isaiah the prophet has written,

"Behold, I send My messenger before You, who will prepare Your way. †

³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of *ADONAI*, and make His paths straight.'" ††

⁴ John appeared, immersing in the wilderness, proclaiming an immersion involving repentance for the removal of sins. ⁵ All the Judean countryside was going out to him, and all the Jerusalemites. As they confessed their sins, they were being immersed by him in the Jordan River.

⁶ John wore clothes made from camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ "After me comes One who is mightier than I am," he proclaimed. "I'm not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of His sandals! ⁸ I immersed you with water, but He will immerse you in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*." ‡

The Spirit Rests on *Yeshua*

⁹ In those days, *Yeshua* came from *Natzeret* in the Galilee and was immersed by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Just as He was coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens ripping open and the *Ruach* as a dove coming down upon Him. ¹¹ And there came a voice from the heavens: "You are My Son, whom I love; with You I am well pleased!" ††

† cf. *Exod.* 23:20; *Mal.* 3:1. †† *Isa.* 40:3.

‡ cf. *Joel* 2:28ff.; *Ezek.* 36:26; *Zech.* 12:10. †† cf. *Ps.* 2:7, 12; *Prov.* 30:4; *Isa.* 9:5(6).

¹² That instant, the *Ruach* drives Him into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness 40 days, being tempted by *satan*. And He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were taking care of Him.

Fishermen Follow Him

¹⁴ Now after John was put in jail, *Yeshua* came into the Galilee, proclaiming the Good News of God. ¹⁵ "Now is the fullness of time," He said, "and the kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins, and believe in the Good News!" ¹⁶ Passing along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew casting a net in the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And *Yeshua* said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." ¹⁸ Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. ¹⁹ Going a little farther, He saw Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired hands and followed Him.

Demons Flee at His Command

²¹ And they went into Capernaum. Right away, on *Shabbat*, He entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²² And they were astounded at His teaching, for He was teaching them as one having authority [†] and not as the *Torah* scholars. ²³ Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴ "What have we to do with You, *Yeshua* of *Natzeret*? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are! You're the Holy One of God!" ²⁵ *Yeshua* rebuked him, saying, "Quiet! Come out of him!" ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, after throwing the man into convulsions and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ They were all so amazed that they asked among themselves, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him!" ²⁸ And immediately news about Him spread throughout the region surrounding Galilee.

The Hurting Become Whole

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with Jacob and John to the house of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever. Right away, they told *Yeshua* about her. ³¹ He came and raised her up by taking her hand. The fever left her, and she began to take care of them. ³² When evening came, at sunset, the people brought to Him all the sick and those who were afflicted by demons. ³³ The whole town gathered together at the door. ³⁴ He healed many who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. And He

† cf. *Isa.* 53:12.

would not allow the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.

³⁵ Very early, while it was still night, *Yeshua* got up, left, and went away to a place in the wilderness; and there He was praying. ³⁶ Then Simon and those with him hunted for *Yeshua*. ³⁷ And when they found Him, they said to Him, "Everybody's looking for You."

³⁸ He said to them, "Let's go somewhere else, to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also—this is what I came for." ³⁹ And He went throughout all the Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and driving out demons.

⁴⁰ A man with *tzara'at* comes to Him, begging Him and falling on his knees, saying, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

⁴¹ Moved with compassion, *Yeshua* stretched out His hand and touched him. He said, "I am willing. Be cleansed." ⁴² Immediately, the *tzara'at* left him, and he was cleansed.

⁴³ *Yeshua* sent him away at once, sternly warning him. ⁴⁴ He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go show yourself to the *kohen*. ^{††} Then, for your cleansing, offer what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim and spread the word, so much that *Yeshua* could no longer enter a town openly but had to stay out in wilderness areas. Still, they kept on coming to Him from everywhere.

Power to Pardon the Paralyzed

2 When He returned to Capernaum after some days, it was heard that He was at the house. ² So many were gathered that there was no longer room for them even outside the door. He kept proclaiming the word to them.

³ Some people came bringing to Him a paralyzed man, carried by four men. ⁴ When they couldn't get near *Yeshua* because of the crowd, they removed the roof where He was. After digging through, they lowered the mat on which the paralyzed man was lying. ⁵ *Yeshua*, seeing their faith, said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶ But some of the *Torah* scholars were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ "Why does this fellow speak like this? He blasphemes! Who can pardon sins but God alone?"

⁸ Immediately *Yeshua*, knowing in His spirit that they were raising questions this way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you questioning these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and take your mat, and walk?' ¹⁰ But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority to pardon sins on earth...." He tells the paralyzed man, ¹¹ "I tell you, get up, take your mat, and go home!"

†† cf. *Lev.* 13:6, 13, 17, 23; 14:39.

¹² At once the man got up, took his mat, and walked before them all. They were all astonished and glorified God, saying, "We've never seen anything like this!" †

Fellowship with Sinners

¹³ Again, *Yeshua* went out by the sea. The whole crowd kept coming to Him, and He continued to teach them. ¹⁴ As He was passing by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. He said to him, "Follow Me." And he got up and followed Him.

¹⁵ Now it happens that *Yeshua* was reclining at the table in Levi's house, and many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with *Yeshua* and His disciples. For there were many, and they were following Him.

¹⁶ When the *Torah* scholars of the Pharisees saw Him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they began to say to His disciples, "With tax collectors and sinners He eats?"

¹⁷ And when He heard this, *Yeshua* said to them, "Those who are healthy have no need for a doctor, but those who are sick do. I did not come to call the righteous, but the sinful."

Feasting in His Presence

¹⁸ Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. They came and said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁹ And *Yeshua* said to them, "The guests of the bridegroom cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

²¹ "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise the patch pulls away from the old, and a worse tear happens. ²² And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins; and the wine is lost, also the skins. But one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

Shabbat Restoration

²³ Now it happened on *Shabbat* that *Yeshua* was going through the grain fields; and His disciples began to make their way, plucking the heads of grain. ††²⁴ The Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing what is not permitted on *Shabbat*?" ‡

²⁵ And He said to them, "Haven't you ever read what David did when he was in need, and he and those with him became hungry? ‡†²⁶ How he entered into the house of God when Abiathar was *kohen gadol* and ate the showbread, which is permitted only for the *kohanim* to eat, and gave some even to those who were with him?"

† cf. Isa. 53:12. †† cf. Deut. 23:25. ‡ cf. Exod. 20:10; 23:12; Deut. 5:14. ‡† cf. Lev. 24:5-9; 1 Sam. 21:1-6.

²⁷ Then He said to them, " *Shabbat* was made for man, and not man for *Shabbat* . ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of *Shabbat* ."

A Mitzvah on Shabbat

3 *Yeshua* entered the synagogue again, and a man with a withered hand was there. ² Now some were carefully watching Him, to see if He would heal him on *Shabbat* , so that they might accuse Him. ³ He said to the man with the withered hand, "Stand up here in the center." ⁴ Then He said to them, "Is it permitted on *Shabbat* to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?" ‡ But they kept silent.

⁵ After looking around at them with anger, grieved by their hardness of heart, He says to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out right away with the Herodians and began plotting against Him, how they might destroy Him.

Crowds Clamor for Yeshua

⁷ *Yeshua* withdrew to the sea with His disciples, and a large crowd from the Galilee followed. From Judea, ⁸ and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and around Tyre and Sidon, a great number, hearing all He was doing, came to Him. ⁹ He told His disciples to have a small boat ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they wouldn't mob Him.

¹⁰ For He had healed many, so that all those afflicted fell down before Him in order to touch Him. ¹¹ And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, would fall down before Him and cry out, "You are *Ben-Elohim* !" ¹² But *Yeshua* strictly ordered them not to make Him known.

Appointing the Twelve

¹³ Now He climbs up on the mountain and calls those He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. ¹⁴ He appointed twelve (whom He also named emissaries), so that they might be with Him and He might send them to proclaim the Good News, ¹⁵ and to have power to drive out demons. ¹⁶ And He appointed the Twelve: to Simon He gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ to Jacob and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee, He gave the name Boanerges, which is Sons of Thunder; ¹⁸ and Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, Jacob the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, ‡†¹⁹ and Judah from Kriot, who also betrayed Him.

Binding the Strong Man

²⁰ Then He comes into a house, and again a crowd gathers so they couldn't even eat. ²¹ When His family heard about this, they went out to take hold of Him; for they were saying, "He's out of His mind!"

‡† cf. Exod. 20:10; Lev. 23:12; Deut. 5:14. ‡†† Lit. Cananean zealot, enthusiast

²² The *Torah* scholars who came down from Jerusalem said, "He's possessed by beelzebul," and, "By the ruler of demons He drives out demons."

²³ He called them and began speaking to them in parables: "How can *satan* drive out *satan*? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if *satan* has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but his end has come.

²⁷ "But no one can enter a strong man's house to ransack his property, unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he will thoroughly plunder his house.

²⁸ Amen, I tell you, all things will be forgiven the sons of men, the sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever slanders † the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* never has release, but is guilty of an eternal sin!" ³⁰ For they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

A Spiritual Family Begins

³¹ Then His mother and brothers come. Standing outside, they sent word to Him, summoning Him. ³² A crowd was sitting around Him, and they tell Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." ³³ Answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" ³⁴ Looking at those sitting in a circle around Him, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother."

Storytelling Opens Hearts

4 Again *Yeshua* began to teach by the sea. A large crowd gathered around Him, so He got into a boat on the sea and sat down. And the crowd was by the sea on the land. ² He began teaching them many things by parables, and in His teaching, He said to them: ³ "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to spread some seed. ⁴ It happened that as he sowed, some fell beside the road; and the birds came and ate it up.

⁵ "Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it didn't have much soil. It sprang up immediately, because the soil wasn't deep. ⁶ But when the sun came up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

⁷ "Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

⁸ "And others fell into the good soil and were producing fruit, springing up and increasing. They yielded a crop, producing 30, 60, and a hundredfold." ⁹ And He said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

¹⁰ When *Yeshua* was alone, those around Him with the Twelve started asking Him about the parables.

¹¹ And He told them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God. But for those who are outside, everything is in parables, †† so that

¹² "Seeing, they may see and not perceive,

and hearing, they may hear and not understand, so they may not turn back and be forgiven." ‡

¹³ He said to them, "Don't you grasp this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ These are the ones beside the road where the word is sown. Whenever they hear, *satan* comes quickly and takes away the word that has been sown in them.

¹⁶ "These are the ones sown on rocky ground. When they hear the word, immediately they receive it with joy. ¹⁷ And they have no root in themselves but last only a short while. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, immediately they fall away.

¹⁸ "And others are the ones sown among the thorns. They have heard the word; ¹⁹ but the worries of the world, the seduction of wealth, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

²⁰ "And those are the ones sown on the good soil. They hear the word and accept it and produce fruit, 30, 60, and a hundredfold."

Reaping What You Sow

²¹ He also was saying to them, "Is a lamp put under a basket or a bed? No, shouldn't it be placed on a lampstand? ²² For there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, nor anything kept secret except that it would come to light. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." ²⁴ Then He continued, "Pay attention to what you hear. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you; and more will be added to you. ²⁵ For whoever has, to him more will be given. And whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

What Is the Kingdom of God Like?

²⁶ And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like when a man spreads seed on the soil ²⁷ and falls asleep at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows. He himself doesn't know how. ²⁸ Automatically, the earth brings forth a crop—first the blade, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹ But when the grain is ready, at once he sends in the sickle, for the harvest has come."

³⁰ *Yeshua* also said, "How should we picture the kingdom of God? Or by what story shall we present it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed when it's planted in the ground. Though the smallest of all seeds in the earth, ³² yet when planted it grows up and becomes the largest of all the herbs. It puts forth big branches, so the birds of the air can nest in its shade." ††

³³ With many such parables He used to tell them the word, as much as they were able to hear. ³⁴ But apart from a parable, He wasn't speaking to them. Yet when they were alone, to His own disciples He would explain everything.

† *Lit. blasphemes*

†† *cf. Prov. 1:6.*

‡ *Isa. 6:9-10. †† Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45.*

Power over Nature

³⁵ Now on that same day in the evening, He says to them, "Let's cross over to the other side." ³⁶ After leaving the crowd, they take Him along in the boat, just as He was. And other boats were with Him.

³⁷ A great windstorm arises, and the waves were rushing into the boat. The boat was beginning to fill up. ³⁸ But *Yeshua* was in the back of the boat, sleeping on a pillow. They wake Him up and say to Him, "Teacher, don't you care that we are perishing?"

³⁹ So He woke up and rebuked the wind. And He said to the sea, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind stopped, and it became totally calm. ⁴⁰ And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Even now you have no faith?"

⁴¹ They were struck with awe and said to one another, "Who is this? Even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

Power over Demons

5 They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. ² As soon as *Yeshua* got out of the boat, a man from the graveyard [†] with an unclean spirit met Him. ³ He lived among the tombs, and no one could restrain him anymore, even with a chain. ⁴ For he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been ripped apart by him and the shackles broken. No one was strong enough to tame him. ⁵ And through it all, night and day, at the graveyard and in the mountains, he kept screaming and gashing himself with stones.

⁶ When he saw *Yeshua* from a distance, he ran and bowed down before Him. ⁷ Crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What's between You and me, *Yeshua*, *Ben El Elyon*? I'm warning you, in the name of God, do not torment me!"

⁸ For *Yeshua* had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" ⁹ Then *Yeshua* began questioning him, "What is your name?"

And he answered, "My name is Legion, ^{††} for we are many." ¹⁰ He kept begging Him not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a large herd of pigs was feeding on the hillside nearby. ¹² The unclean spirits urged Him, saying, "Send us to the pigs, so we may enter them." ¹³ So *Yeshua* gave them permission. The unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs. And the herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the cliff and were drowned in the sea.

¹⁴ The herdsmen ran away and told the town and countryside, and they came to see what had happened. ¹⁵ Now they came to *Yeshua* and saw the madman who had had the legion. He was sitting there, dressed in clothes, and in his right mind. The people were scared.

¹⁶ Those who had seen it described in detail what had happened to the man plagued by a demon, and

they also told about the pigs. ¹⁷ And they began to beg *Yeshua* to leave their country. ¹⁸ As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been infested with demons kept begging to remain with Him. ¹⁹ *Yeshua* did not let him, but He told him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much *ADONAI* has done for you, how He showed you mercy."

²⁰ So he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis [‡] how much *Yeshua* had done for him. And all were amazed.

Power in His Touch

²¹ When *Yeshua* had crossed over in the boat again to the other side, a big crowd gathered around Him; and He was by the sea. ²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, comes. Seeing Him, he falls at His feet. ²³ He begs Him a great deal, saying, "My little daughter is near death! Come and lay hands on her so that she may be healed and live!"

²⁴ So *Yeshua* went off with him, and a big crowd was following Him and pressing upon Him. ²⁵ And there was a woman with a blood flow for 12 years, ^{‡26} who had suffered much under many doctors. She had spent all that she had without benefit; instead, she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about *Yeshua*, she came through the crowd from behind and touched His garment. ²⁸ For she kept saying, "If I touch even His clothes, I shall be healed."

²⁹ Right away the blood flow stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed from her disease. ³⁰ At once *Yeshua*, knowing in Himself that power had gone out from Him, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My clothes?"

³¹ His disciples responded, "You see the crowd pressing upon You and you say, 'Who touched Me?'" ³² But He kept looking around to see who had done this.

³³ But the woman, scared and shaking, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. ³⁴ And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in *shalom* and be healed from your disease."

³⁵ While *Yeshua* was still speaking, messengers come from the house of the synagogue leader, saying, "Your daughter is dead. Why do you still trouble the Teacher?"

³⁶ But ignoring what they said, *Yeshua* tells the synagogue leader, "Do not be afraid; only believe." ³⁷ He did not let anyone follow Him except Peter, Jacob, and John, the brother of Jacob.

³⁸ They come to the house of the synagogue leader. He sees a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ After entering, He said to them, "Why make such a fuss and weep? The child didn't die, but is sleeping."

⁴⁰ They start jeering at Him. But after sending all of them out, He takes the child's father and mother, and those with Him, and enters where the child was.

[†] Lit. tombs ^{††} Latin for thousands

[‡] The name means 10 Cities ^{††} cf. Lev. 15:25-29.

41 Then, taking hold of the child's hand, He tells her, "*Talitha koum*," † which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up." 42 Immediately, the girl stood up and began to walk around! (She was 12 years old.) And they were overcome with astonishment. 43 But He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this, and He said something to eat should be given to her.

Responding to Rejection

6 Now *Yeshua* went out from there, and He comes to His hometown, and His disciples follow Him. 2 When *Shabbat* came, He began to teach in the synagogue. Many listeners were amazed, saying, "Where did this fellow get these things? What's this wisdom given to Him? Such miracles are done by His hands! 3 Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Miriam, and the brother of Jacob and Joseph and Judah and Simon? Aren't His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him.

4 Then *Yeshua* began saying to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown, among his relatives, and in his own house." 5 He was not able to do any miracle, except that He laid hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And He was astonished because of their unbelief. †† And He was going around among the villages teaching.

7 *Yeshua* summoned the Twelve, and He began to send them out two by two. And He gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He directed them to take nothing for the journey except a walking stick—no bread, no bag, no copper coin in their belt— 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on two shirts. ‡

10 He was also telling them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that place. 11 And whatever place will not receive you or listen to you, as you leave from there, shake the dust off the bottom of your feet as a witness against them." 12 So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent, 13 and they were driving out many demons and anointing with oil many who were sick and healing them.

14 King Herod heard, for *Yeshua*'s name had become known. Some were saying, "John the Immerser has risen from the dead! Because of this, these powers are at work in Him!" 15 But others were saying, "It's Elijah!" Still others were saying, "It's a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." ††

16 But when Herod heard, he said, "John, the one I beheaded, has been raised!" 17 For Herod himself sent and arrested John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because Herod had married her. 18 For John had been telling Herod, "It is not permitted for you to have your brother's wife." †††19 Now Herodias had a grudge against John and wanted to kill him, but she wasn't

able. 20 For Herod was in awe of John and kept him safe, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When he listened to John he was confused, but he still listened gladly.

21 An opportunity came—when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his high officials, military brass, and the leaders of the Galilee. 22 When the daughter of Herodias ††† came in and danced, she pleased Herod and those reclining with him. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you want, and I'll give it to you!" 23 He vowed to her, "Whatever you ask of me I'll give you, up to half of my kingdom!"

24 She left the room and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?"

Her mother said, "The head of John the Immerser!"

25 Immediately she rushed to the king and requested, "I want you to give me, right now, the head of John the Immerser on a platter!"

26 The king became very sorrowful; but because of his oaths and those reclining with him, he didn't want to refuse her.

27 Immediately the king sent an executioner and gave orders to bring John's head. And the executioner went out 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, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Feeding Five Thousand Families

30 The twelve emissaries gathered together with *Yeshua*, and they reported to Him all they had done and taught. 31 There were many coming and going, and they had no time even to eat. So He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to an isolated place and rest awhile." 32 So they left privately by boat to an isolated place. 33 However, the people saw them leaving, and many recognized them. They ran on foot from all the towns to get there ahead of them. 34 As *Yeshua* came ashore, He saw a large crowd and felt compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. ††† So He taught them many things.

35 When it was already late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is isolated, and the hour is already late. 36 Send these people away so they can go into the nearby countryside and the villages and buy themselves something to eat."

37 But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat!"

And they said to Him, "Should we go and spend 200 denarii on bread to give them something to eat?"

38 Then He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish."

39 Then *Yeshua* made them all sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they reclined in groups of hun-

† Greek transliteration for the general Aramaic command to get up; some mss. read *Talitha kumi*

†† cf. Isa. 53:1ff. ‡ Lit. tunic undershirt †† cf. Mal. 4:5; Deut. 18:17-19. ††† cf. Exod. 20:8, 17; Lev. 18.

††† cf. Matt. 14:6. Some mss. say his daughter Herodias ††† cf. Num. 27:17; 2 Chron. 18:16.

dreds and fifties. ⁴¹ And He took the five loaves and the two fish; and looking up to heaven, He offered the *bracha*. He broke the loaves and kept giving them to the disciples to serve to the people; and He divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³ and the disciples picked up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and fish. ⁴⁴ Now there were 5,000 men who ate the loaves.

Walking on Water

⁴⁵ Right away, *Yeshua* made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away. ⁴⁶ After leaving them, He went up on the hillside to pray.

⁴⁷ And when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ He saw the disciples struggling to row, for the wind was against them. Around the fourth watch in the night, † *Yeshua* comes to them, walking on the sea; and He wanted to pass by them. ⁴⁹ But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they thought He was a ghost and cried out— ⁵⁰ for they all saw Him and were terrified.

But immediately, He spoke to them. He said, “Take courage! I am. Do not be afraid.” ⁵¹ Then He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped. They were utterly dumbfounded, ⁵² for they still hadn’t understood about the loaves. Instead, their hearts were hardened.

Miracles Multiply

⁵³ After they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and set anchor there. ⁵⁴ As they got out of the boat, immediately people recognized *Yeshua*. ⁵⁵ They ran about the region and began to carry around on their mats all those who were in bad shape, to wherever they heard He was. ⁵⁶ And wherever He entered villages, towns, or countryside, people were placing the sick in the marketplaces and begging Him to let them touch even the *tzitzit* of His garment—and all who touched it were being healed.

Hearts Harden

7 Now the Pharisees and some of the *Torah* scholars who had come from Jerusalem gathered around *Yeshua*. ² And they saw that some of His disciples were eating bread with unclean hands, that is, not washed. ³ (For the Pharisees and all Jewish people do not eat unless they wash their hands up to the elbow, keeping the tradition of the elders. ⁴ And when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they perform a ritual washing. †† There are many other traditions they have received and hold, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, and copper vessels.) ‡

† Roman time, 3-6 a.m. †† Various mss. say wash immerse
‡ Some mss. add and dining couches

⁵ The Pharisees and *Torah* scholars questioned *Yeshua*, “Why don’t Your disciples walk according to the tradition of the elders? Why do they eat bread with unwashed hands?”

⁶ And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honors Me with their lips but their heart is far from Me.

⁷ And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ ††

⁸ “Having left behind the commandment of God, you hold on to the tradition of men.”

⁹ He was also telling them, “You set aside the commands of God, in order that you may validate your own tradition. ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘He who speaks evil of father or mother must be put to death.’ ††¹¹ But you say if anyone tells his father or mother, ‘Whatever you might have gained from me is *korban* (that is, an offering to God),’ ¹² then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, ¹³ making void the word of God with your tradition that you’ve handed down. And you do many such things.” †††

¹⁴ Then *Yeshua* called the crowd again and began saying to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing outside the man that can make him unholy by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of the man that makes the man unholy.” ††† (¹⁶) §

¹⁷ When He had left the crowd and entered the house, His disciples questioned Him about the parable. ¹⁸ And He said to them, “Are you then also lacking understanding? Don’t you grasp that whatever goes into the man cannot make him unholy? ¹⁹ For it does not enter into the heart but into the stomach, and then goes out into the sewer, cleansing all foods.” ††

²⁰ And He continued, “It is what comes out of the man that makes the man unholy. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, come evil intentions, sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustfulness, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. ²³ All these evil things come from within and make the man unholy.”

Miracles Touch Gentile Lives

²⁴ *Yeshua* got up and left from there to the region of Tyre. When He had entered a house, He didn’t want anyone to know; but He couldn’t escape notice. ²⁵ A woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him. She came immediately and fell at His feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, from Syrophenicia. And she kept begging *Yeshua* to drive the demon out of her daughter.

†† Isa. 29:13. †† Exod. 20:10; Deut. 5:16. ††† cf. Num. 30:1-2. This commandment concerning vows is sometimes abused. ††† cf. Lev. 10:10. § Some mss. add If any man has ears to hear, let him hear †† cf. Lev. 10:10; 11; Deut. 14:3ff.

²⁷ He was telling her, "First let the children get their fill, for it's not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

²⁸ "Yes, Master," she said to Him, "but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

²⁹ Then He said to her, "Because of this word, go your way! The demon has left your daughter." ³⁰ She went home and found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

³¹ Again He left the region of Tyre and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of the Decapolis. ³² They bring Him a deaf man who had a speech impediment, and they beg Him to lay His hand on him. ³³ *Yeshua* took him aside from the crowd to a private place, and He put His fingers in the man's ears. After spitting, He touched the man's tongue. ³⁴ Looking up to heaven, He says to the man, "*Ephphatha*" † which means "Be opened!"

³⁵ Immediately the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak plainly. ³⁶ *Yeshua* ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more He ordered them, the more they continued proclaiming it. ³⁷ People were completely astounded, saying, "He has done all things well. He makes even the deaf hear and the mute speak!"

Do You Still Not Understand?

8 In those days, there was another large crowd with nothing to eat, and *Yeshua* called the disciples. He said to them, ² "I have compassion for the crowd, because they've stayed with Me for three days now and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them home hungry they'll pass out on the way, for some of them have come from very far away."

⁴ His disciples answered Him, "How can anyone satisfy these people with bread here in a wasteland?"

⁵ "How many loaves do you have?" *Yeshua* was asking them.

"Seven," they said.

⁶ He directed the crowd to recline on the ground. After taking the seven loaves and giving thanks, He broke them and began giving them to His disciples to serve; and they served them to the crowd. ⁷ They also had a few small fish and, after offering a *bracha* for them, He commanded these to be served as well.

⁸ They ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the broken pieces left over—seven baskets. ⁹ About four thousand †† were there, and *Yeshua* sent them away.

¹⁰ Right away, He got into the boat with His disciples and went to the area of Dalmanutha. ¹¹ The Pharisees came and began to argue with Him, demanding a sign from heaven, to test Him. ¹² Sighing deeply in His spirit, *Yeshua* said, "Why does this generation demand a sign? Amen, I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." ¹³ Leaving them, He got back into the boat and crossed to the other side.

† Contraction of the Aramaic *etpatach* †† 4000 men or families; cf. Matt. 15:32-39.

The Un-Seeing Disciples

¹⁴ Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they had only one loaf in the boat. ¹⁵ *Yeshua* was warning them, "Watch out! Beware of the *hametz* of the Pharisees and the *hametz* of Herod."

¹⁶ They began to discuss with each other that they had no bread. ¹⁷ And *Yeshua*, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you discuss that you have no bread? You still don't get it? Don't you understand? Are your hearts hardened? ¹⁸ Having eyes, don't you see? And having ears, don't you hear? And don't you remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up?"

"Twelve," they say to Him.

²⁰ "When I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up?"

"Seven," they say to Him.

²¹ He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

Eyes that Need Opening

²² They come to Bethsaida. Some people bring a blind man to *Yeshua* and beg Him to touch the man.

²³ Taking the blind man by the hand, *Yeshua* brought him outside the village. After spitting on the man's eyes and laying His hands on him, *Yeshua* asked the man, "Do you see anything?"

²⁴ The man looked up and said, "I see men! They look like trees walking about." ²⁵ Then *Yeshua* put His hands on the man's eyes again. The man looked intently, his sight was restored, and he began to see everything clearly.

²⁶ *Yeshua* sent him straight home, saying, "Don't even enter the village!"

²⁷ Now *Yeshua* and His disciples went out to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

²⁸ They told Him, "John the Immerser; and others Elijah; but others, one of the prophets." ‡

²⁹ Then He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered Him, "You are the Messiah!" ³⁰ And He warned them not to tell anyone about Him.

Revealing the Mission

³¹ Then He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars, and be killed, and after three days rise again. †‡³² He was speaking openly about this. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³ But turning around and looking at His disciples, He rebuked Peter. He said, "Get behind Me, *satan*! You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but the things of men."

³⁴ Then He called the crowd, along with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wants to follow after Me,

‡ cf. Deut. 18:17-19; Mal. 4:5. †† cf. Isa. 53.

he must deny himself, take up his cross, and keep following Me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the sake of the Good News will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? ³⁷ For what could a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this unfaithful 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 *Yeshua* was telling them, "Amen, I tell you, there are some standing here who will never taste death until they see the kingdom of God come with power!"

A Glimpse of His Glory

² After six days, *Yeshua* takes with Him Peter and Jacob and John, and brings them up a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them.

³ His clothes became radiant and brilliantly white, whiter than any launderer on earth could bleach them.

⁴ Then Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with *Yeshua*.

⁵ Peter responds to *Yeshua*, "Rabbi, it's good for us to be here. Let's make three *sukkot*—one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶ (He didn't know what to say, for they were terrified.)

⁷ Then a cloud came, overshadowing them; † and out of the cloud came a voice, "This is My Son, whom I love. Listen to Him!" †† Suddenly when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except *Yeshua*.

⁹ As they were coming down from the mountain, *Yeshua* ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man rose up from the dead.

¹⁰ They kept this word to themselves, discussing among themselves what it is to rise up from the dead.

¹¹ And they questioned Him, saying, "Why do the *Torah* scholars say that Elijah must come first?"

¹² Now He told them, "Indeed Elijah comes first; ‡ he restores all things. And how is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be treated with contempt? ††† I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they wanted, just as it is written about him." ‡

The Secret of Prayer

¹⁴ When they came to the disciples, they saw a big crowd around them and the *Torah* scholars arguing with them. ¹⁵ Suddenly, when the whole crowd saw *Yeshua*, they were amazed and began running to greet Him. ¹⁶ He questioned them, "What are you arguing about with them?"

¹⁷ And a man from the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a spirit that

† cf. *Exod.* 40:34. †† cf. *Ps.* 2:7; *Prov.* 30:4; *Isa.* 9:5(6); *Deut.* 18:15. ‡ cf. *Mal.* 4:5. †† cf. *Isa.* 53:1-3; *Ps.* 118:22 (117:22 LXX); 22:6 (21:7 LXX). ††† cf. *1 Kings* 19:2-3, 10, 14.

makes him mute. ¹⁸ Whenever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes stiff. I told Your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn't!"

¹⁹ And answering them, He said, "Oh 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 *Yeshua*. When the spirit saw Him, immediately it threw the boy into a convulsion. The boy fell to the ground and began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. ²¹ *Yeshua* asked the father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

"Since he was a child," the man answered. ²² "It has often thrown him into fire or water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion and help us!"

²³ "If You can?" *Yeshua* said to him. "All things are possible for one who believes!"

²⁴ Immediately the boy's father cried out, "I believe! Help my unbelief!"

²⁵ When *Yeshua* saw that a crowd was gathering fast, He rebuked the unclean spirit, telling it, "I command you, deaf and mute spirit, come out of him and do not ever enter him again!"

²⁶ After howling and shaking the boy wildly, it came out. The boy became so much like a corpse that many were saying, "He's dead!" ²⁷ But *Yeshua* took him by the hand and lifted him, and the boy stood up.

²⁸ After *Yeshua* came into the house, His disciples began questioning Him in private, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

²⁹ And He said to them, "This kind cannot come out except by prayer." †††

³⁰ They left from there and passed through the Galilee. *Yeshua* didn't want anyone to know, 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. And after He is killed, three days later He will rise up." ³² But the disciples didn't understand this statement, and they were afraid to question Him about it.

The Secret of Childlike Humility

³³ Then they came to Capernaum. And when *Yeshua* was in the house, He began to ask the disciples, "What were you discussing on the way?" ³⁴ But they kept quiet, because on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest.

³⁵ Sitting down, He called the Twelve and said to them, "If any man wants to be first, he shall be least of all and the servant of everyone." ³⁶ Taking a small child, He set him in the midst of them. And taking him in His arms, He said to them, ³⁷ "Whoever welcomes one of these children in My name, welcomes Me; and whoever welcomes Me, welcomes not Me but the One who sent Me."

††† Some manuscripts add and fasting

³⁸ John said to Him, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in Your name, and we tried to stop him because he wasn't following us."

³⁹ But *Yeshua* responded, "Don't stop him! No one who does a miracle in My name will be able soon afterward to speak evil about Me. ⁴⁰ He who is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name because you belong to Messiah, amen I tell you, he will never lose his reward."

⁴² "But whoever causes one of these little ones who trust in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone put around his neck and to be thrown into the sea!"

The Secret of Salt

⁴³ "And if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off! It is better for you to enter into life crippled than, having two hands, to go to Gehenna, † into the unquenchable fire. (⁴⁴) ††⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off! It's better for you to enter life lame than, having your two feet, to be thrown into Gehenna. (⁴⁶) ⁴⁷ If your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out! It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than, having two eyes, to be thrown into Gehenna, ⁴⁸ where

"their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched." ‡

⁴⁹ "For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you flavor it? Have salt in yourselves, and keep *shalom* with one another."

Abide in Marriage

10 Then getting up from there, *Yeshua* goes to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. Again crowds gather around Him, and, as was His custom, He began to teach them once more.

² Pharisees came up, and to test Him they began asking, "Is it permitted for a man to divorce his wife?"

³ And He replied to them, "What did Moses command you?"

⁴ The Pharisees said, "Moses permitted a man to write a bill of divorce and to put her away." ††

⁵ But *Yeshua* said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment! ⁶ But from the beginning of creation, God 'made them male and female. ⁷ For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, ⁸ and the two shall become one flesh.' †† So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate!"

¹⁰ In the house, the disciples began questioning Him about this again. ¹¹ And He said to them, "Whoever di-

† cf. Isa. 66:24; for more, see Glossary. †† Verses omitted; some mss. read where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched ‡ Isa. 66:24. †† Deut. 24:1-4. †† Gen. 1:27; 2:24; 5:2.

vorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. ¹² And if she divorces her husband and marries another, she is committing adultery."

Let the Little Ones Come!

¹³ Now people were bringing little children to *Yeshua* so He might touch them, but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. ¹⁴ But when *Yeshua* saw this, He got angry. He told them, "Let the little children come to Me! Do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ Amen, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it!" ¹⁶ And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.

The Cost of Discipleship

¹⁷ As *Yeshua* was setting out on His way, a man ran up to Him, fell on his knees before Him, and asked, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁸ "Why do you call Me good?" *Yeshua* said to him. "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 cheat, 'honor your father and mother.'" †††

²⁰ The man responded, "Teacher, all these I have kept since my youth!"

²¹ Looking at him, *Yeshua* loved him and said, "One thing you lack. Go, sell as much as you have, and give to the poor; and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me." ²² But at this statement, the man became sad and went away grieving, for he had much property.

²³ Then looking around, *Yeshua* says to His disciples, "How hard it will be for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁴ The disciples were amazed at His words. But *Yeshua* answers again and says to them, "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 man to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶ The disciples were even more astonished, saying among themselves, "Then who can be saved?"

²⁷ Looking at them, *Yeshua* said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God!" †††

²⁸ Peter began to say to Him, "Look, we've left everything to follow You!"

²⁹ "Amen, I tell you," *Yeshua* replied, "there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for My sake and for the sake of the Good News, ³⁰ who will not receive a hundred times as much now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and property, along with persecutions; and in the *olam haba*, eternal life. ³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

††† Exod. 20:12-16; Deut. 5:16-20. ††† cf. Gen. 18:14.

Death and Resurrection Revealed

³² They were on the way going up to Jerusalem, and *Yeshua* was going ahead of them. And they were amazed, while those who followed were fearful. Again *Yeshua* took the Twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him.

³³ He said, "Look, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the ruling *kohanim* and the *Torah* scholars. They will condemn Him to death and hand Him over to the Gentiles. ^{†34} They will mock Him and spit on Him, scourge Him and kill Him. Yet after three days, He will rise again!"

³⁵ Then Jacob and John, the sons of Zebedee, come up to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask of You."

³⁶ And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

³⁷ They said to Him, "Let us sit, one on Your right and one on Your left, in Your glory."

³⁸ But *Yeshua* answered them, "You don't know what you're asking! Are you able to drink the cup I drink, or endure the immersion I must endure?"

³⁹ They said to Him, "We are able."

And *Yeshua* said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink, and you will endure the immersion I must endure. ⁴⁰ But to sit on My right or left is not Mine to grant—it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

⁴¹ Now when the ten heard, they started to get angry with Jacob and John. ⁴² And calling them over, *Yeshua* said to them, "You know those recognized as rulers of the nations lord it over them, and their great ones play the tyrant over them. ⁴³ Yet it is not this way among you. But whoever wants to be great among you shall be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

Ben-David Heals the Blind

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. Now as *Yeshua* was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus the son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was *Yeshua* of *Natzeret*, he began to cry out, " *Ben-David*, *Yeshua*! Have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸ Many were warning him to be quiet; but he kept crying out all the more, " *Ben-David*, have mercy on me!" ^{††}

⁴⁹ *Yeshua* stopped and said, "Call him over."

So they call the blind man, saying, "Take heart! Get up, He's calling you!" ⁵⁰ Throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and came to *Yeshua*.

⁵¹ And answering him, *Yeshua* said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

The blind man said, " *Rabboni*, I want to see again!"

† cf. *Isa.* 42: 49; 50; 53; *Dan.* 9:26. †† cf. *Isa.* 61:1(LXX); *Luke* 4:18.

⁵² *Yeshua* said to him, "Go! Your faith has made you well." Instantly he regained his sight and began following *Yeshua* down the road.

Ben-David Enters Jerusalem

11 Now as they draw near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, to the Mount of Olives, *Yeshua* sends two of His disciples ² and says to them, "Go into the village ahead of you. Right away as you enter it, you will find a colt tied up that no one has ever sat upon. [‡] Untie it and bring it. ³ If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Master needs it.' And right away he will send it back here." ^{‡†}

⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a door. And they untied it. ⁵ Some people standing there began saying to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?"

⁶ They answered just as *Yeshua* had told them, and the people let them go. ⁷ And they brought the colt to *Yeshua* and laid their cloaks on it, and He sat on it.

⁸ Many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread branches cut from the fields. ^{‡‡9} Those going before and those following kept shouting,

" *Hoshia-na! Baruch ha-Ba b'Shem ADONAI!*

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the *LORD!*

¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! *Hoshia-na* in the highest!" ^{‡‡†}

¹¹ And He entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. After looking around at everything, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve, since it was already late.

The Fruit of the Faithful

¹² The next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. ¹³ Seeing from a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if He would find any fruit on it. When He came up to it, He found nothing except leaves, because it wasn't the season for figs. ¹⁴ And He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening.

¹⁵ Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the Temple and started to drive out those selling and buying in the Temple. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and He wouldn't let anyone carry goods through the Temple. ¹⁷ And He began to teach them, saying, "Is it not written,

"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations"? ^{‡‡†} But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" [§]

¹⁸ The ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars heard this and began looking 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, *Yeshua* and His disciples would leave the city.

‡ cf. *Zech.* 9:9. †† cf. *Gen.* 49:10-11. ‡‡ *Lit. garments, clothing* ‡‡† cf. *Ps.* 118:25-26. ‡‡‡ *Isa.* 56:7. § *Jer.* 7:11.

²⁰ As they were passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree shriveled from the roots. ²¹ Peter remembered and said to *Yeshua*, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree You cursed has shriveled up!"

²² And *Yeshua* answered, saying to them, "Have faith in God! ²³ Amen, I tell you, if someone says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but trusts that what he says is happening, so shall it be for him. ²⁴ For this reason I say to you, whatever you pray and ask, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your transgressions." ²⁶ †

A Question for a Question

²⁷ Again they come to Jerusalem. While *Yeshua* was walking in the Temple, the ruling *kohanim*, *Torah* scholars, and elders come up to Him. ²⁸ And they start saying to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? Who gave You this authority to do these things?"

²⁹ *Yeshua* said to them, "I will put one question to you. Answer Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. ³⁰ The immersion of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me!"

³¹ They began to dialogue among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ³² But if we say, 'From men'...?" They were afraid of the crowd, for all held that John really was a prophet. ³³ So answering *Yeshua*, they say, "We don't know."

And *Yeshua* tells them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Taking the Kingdom by Force

12 *Yeshua* began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a hedge around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a tower. He leased it to some tenant farmers and went on a journey. ² And at the season, he sent a servant to collect from the tenants part of the vineyard's fruit. ³ But grabbing him, they beat him up and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ And again the man sent another servant to them, and they wounded his head and treated him shamefully. ⁵ He sent another, and that one they killed; and so on with many others, beating some and killing some. ⁶ He had yet one, a well-loved son. He sent him to them last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

⁷ "But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir! Come on, let's kill him and the inheritance will be ours!' ⁸ So grabbing the son, they killed him and threw him out of the vineyard."

† Some mss. add *But if you don't forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your transgressions*

⁹ "What then will the master of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰ Haven't you read this Scripture?"

"The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the chief cornerstone."

¹¹ This came from *ADONAI*, and it is marvelous in our eyes." ††

¹² They were trying to seize *Yeshua*, because they realized that He spoke the parable against them. But they feared the crowd, so they left Him and went away.

A Test of Loyalty

¹³ Then they send some of the Pharisees and Herodians to *Yeshua* in order to trap Him with a word. ¹⁴ They come and say to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are honest, and what others think doesn't concern You. You don't look at men's appearance, but teach the way of God according to the truth. Is it permitted to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? ¹⁵ Should we pay, or shouldn't we?"

But *Yeshua* saw through their hypocrisy and said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius so I may see it."

¹⁶ They brought one. And He said to them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?"

"Caesar's," they said to Him.

¹⁷ Then *Yeshua* said to them, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were completely amazed at Him.

The Challenge of the Sadducees

¹⁸ Then Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came and began questioning *Yeshua*, saying,

¹⁹ "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that 'if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, then his brother should take the widow and father children for his brother.' ²⁰ There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife and, when he died, left no offspring. ²¹ And the second took her and died, leaving no offspring, and the third likewise. ²² Now the seven left no offspring. Last of all, the woman died, too. ²³ In the resurrection, when they rise up, whose wife will she be? For all seven had married her."

²⁴ *Yeshua* said to them, "Isn't this the reason you've gone astray, because you don't understand the Scriptures or the power of God? ²⁵ For when they rise up from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ²⁶ But concerning the dead being raised, haven't you read in the book of Moses about the burning bush? How God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' ²⁷ He's not the God of the dead, but of the living. You have gone far astray!"

†† Ps. 118:22-23(117:22-23 LXX). ‡ Lit. raise up seed for his brother
‡† Exod. 3:6.

Love Ends the Argument

²⁸ One of the *Torah* scholars came and heard them debating. Seeing that *Yeshua* had answered them well, he asked Him, "Which commandment is first of all?"

²⁹ *Yeshua* answered, "The first is, ' *Shema Yisrael*, *ADONAI Eloheinu*, *ADONAI echad*. Hear, O Israel, the *LORD* our God, the *LORD* is One. ³⁰ And you shall love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ^{††} There is no other commandment greater than these."

³² "Well said, Teacher," the *Torah* scholar said to Him. "You have spoken the truth, that He is *echad*, and besides Him there is no other! ^{‡‡‡} And 'to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' ^{††} and 'to love the neighbor as oneself,' ^{‡‡} is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

³⁴ When *Yeshua* saw that he had answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one dared any longer to question Him.

Who Is King David's Lord?

³⁵ While *Yeshua* was teaching in the Temple, He said, "How is it that the *Torah* scholars say that the Messiah is *Ben-David*? ³⁶ David himself, through the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, said,

" *ADONAI* said to my Lord,
"Sit at My right hand,

until I put Your enemies under Your feet." ^{‡‡}

³⁷ "If David himself calls Him 'Lord,' in what way is He his son?" And the large crowd was listening to Him with delight.

³⁸ In His teaching He said, "Watch out for the *Torah* scholars, who like to walk around in long robes. They like greetings in the marketplaces, ³⁹ the best seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at feasts. ⁴⁰ They devour widows' houses and make long prayers as a show. These men will receive greater condemnation!"

⁴¹ He sat down opposite the treasury and began watching how the people were putting money into the offering box. Many rich people were putting in a lot. ⁴² Then a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, worth less than a penny. ⁴³ Calling His disciples over, He said to them, "Amen, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those contributing to the box! ⁴⁴ For they all put in from their surplus; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything she had, her whole living."

† Deut. 6:4-5(6:4-5 LXX), *v'ahavta* †† Lev. 19:18b, *v'ahavta l'reiacha kamocho* ‡ cf. Deut. 4:35 (LXX). †† Deut. 6:4-5. ‡‡ Lev. 19:18b. ‡‡† cf. Ps. 110:1; Ps. 109:1 (LXX).

Signs of the End

13 As *Yeshua* was going out of the Temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, look! What stones and what buildings!"

² *Yeshua* said to him, "You see these great buildings? Not one stone here will be left upon another. Every one will be torn down!"

³ As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the Temple, Peter, Jacob, John, and Andrew were questioning Him privately, ⁴ "Tell us, when will these things happen? What will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?"

⁵ *Yeshua* began to tell them, "Watch out that no one leads you astray! ⁶ Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and they will lead many astray. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed, for this must happen but it is not yet the end. ⁸ For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines. These things are only the beginning of birth pains.

⁹ "Watch out for yourselves! They will hand you over to the courts, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will stand before governors and kings because of Me, as a witness to them. ¹⁰ The Good News must first be proclaimed to all the nations. ¹¹ When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Say whatever is given to you in that hour, for it is not you who speaks but the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ¹² Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. And children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ¹³ And you will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end will be saved."

Birth Pangs before Deliverance

¹⁴ "But when you see 'the abomination of desolation' ^{‡‡‡} standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. ¹⁵ The one on the roof must not go down, nor enter to take anything out of his house. ¹⁶ And the one in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. ¹⁷ Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ¹⁸ Pray that it will not happen in winter.

¹⁹ "For in those days there will be trouble such as has never happened, [§] not since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. ²⁰ And unless *ADONAI* had cut short those days, no one would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He cut short the days.

²¹ "And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here's the Messiah!' or, 'Look, there He is!' do not believe it. ²² For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up ^{§†} and

‡‡‡ cf. Dan. 9:27; 12:11 (LXX); Matt. 24:15. § cf. Dan. 12:1. §† cf. Deut. 13:1ff.; 18:14ff.

show signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, the chosen. ²³ So be careful! See, I have told you everything beforehand."

Messianic Victory

²⁴ "But in those days, after that trouble, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.' †
²⁶ "And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' †† with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then He will send out the angels and will gather together His chosen from the four winds, from the end of the earth, to the end of heaven."

Keep Watch

²⁸ "Now learn the parable from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see all these things happening, know that it is near, at the door. ³⁰ Amen, I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things happen. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. ³² But of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven nor the Son, except the Father.

³³ "Keep on the lookout! Stay alert! For you do not know when the time is. ³⁴ It is like a man away on a journey. After leaving his house and putting his servants in charge and giving each his task, he also commanded the doorkeeper to watch. ³⁵ Therefore stay alert, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or in the early morning. ³⁶ So watch in case, coming suddenly, he finds you asleep. ³⁷ What I say to you I say to all: 'Stay alert!'"

Anointed for Burial

14 Now it was two days before Passover and the Feast of *Matzah*. The ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars were searching for a way to grab *Yeshua* by stealth and kill Him. ² "But not during the festival," they were saying, "so there won't be a riot among the people."

³ And while *Yeshua* was in Bethany at the house of Simon *ha-Metzora*, reclining at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive oil of pure nard. Breaking open the jar, she poured it over His head. ⁴ But some got angry and said among themselves, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵ It could have been sold for over three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor!" And they kept scolding her.

⁶ But *Yeshua* said, "Leave her alone. Why do you cause trouble for her? She's done Me a *mitzvah*. ⁷ For

† From Isa. 13:10; 34:4 (LXX); Joel 2:10. †† Dan. 7:13.

you always have the poor with you, and you can do good for them whenever you want; but you won't always have Me. ⁸ She did what she could—she came beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹ Amen, I tell you, wherever the Good News is proclaimed in all the world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her."

¹⁰ Then Judah from Kriot, one of the Twelve, went out to the ruling *kohanim* to betray *Yeshua* to them.

¹¹ They were delighted when they heard this and promised to give him money. And Judah began looking for a chance to hand Him over.

New Covenant at the Last Seder

¹² Now on the first day of *matzah*, when they were slaughtering the Passover lamb, *Yeshua*'s disciples say to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

¹³ He sends two of His disciples and tells them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, tell the homeowner, 'The Teacher says, "Where is My guest room, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' ¹⁵ He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."

¹⁶ The disciples went out, came to the city, and found just what *Yeshua* had told them. And they prepared the Passover. ¹⁷ When it was evening, He came with the Twelve. ¹⁸ As they were reclining and eating, *Yeshua* said, "Amen, I tell you, one of you who is eating with Me will betray Me."

¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to Him one by one, "I'm not the one, am I?"

²⁰ He said to them, "It's one of the Twelve, one who dips with Me in the bowl. ²¹ For the Son of Man indeed goes, just as it is written about Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born!"

²² And while they were eating, He took *matzah*; † and after He offered the *bracha*, He broke it and gave it to them and said, "Take; this is My body." ²³ And He took a cup; and after giving thanks, He gave to them and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Amen, I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

Denial Predicted

²⁶ After singing the *Hallel*, ††† they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And *Yeshua* said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written, "I will strike the Shepherd,

‡ cf. Exod. 12:8. †† Lit. bread

††† cf. Exod. 24:8; Jer. 31:31; Heb. 9:22; 10:16-18. Some mss. say new covenant ††† Ps. 113-118. (After the last cup, Ps. 115-118 is sung.)

and the sheep will be scattered.’ †

²⁸ “But after I’m raised up, I will go before you to the Galilee.”

²⁹ Peter said to Him, “Even though all fall away, I won’t!”

³⁰ And *Yeshua* said to him, “Amen, I tell you, today—this very night—before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”

³¹ But Peter kept insisting exceedingly, “Even if I must die with You, I’ll never deny You!” And they all were saying the same.

A Night of Painful Prayer

³² Then they come to a place whose name is Gethsemane; and *Yeshua* says to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³ He takes with Him Peter, Jacob, and John; and He began to be deeply distressed and troubled.

³⁴ And He tells them, “My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.”

³⁵ Going a little farther, He fell to the ground and began praying that if possible this hour might pass Him by. ³⁶ And He was saying, “*Abba*, Father, all things are possible for You! Take this cup from Me! Yet not what I will, but what You will.”

³⁷ Then He comes and finds them sleeping; and He tells Peter, “Simon, you’re asleep? Couldn’t you keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Keep watching and praying, so that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ³⁹ Again He went away and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰ And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy. They didn’t know what to answer Him. ⁴¹ And He comes the third time and says to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Get up, let’s go! Look, My betrayer is near.”

Betrayed and Abandoned

⁴³ Right away, while *Yeshua* was still speaking, Judah comes up, one of the Twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the ruling *kohanim*, *Torah* scholars, and elders. ⁴⁴ Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, “The One I kiss, He’s the One! Seize Him and lead Him away under guard.”

⁴⁵ As soon as Judah came, he drew near † to *Yeshua* and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed Him. ⁴⁶ Then they threw their hands on *Yeshua* and seized Him. ⁴⁷ But one of the bystanders, drawing his sword, struck the servant of the *kohen gadol* and cut off his ear.

⁴⁸ *Yeshua* said to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs, to capture Me as you would against a revolutionary? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you in the Temple teaching, and you didn’t seize Me. But this is so that the Scriptures ‡ would be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰ And all fled,

† Zech. 13:7. †† cf. Gen. 44:18. ‡ cf. Matt. 26:56, writings of the prophets

abandoning Him. ††⁵¹ A certain young man was following Him, with nothing but a linen cloth around his body, and they grabbed him. ⁵² But he ran away naked, leaving behind the linen cloth.

Falsely Charged

⁵³ Then they led *Yeshua* away to the *kohen gadol*. And all the ruling *kohanim*, elders, and *Torah* scholars gathered. ⁵⁴ Peter had followed Him from a distance, right into the courtyard of the *kohen gadol*. He was sitting with the guards, warming himself by the fire.

⁵⁵ Now the ruling *kohanim* and all the Sanhedrin kept trying to get evidence against *Yeshua* so they could put Him to death, but they weren’t finding any. ⁵⁶ Many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony wasn’t consistent. ⁵⁷ Some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, ⁵⁸ “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this Temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.’” ⁵⁹ Yet even then, their testimony didn’t agree.

⁶⁰ The *kohen gadol* stood up in the middle and questioned *Yeshua*, saying, “Do You have no answer? What is this they’re testifying against You?”

⁶¹ But keeping silent, *Yeshua* did not answer. Again the *kohen gadol* questioned Him, “Are you *Mashiach*, Son of the Blessed One?” †

⁶² “I am,” said *Yeshua*, “and you shall see ‘the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Powerful One,’ and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven!’” ††

⁶³ Tearing his clothes, the *kohen gadol* says, “Why do we still need witnesses? ⁶⁴ You’ve heard the blasphemy. What seems right to you?”

Then all condemned Him as deserving death. ⁶⁵ Some began to spit on Him, to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, saying, “Prophecy!” Also the guards slapped Him around.

The Rooster Crows

⁶⁶ As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the *kohen gadol* comes by. ⁶⁷ Seeing Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him. “You also were with *Yeshua* of *Natzeret*,” she says.

⁶⁸ But he denied it, saying, “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about!” Then he went outside to the gateway, and a rooster crowed.

⁶⁹ Seeing him, the servant girl began again to tell the bystanders, “This is one of them.”

⁷⁰ But again he denied it. And a little while later, the bystanders were again saying to Peter, “Surely you’re one of them, for you’re also a Galilean.”

⁷¹ But he began to curse himself and to swear an oath: “I do not know this Man you’re talking about!”

⁷² Right then, a rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter called to mind the word *Yeshua* had said to him:

†† cf. Zech. 13:7; Mark 14:27; Matt. 26:31. †† Hebrew *Ben-ha-Mvorach* ††† cf. Dan. 7:13(LXX); Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX).

"Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he broke down and began to weep.

Handed over to the Romans

15 Right at daybreak, the ruling *kohanim* held a meeting to consult with the elders and *Torah* scholars and the whole Sanhedrin. They tied up *Yeshua*, led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate. ² Pilate interrogated Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

Yeshua answers him, "As you say."

³ The ruling *kohanim* began to accuse Him of many things. ⁴ Again, Pilate asked Him, "Aren't you going to answer? Look how many charges they're bringing against You!" ⁵ But *Yeshua* did not answer, so Pilate was amazed.

⁶ Now during the feast, he used to release to them one prisoner, anyone they were asking for. ⁷ Now a man named *Bar-Abba* [†] had been in jail with the rebels who had committed murder during the rebellion. ⁸ The crowd came up and began to request what he was accustomed to do for them. ⁹ But Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For he knew that out of envy the ruling *kohanim* had handed Him over. ¹¹ But the ruling *kohanim* stirred up the crowd, so he would release *Bar-Abba* to them instead.

¹² Then answering again, Pilate said to them, "So what do you want me to do with the One you call the King of the Jews?"

¹³ They shouted back, "Execute Him!"

¹⁴ Pilate responded, "Why? What evil has He done?" But they shouted all the more, "Execute Him!"

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released *Bar-Abba* for them. And after he had *Yeshua* scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

¹⁶ The soldiers took Him away, into the palace, the governor's mansion called the Praetorium. And they call together the cohort ^{††} of soldiers. ¹⁷ They dress Him up in purple. After braiding a crown of thorns, they put it on Him. ¹⁸ And they began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ Over and over, they kept hitting Him on the head with a staff and spitting on Him; and kneeling down, they worshiped Him. ²⁰ When they finished mocking Him, they stripped the purple off Him and put His own clothes back on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

Crucified as King of the Jews

²¹ Now Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was coming in from the countryside. The soldiers force this passerby to carry *Yeshua*'s crossbeam. ²² They bring *Yeshua* to the place called Golgotha (which is translated, Place of a Skull). ²³ They were offering Him wine mixed with myrrh, but He didn't take

[†] Son of Abba Son of the Father ^{††} Lit. speira
[‡] Probably the patibulum

it. ²⁴ Then they crucify Him and divide up His clothing among themselves, casting lots for them ^{††} to see who should take what.

²⁵ Now it was the third hour ^{‡‡} when they nailed Him on the stake. ²⁶ And the inscription of the charge against Him was written above: "THE KING OF THE JEWS." ²⁷ And with Him they execute two outlaws, one on His right and one on His left. (²⁸) ^{‡‡‡}

²⁹ Those passing by were jeering at Him, shaking their heads and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰ save Yourself by coming down from the stake!"

³¹ Likewise the ruling *kohanim*, along with the *Torah* scholars, were also mocking Him among themselves. "He saved others," they were saying, "but He can't save Himself? ³² Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down now from the stake, so we may see and believe!" Even those executed with Him were ridiculing Him.

Death and Burial

³³ When the sixth hour had come, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. ^{‡‡‡‡} ³⁴ At the ninth hour *Yeshua* cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" [§] which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" ^{§†}

³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they began saying, "Look, He's calling for Elijah." ³⁶ Then someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine. He put it on a stick and was offering it to *Yeshua* to drink, saying, "Wait, let's see if Elijah comes to take Him down." ³⁷ But letting out a loud cry, *Yeshua* breathed His last.

³⁸ Then the curtain ^{§††} of the Temple was split in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹ When the centurion, who was standing in front of Him, saw the way *Yeshua* breathed His last, he said, "This Man really was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰ There were also women watching from a distance. Among them were Miriam from Magdala, Miriam the mother of Jacob the younger and of Joses, ^{§‡} and Salome. ⁴¹ They would follow Him and serve Him when He was in the Galilee. Many other women who had gone one up together with Him to Jerusalem were there also.

⁴² Now evening had already come. Since it was the Day of Preparation, that is, the day before *Shabbat*, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected council member who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for *Yeshua*'s body.

⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised that He was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him whether *Yeshua* had been dead for long. ⁴⁵ When Pilate learned this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Joseph bought a linen cloth, took Him down,

^{††} Ps. 22:19(18). ^{‡‡} About nine in the morning. ^{‡‡†} Later mss. add So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'He was counted with the sinners' ^{‡‡‡} From noon until 3 p.m. [§] Eloi, Eloi, l'ma sh'vaktani?

^{§†} Ps. 22:2(1); cf. Deut. 32:20. ^{§††} Hebrew parokhet, veil inner curtain ^{§‡} A shortened form of the name Joseph

wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. Then he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Miriam from Magdala and Miriam the mother of Joses were watching where *Yeshua's* body was placed.

The Empty Tomb

16 When *Shabbat* was over, Miriam of Magdala, Miriam the mother of Jacob, and Salome bought spices, so that they might come and anoint *Yeshua's* body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they come to the tomb. ³ They were saying to each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"

⁴ Looking up, they see that the stone (it was really huge) had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were startled. ⁶ But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You are looking for *Yeshua of Natzeret*, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here! See the place where they put Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples and Peter, 'He is going before you to the Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you.'"

⁸ And going outside, they fled from the tomb, gripped by trembling and amazement. They didn't say anything to anybody, for they were afraid.

He Is Risen †

⁹ After He had risen early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Miriam of Magdala, from

† *The earliest mss. exclude Mark 16:9-20. A shorter version reads: But, they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all they had been told. And after these things, Yeshua Himself, through them, sent out from east to west the sacred, imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.*

whom He had driven out seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and brought word to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹ When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe.

¹² After that, He appeared in a different form to two of them as they were walking on their way to the country. ¹³ They went and reported it to the rest, but they did not believe them either. ¹⁴ Later He appeared to them, the 11, as they were reclining at the table. He rebuked them for their unbelief and hardheartedness, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had been raised.

Tell the World!

¹⁵ He told them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the Good News to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is immersed shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned. ¹⁷ These signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will drive out demons; they will speak new languages; ¹⁸ they will handle snakes; and if they drink anything deadly, it will not harm them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well."

¹⁹ Then the Lord *Yeshua*, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went out and proclaimed everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word by the signs that follow.

Luke

Introduction

The Gospel of Luke was written by a doctor—but not a Jewish one! However, Luke may well have been one of the “God-fearers,” a large group of Gentiles who frequented the synagogue and observed some Jewish customs but were not full converts to Judaism.

Luke was a careful historian who researched others’ first-hand accounts before writing his own. He spent time traveling with Paul and also authored the book of Acts, which forms the second volume of what is really a two-part work. The first volume, the Gospel of Luke, is the longest of all the New Covenant books. Luke is unique among the Gospel writers in focusing on the events that took place as he made his way to Jerusalem (9:51-19:27). Some of his teaching is found only in Luke, such as the well-known parable of the Prodigal Son. We would be much the poorer without this material.

Written about 60-85 C.E., Luke addresses an audience not unlike today’s Messianic communities—established by Jewish believers yet with a large Gentile contingent, with great interest and loyalty to the homeland of biblical faith and hope. In the very first paragraph, Luke tells us his purpose for writing: “so you may know for sure the truth of the words you have been taught” (1:4). Luke stresses God’s plan of salvation and the offer of that salvation to both Gentile and Jewish people. Luke resonates with modern Jewish sensibilities, reflecting his concern for the oppressed and downtrodden as well as for justice—issues of, “repairing the world.” Luke is also especially inclusive of women, from Elizabeth to Miriam and Martha and the women who are first to meet the resurrected Messiah.

For readers in today’s diverse, pluralistic world, Luke gently raises questions about truth and why is who He and His followers claim Him to be. He is the fulfillment of Israel’s Messianic hope and the One who gives purpose and dignity to all who put their trust in Him.

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A Doctor Charts the Facts

1 Now many have undertaken to organize an account of the events fulfilled among us, ² just as they were handed down to us from the start by the eyewitnesses and reporters of the word. ³ Therefore it seemed best to me also, because I have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, to write for you an orderly record, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so you may know for sure the truth of the words you have been taught.

Prophecy of Birth to the Barren

⁵ In the days of Herod, King of Judah, there was a *kohen* named Zechariah from the priestly division of Abijah. [†] Elizabeth, his wife, was from the daughters of Aaron. ⁶ Together they were righteous before *ADONAI*, walking without fault in all His commandments and instructions. ⁷ But they were childless, because Elizabeth was barren and both of them were elderly.

⁸ Now it happened to be Zechariah's time to serve as *kohen* before *ADONAI* in the order of his division. ⁹ According to the custom of the priestly office, it became his lot to enter the Holy Place of *ADONAI* to burn incense. ^{††10} And the whole crowd of people was praying outside at the hour of incense burning. ¹¹ An angel of *ADONAI* appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² Zechariah was in turmoil when he saw the angel, and fear fell upon him. ¹³ But the angel said, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to your son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴ And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵ He will be great before *ADONAI*; and he should not drink wine and intoxicating beverage, [‡] but he will be filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* just out of his mother's womb. ¹⁶ Many of *Bnei-Yisrael* will turn to *ADONAI* their God. ¹⁷ And he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to the children ^{††} and the disobedient ones to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready for *ADONAI* a prepared people."

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know this for certain? I'm an old man, and my wife is well-advanced in age."

¹⁹ And speaking to him, the angel declared, "I am Gabriel, the one standing in God's presence. I was commissioned to tell you and proclaim to you this good news. ²⁰ So look, you will be silent and powerless to speak until the day these things happen, since you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their time."

²¹ The people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering about his long delay in the Holy Place. ²² But when he came out, he couldn't speak to them. Then

they realized that he had seen a vision in the Holy Place. He was making signs to them but remained mute. ²³ When the days of his priestly service had been completed, he went home. ²⁴ After these days, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and hid herself for five months, saying, ²⁵ " *ADONAI* has done this for me! In these days He looked upon me, to take away my disgrace among the people." ^{‡‡}

Prophecy of Birth to the Virgin

²⁶ Then in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by *ADONAI* into a town in the Galilee named *Natzeret* ²⁷ and to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Miriam. ²⁸ And coming to her, the angel said, " *Shalom*, favored one! *ADONAI* is with you." ^{††29} But at the message, she was perplexed and kept wondering what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel spoke to her, "Do not be afraid, Miriam, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ Behold, you will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you shall call His name *Yeshua*. ^{‡‡‡32} He will be great and will be called *Ben-Elyon*. *ADONAI Elohim* will give Him the throne of David, [§] His father. ³³ He shall reign over the house of Jacob for all eternity, and His kingdom will be without end." ^{§†}

³⁴ Miriam said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am not intimate with a man?" ^{§††}

³⁵ And responding, the angel said to her, "The *Ruach ha-Kodesh* will come upon you, and the power of *Elyon* will overshadow you. Therefore, the Holy One being born will be called *Ben-Elohim*. ³⁶ Behold, even your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age; and the one who was called barren is six months pregnant. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ^{§†}

³⁸ So Miriam said, "Behold, the servant of *ADONAI*. Let it be done to me according to your word." And the angel left her.

Elizabeth Greets Miriam with Joy

³⁹ Now in those days, Miriam got up and quickly traveled into the hill country, to a town in Judah. ⁴⁰ She entered Zechariah's home and happily greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Miriam's greeting, the unborn child leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was completely filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ⁴² She then cried out with a great shout, saying, "You are blessed among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ Who am I, that the mother of my Master should come to me? ⁴⁴ For even when I just heard the sound of your greeting in my ear, the unborn child leaped with joy in my womb. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who trusted that there would be a fulfillment of those things spoken to her by *ADONAI*."

^{‡‡} cf. Isa. 54:1-10. ^{†††} Some mss. add and blessed are you among women ^{†††} cf. Isa. 7:14. [§] cf. 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Isa. 9:6(7); 11:1; Ps. 132:11-12. ^{§†} cf. Ps. 45:6; 89:35-37; Dan. 2:44; 7:14. ^{§††} cf. Isa. 7:14. ^{§‡} cf. Gen. 18:14.

[†] cf. 1 Chron. 24:10. ^{††} cf. Exod. 30:6-8; 1 Chron. 24:10, 19. [‡] cf. Num. 6:3. ^{††} cf. Mal. 3:23-24(4:5-6).

⁴⁶ Then Miriam said,
⁴⁷ “My soul magnifies *ADONAI*, †
⁴⁸ and my spirit greatly rejoices in God, my Savior.
⁴⁸ For He has looked with care upon the humble state
of His maidservant.
For behold, from now on all generations will call me
blessed.
⁴⁹ For the Mighty One has done a great thing for me,
and holy is His name.
⁵⁰ And His mercy is from generation to generation
to the ones who fear Him.
⁵¹ He has displayed power with His arm
He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their
hearts.
⁵² He has brought down rulers from thrones
and exalted humble ones.
⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
and sent away the rich empty-handed.
⁵⁴ He has helped His servant Israel, ††
remembering His mercy,
⁵⁵ just as He spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his seed forever.”

Zechariah Breaks His Silence

⁵⁶ Miriam stayed with her for three months and then
returned to her home. ⁵⁷ Upon Elizabeth’s full term to
deliver, she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸ Her neighbors and
relatives heard how *ADONAI* had shown her His great
mercy, and they began to rejoice with her.

⁵⁹ Now on the eighth day they came to circumcise
the child, ‡ and they kept trying to call him by his fa-
ther’s name, Zechariah. ⁶⁰ But his mother declared,
“*No, he will be called John.*”

⁶¹ But they said to her, “No one among your relatives
is called by this name.” ⁶² So they began making signs
to his father, as to what he wanted him named.

⁶³ Asking for a small tablet, he wrote, “John is his
name.” They were all astonished! ⁶⁴ And his mouth was
immediately unlocked as well as his tongue, and he
began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵ Fear came on all
those who lived around them, and all these matters
were talked about throughout the hill country of Ju-
dah. ⁶⁶ Everyone who heard pondered these things in
their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be-
come?” For the hand of *ADONAI* was on him.

The *Kohen*’s Song of Prophecy

⁶⁷ His father Zechariah was filled with the *Ruach ha-*
Kodesh and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ “Blessed be *ADONAI*,
God of Israel,
for He has looked after His people
and brought them redemption.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of His servant David, ††

† cf. 1 Sam. 2:1-10. †† cf. Isa. 41:8(41:8 LXX). ‡ cf. Gen.
17:12; Lev. 12:3. †† cf. 2 Sam. 7; 22:3; Isa. 37:35(37:35 LXX).

⁷⁰ just as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets
from ages past,

⁷¹ salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us!

⁷² So He shows mercy to our fathers
and remembers His holy covenant, ††

⁷³ the vow which He swore to Abraham
our father, to grant us—

⁷⁴ rescued fearlessly from the hand of
our enemies †††—to serve Him,

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before Him all our
days.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called a prophet of *Elyon*.
For you will go before *ADONAI* to prepare His ways, †††

⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to His people
through removal of their sins. §

⁷⁸ Through our God’s heart of mercy,
the Sunrise from on high will come upon us,

⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death, §†

to guide our feet in the way of *shalom*.”

⁸⁰ And the child kept growing and became strong in
spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until the day of
his public appearance to Israel.

Yeshua’s Birth in Bethlehem

2 Now it happened in those days a decree went out
from Caesar Augustus to register all the world’s
inhabitants. ² This was the first census taken when
Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ Everyone was travel-
ing to be registered in his own city.

⁴ Now Joseph also went up from the Galilee, out of
the town of *Natzeret* to Judah, to the city of David,
which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the
house and family of David. §†† He went to register with
Miriam, who was engaged to him and was pregnant.

⁶ But while they were there, the time came for her to
give birth— ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn son.
She wrapped Him in strips of cloth and set Him down
in a manger, since there was no room for them in the
inn.

Shepherds Witness Angelic Praises

⁸ Now there were shepherds in the same region, liv-
ing out in the fields and guarding their flock at night.

⁹ Suddenly an angel of *ADONAI* stood before them, and
the glory of *ADONAI* shone all around them; and they
were absolutely terrified.

¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid! For
behold, I proclaim Good News to you, which will be
great joy to all the people. ¹¹ A Savior is born to you to-
day in the city of David, who is Messiah the Lord.

¹² And the sign to you is this: You will find an infant
wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.”

†† cf. Mic. 7:20. ††† cf. Gen. 22:16-17. ††† cf. Mal. 3:1; Isa.
40:3; Mic. 1:2. § cf. Jer. 31:34(38:34 LXX). §† cf. Isa. 9:1(2). §††
cf. Mic. 5:1(2).

¹³ And suddenly a multitude of heavenly armies appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth *shalom* to men of good will."

¹⁵ And when the angels departed from them into the heavens, the shepherds were saying to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which *ADONAI* has made known to us!" ¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Miriam and Joseph, and the Baby lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen this, they made known the word that had been spoken to them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard were amazed at the things the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Miriam treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, just as they had been told.

Temple Prophets Rejoice

²¹ When eight days had passed for His *brit-milah*, [†] He was named *Yeshua*, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. ²² And when the days of their purification were fulfilled, ^{††} according to the *Torah* of Moses, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present to *ADONAI*. ²³ As it is written in the *Torah* of *ADONAI*, "Every firstborn male that opens the womb shall be called holy to *ADONAI*." ^{‡24} So they offered a sacrifice according to what was said in the *Torah* of *ADONAI*: "a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons." ^{‡‡}

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and pious, waiting for the consolation of Israel. ^{‡‡} The *Ruach ha-Kodesh* was on him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* that he would not die before he had seen the Anointed One of *ADONAI*. ²⁷ So in the *Ruach*, Simeon came into the Temple; and when the parents brought the Child *Yeshua* to do for Him according to the custom of the *Torah*, ²⁸ Simeon received Him into his arms and offered a *bracha* to God, saying,

²⁹ "Now may You let Your servant go in peace, O Sovereign Master, ^{‡‡‡}

according to Your word.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

³¹ which You have prepared

in the presence of all peoples:

³² 'A light for revelation to the nations' ^{‡‡‡}

and the glory of Your people Israel."

³³ And His father and mother were marveling at the things that were said about Him. ³⁴ And Simeon offered a *bracha* over them and said to Miriam His mother, "Behold, this One is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that is opposed, ³⁵ so the thoughts of many hearts may be un-

covered. (And even for you, a sword will pierce through your soul.)"

³⁶ Now Anna, a daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Asher, was a prophetess. She was well advanced in age, having lived with a husband only [§] seven years ³⁷ and then as a widow until age eighty-four. She never left the Temple, serving night and day with fasting and prayers. ³⁸ And coming up at that very instant, she began praising God and speaking about the Child to all those waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. ^{§†}

³⁹ When Joseph and Miriam had completed everything according to the *Torah* of *ADONAI*, they returned to the Galilee, to their own city of *Natzeret*. ⁴⁰ The Child kept growing and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him.

The Boy Astonishes Jerusalem Scholars

⁴¹ Now His parents were going every year to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. ^{§††42} When He became twelve years old, they were going up according to festival custom. ⁴³ As they headed home after completing the days, the boy *Yeshua* remained in Jerusalem, but His parents didn't know. ⁴⁴ Supposing He was in the caravan, they went a day's journey, then began looking for Him among relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for Him.

⁴⁶ After three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the center of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all those hearing Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers. ⁴⁸ When His parents saw *Yeshua*, they were overwhelmed. And His mother said to Him, "Child, why did you do this to us? Look! Your father and I were searching for You frantically!"

⁴⁹ He said to them, "Why were you searching for Me? Didn't you know that I must be about the things of My Father?" ⁵⁰ But they did not grasp the message He was telling them.

⁵¹ Then He went down with them to *Natzeret* and was obedient to them. But His mother treasured all these words in her heart. ⁵² And *Yeshua* kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

John the Immerser at the Jordan

3 It was now the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of the Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene. ² During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came upon John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. ³ And he came into all the surrounding region of the Jordan, proclaiming an im-

§ *Lit. from her virginity* §† *cf. Isa. 43:1-3; 49:26.* §†† *cf. Exod. 23:15; Lev. 23:4-8; Deut. 16:1-8.*

† *cf. Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3.* †† *cf. Lev. 12:1-8.* ‡ *Exod. 13:2, cf. 13:12, 15.* ‡† *Lev. 12:8; 5:11 (LXX).* ‡‡ *cf. Isa. 40:1; 51:3.* ‡‡† *Greek Despota* *Ha-Adon* ‡‡‡ *Isa. 42:6; 49:6; cf. 60:1-3.*

mersion of repentance for the removal of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the scroll of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way of *ADONAI*, and make His paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled up and every mountain and hill brought low. The crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways made smooth,

⁶ and all humanity shall see the salvation of God.”[†]

⁷ Therefore John was saying to the crowds that came out to be immersed by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore produce fruits worthy of repentance; and don’t even begin to say among yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father!’ For I tell you that from these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ⁹ Even now the axe is laid at the root of the trees, so every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire!”

¹⁰ The crowds were asking him, “What should we do?”

¹¹ He answered them, saying, “Whoever has two coats, let him give to the one who has none; and whoever has food, let him do the same.”^{††}

¹² Tax collectors also came to him to be immersed. “Teacher,” they said to him, “what should we do?”

¹³ He said to them, “Do not take more than you are supposed to.”

¹⁴ Also soldiers asked him, saying, “And what should we do?”

He said to them, “Do not take things from anyone by force, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be content with your wages.”[‡]

¹⁵ Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were wondering in their hearts about John, whether he might be the Messiah. ¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, “As for me, I immerse you with water. But One is coming who is mightier than I am; I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandals! He will immerse you in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in His hand to clear His threshing floor and gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn up with inextinguishable fire.”^{‡‡} ¹⁸ So with many other exhortations, John proclaimed Good News to the people. ¹⁹ But Herod the tetrarch—after being rebuked by John because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil things Herod had done—²⁰ added even this on top of them all: he shut up John in prison.

²¹ Now when all the people were immersed, *Yeshua* also was immersed. And while He was praying, heaven was opened ²² and the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* came down upon Him in bodily form like a dove. And from out of heaven came a voice, “You are My Son, whom I love—with You I am well pleased!”^{‡‡}

The Lineage of *Yeshua Ben-David Ben-Elohim*

²³ *Yeshua* was about thirty years old when He began his ministry. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melki, 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 Se-mein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, ²⁷ the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melki, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹ the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, 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 Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Yitzhak, 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 Cainan, 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 Mahalalel, the son of Kenan, ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, [§] the son of God.

Temptation in the Wilderness

4 *Yeshua*, now filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, returned from the Jordan. He was led by the *Ruach* in the wilderness ² for forty days, being tested by the devil. Now He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He was hungry.

³ The devil said to Him, “If You are *Ben-Elohim*, tell this stone to become bread.”

⁴ *Yeshua* answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’”^{§†}

⁵ And leading Him up, the devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant. ⁶ And the devil said to Him, “I’ll give to You all this authority along with its glory, because it has been handed over to me and I can give it to anyone I wish. ⁷ Therefore, if you will worship before me, all this shall be Yours.”

⁸ But answering, *Yeshua* told him, “It is written, ‘You shall worship *ADONAI* your God, and Him only shall you serve.’”^{§††}

⁹ Then he brought *Yeshua* to Jerusalem and placed Him on the highest point of the Temple. He said to Him, “If You are *Ben-Elohim*, throw Yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written,

‡†† Hebrew *Ben-David* ‡‡‡ Hebrew *Ben-Avraham* § Hebrew *Ben-Adam* §† Deut. 8:3. §†† Deut. 6:13; some mss. begin: “Get behind Me It is written

† Isa. 40:3-5. †† Isa. 58:7. ‡ cf. Exod. 20:16; 23:1; Lev. 19:11. ‡† cf. Ps. 1:4; Jer. 7:20. ‡‡ cf. Ps. 2:7; Prov. 30:4; Isa. 9:5(6).

“He will command His angels concerning you, to guard you,’ †
 11 and ‘upon their hands they will lift you up, so that you may not strike your foot against a stone.” ††

12 But answering, *Yeshua* said to him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put *ADONAI* your God to the test.’” †13 And when the devil had completed every test, he departed from Him until another occasion.

Isaiah’s Prophecy Fulfilled in *Natzeret*

14 *Yeshua* returned in the power of the *Ruach* to the Galilee, and news about Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15 He taught in their synagogues, and everyone was praising Him. 16 And He came to *Natzeret*, where He had been raised. As was His custom, He went into the synagogue on *Shabbat*, and He got up to read. 17 When the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him, He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

18 “The *Ruach ADONAI* is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim Good News to the poor. He has sent me †† to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed,

19 and to proclaim the year of *ADONAI*’s favor.” ††

20 He closed the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue were focused on Him. 21 Then He began to tell them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears.”

22 All were speaking well of Him and marveling at the gracious words coming out of His mouth. And they were saying, “Isn’t this the son of Joseph?”

23 But He said to them, “Doubtless you will say to Me this proverb, ‘Doctor, heal yourself!’ and ‘What we have heard was done at Capernaum, do as much here also in your hometown.’”

24 But He said, “Truly, I tell you, ‘No prophet is accepted in his own hometown.’” 25 But with all truthfulness I say to you, that there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when heaven was closed for three and a half years and there came a great famine over all the land. 26 Elijah was not sent to any of them, but only to Zarephath in the land of Sidon, to a widowed woman. †††27 There were many with *tzara’at* in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them were purified apart from Naaman the Syrian.” †††

28 Now all in the synagogue were filled with rage upon hearing these things. 29 Rising up, they drove Him out of the town and brought Him as far as the edge of the mountain on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him off the cliff. 30 But passing through the middle of them, He went on His way.

† Ps. 91:11. †† Ps. 91:12. ‡ Deut. 6:16. †† Some mss. add to heal the brokenhearted †† Isa. 61:1-2a(61:1-2a LXX); 58:6d(58:6d LXX); cf. Lev. 25:10. ††† cf. 1 Kings 17:1, 7-10. ††† cf. 2 Kings 5:1-14.

Healing and Deliverance in Capernaum and beyond

31 *Yeshua* came down to Capernaum, a town in the Galilee. He was teaching them on *Shabbat*, 32 and they were astounded at His teaching because His message had authority. 33 In the synagogue was a man who had an unclean demonic spirit, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34 “Ah! What have we to do with You, *Yeshua of Natzeret*? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are! You are the Holy One of God!”

35 *Yeshua* rebuked him, saying, “Quiet! Come out of him!” And when the demon threw him down in their midst, it came out without hurting him.

36 They were all amazed, and they spoke to one another, saying, “What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out.” 37 So His reputation grew, spreading to every place in that region.

38 After He left the synagogue, *Yeshua* entered Simon’s home. Simon’s mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they petitioned Him concerning her. 39 Then standing over her, He rebuked the fever and it left her. Immediately she arose to wait on them.

40 When the sun was setting, they brought to *Yeshua* all who were sick with various diseases. And He was laying hands on each one and healing them. 41 Even demons were coming out from many, shouting out and saying, “You are *Ben-Elohim!*” 5 But He was rebuking them and not permitting them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Messiah.

42 Now when it was day, He left and went to a desert place. The crowds were searching for Him, and they came to Him and were trying to keep Him from leaving them. 43 But He said to them, “I must proclaim the Good News of the kingdom of God †† to the other towns also. It was for this purpose I was sent.” 44 So He kept preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Calling Fishermen at the *Kinneret*

5 It happened that the crowds were pressing upon *Yeshua* to hear the word of God as He was standing by the Lake of *Kinneret*, 2 when He saw two boats standing beside the lake. Now the fishermen had left them and were washing the nets. 3 Getting into one of the boats, Simon’s boat, *Yeshua* asked him to push out a ways from the land. Then sitting down, He taught the crowds from the boat.

4 When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, “Go out into the deep water, and let down your nets for a catch.”

5 Simon replied, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and caught nothing. But at Your word I will let down the nets.” 6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full that

§ cf. Ps.2:7. §† cf. Dan. 7:14, 27.

they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at *Yeshua's* knees, saying, "Go away from me, Master, for I am a sinful man!" ⁹ For amazement had gripped him and all who were with him, over the catch of fish they had netted; ¹⁰ so also Jacob and John, Zebedee's sons, who were partners with Simon.

But *Yeshua* said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men." ¹¹ So when they had brought the boats to the landing, they left everything and followed Him.

Yeshua Heals and News Spreads

¹² Now while *Yeshua* was in one of the towns, a man covered with *tzara'at* appeared. And when he saw *Yeshua*, he fell on his face and begged Him, saying, "Master, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

¹³ *Yeshua* stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be cleansed!" Immediately, the *tzara'at* left him. ¹⁴ *Yeshua* ordered him to tell no one, but commanded him, "Go and show yourself to the *kohen*. † Then bring an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

¹⁵ But the news about *Yeshua* was spreading all the more, and many crowds were coming together to hear and to be healed of their diseases. ¹⁶ Yet He would often slip away into the wilderness and pray.

Crowds Gather from the Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem

¹⁷ Now on one of those days, *Yeshua* was teaching. Pharisees and *Torah* scholars were sitting there, who had come from every village of the Galilee and Judea, as well as from Jerusalem. And *ADONAI's* power to heal was in Him. ¹⁸ And behold, men were carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher, trying to bring him in and place him before *Yeshua*. ¹⁹ But when they found no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his stretcher through the tiles, right in the middle before *Yeshua*. ²⁰ When He saw their faith, He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven."

²¹ Then the *Torah* scholars and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this fellow speaking blasphemies? Who can pardon sins but God alone?"

²² *Yeshua*, knowing their thoughts, replied to them, "Why are you raising questions in your hearts?"

²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk?' ²⁴ But so you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to pardon sins. . . ." He said to the paralyzed one, "I tell you, get up and take your cot, and go home!"

²⁵ Immediately he got up before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ Astonishment took hold of them, and they glorified God and all were filled with awe, saying, "We've seen incredible things today!"

† cf. Lev. 13:1; 14:2-3.

The Banquet at Levi's House

²⁷ After these things, *Yeshua* went out and observed a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁸ And leaving everything, he got up and followed Him.

²⁹ Levi made a great banquet for *Yeshua* at his house, and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others who were reclining with them. ³⁰ The Pharisees and their *Torah* scholars began murmuring to His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹ And *Yeshua* answered and said to them, "Those who are healthy have no need for a doctor, but those who are sick do. ³² I did not come to call the righteous, but the sinful to repentance."

³³ But they said to Him, "John's disciples often fast and offer prayers, as do the disciples of the Pharisees. But Your disciples are eating and drinking."

³⁴ But *Yeshua* said to them, "You cannot make the guests of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? ³⁵ But the days will come; and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days."

³⁶ Now he was also telling them a parable. "No one tears a patch from a new garment to use it on an old garment. Otherwise he will rip the new, and the patch from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, it will be spilled out, and the skins will be destroyed. ³⁸ But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. ³⁹ No man who drinks old wine wants new, because he says, 'The old is fine.'"

Shabbat in the Grain Fields

6 Now during *Shabbat*, *Yeshua* was passing through grain fields; and His disciples were picking and eating heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands. ² But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is not permitted on *Shabbat*?"

³ Then answering them, *Yeshua* said, "Haven't you read what David did when he was hungry, and those with him? ⁴ How he entered into the house of God, took and ate the showbread which only the *kohanim* are permitted to eat, and even gave it to those with him?" ^{†5} He said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of *Shabbat*."

Shabbat Controversy at the Synagogue

⁶ On a different *Shabbat*, *Yeshua* entered the synagogue and was teaching. A man was there, whose right hand was paralyzed. ⁷ But closely watching Him were the *Torah* scholars and Pharisees, to see if He heals on *Shabbat*, so that they might find grounds to accuse Him. ⁸ But He knew their opinions and said to

†† cf. 1 Sam. 21:2-7(1-6).

the man with the paralyzed hand, "Get up and stand in our midst." And getting up, the man stood.

⁹ *Yeshua* said to them, "I ask you, is it permitted on *Shabbat* to do good or to do evil, to save or to destroy a life?" ¹⁰ Then looking around at everyone, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man did, and his hand was restored. ¹¹ But they were filled with fury and discussed among themselves what they might do to *Yeshua*.

Appointing the Twelve

¹² And it was during these days that *Yeshua* went out to the mountain to pray, and He spent all night in prayer to God. ¹³ When day came, He called His disciples, choosing from among them twelve whom He also named emissaries— ¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and Jacob and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵ and Matthew and Thomas; Jacob the son of Alphaeus; Simon who was called the Zealot; ¹⁶ Judah the son of Jacob; and Judah from Kriot, who became a traitor.

The Sermon on the Plain

¹⁷ Then *Yeshua* came down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of His disciples and a multitude of people, from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸ had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases. Even those disturbed by defiling spirits were being healed. ¹⁹ Everyone in the crowd was trying to touch Him, because power flowed from Him and He was healing them all.

²⁰ And looking up at His disciples, He said,
"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you shall be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,
for you shall laugh.

²² Blessed are you when people hate you,
and when they exclude you, and revile you,
and spurn your name as evil on account
of the Son of Man.

²³ "Rejoice in that day and jump for joy! For behold, your reward is great in heaven! For their fathers used to treat the prophets the same way. †

²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich,
for you are receiving your comfort in full.

²⁵ Woe to you who are full,
for you shall be hungry.

Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you shall mourn and weep.

²⁶ Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
for their fathers used to treat the false prophets the same way. ††

²⁷ "But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those

who curse you, pray for the ones who mistreat you.

²⁹ To the one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also. And from the one who takes your cloak, do not hold back your shirt. ³⁰ Give to every one who asks you; and whoever takes something of yours, make no demands upon him.

³¹ "Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

³³ And if you do good to those who are doing good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do this.

³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to take, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same.

³⁵ "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. ‡ Then your reward will be great and you will be sons of *Elyon*, for He is kind to the ungrateful and evil ones. ³⁶ Be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate to you.

³⁷ "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Pardon, and you will be pardoned. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you—a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, overflowing, will be given into your lap. For whatever measure you measure out will be measured back to you."

³⁹ He also spoke this parable to them: "The blind cannot show the way to the blind, can he? Won't they both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰ A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

⁴¹ "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not notice the beam in your own eye?

⁴² How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly the speck in your brother's eye, to take it out.

⁴³ "For there is no good tree that produces rotten fruit, nor again does a rotten tree produce good fruit.

⁴⁴ Each tree comes to be known by its own fruit. For figs are not gleaned out of briars; neither are bunches of grapes gathered from thorn bushes.

⁴⁵ "Out of the good treasure of his heart the good man brings forth good, and out of evil the evil man brings forth evil. For from the overflow of the heart his mouth speaks.

⁴⁶ "Why do you call Me 'Master, Master' and do not do what I say? ⁴⁷ Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and does them, I will show you what he is like. ⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock. And when a flood came, the torrent burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.

⁴⁹ "But the one who hears yet does not do is like a man who built a house upon land without a foundation. When the torrent burst against it, immediately it

† cf. Neh. 9:26. †† cf. Jer. 5:11-13.

‡ cf. Prov. 19:17.

collapsed—and the destruction of that house was great!”

A Centurion's Faith at Capernaum

7 When *Yeshua* finished all His *drash* in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. ² Now a certain centurion had a valued slave, who was ill and about to die. ³ When he heard about *Yeshua*, he sent Jewish elders to Him, asking Him to come and save his slave. ⁴ When they came to *Yeshua*, they begged Him earnestly, saying, “He is worthy for You to grant this, ⁵ for he loves our people and even built our synagogue.”

⁶ Now *Yeshua* started to go with them; and when He wasn't far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to Him, “Master, do not trouble Yourself, for I'm not worthy for You to come under my roof. ⁷ That is why I didn't consider myself worthy to come to You. But say the word and let my servant be healed. ⁸ For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, ‘Go!’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”

⁹ Now when *Yeshua* heard this, He was amazed at him. Turning to the crowd following Him, He said, “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith.” ¹⁰ When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

An Amazing Report Spreads throughout all Judea

¹¹ The next day *Yeshua* traveled to a town called Nain, and coming along with Him were His disciples and a large crowd. ¹² Just as He came near the town gate, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, a widow. A considerable crowd from the town was with her.

¹³ When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her and said, “Don't cry.” ¹⁴ Then He came up and touched the coffin, and the pallbearers came to a standstill. He said, “Young man! I tell you, get up!” ¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began speaking, and *Yeshua* gave him to his mother. †

¹⁶ Fear took hold of them all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has appeared among us, and God has visited His people.” ¹⁷ This report concerning Him spread throughout all Judea and the surrounding region.

John Seeks Confirmation from Prison

¹⁸ John's disciples reported to him about all these things. Calling two of his disciples, ¹⁹ John sent them to the Lord, saying, “Are you the One who is to come, or should we look for another?”

²⁰ When they appeared before Him, the men said, “John the Immerser sent us to you, saying, ‘Are you the One who is to come, or shall we look for another?’”

† 1 Kings 17:23.

²¹ At this very hour He was healing many of diseases, sicknesses, and evil spirits; and He granted sight to many who were blind. ²² And answering, He said to them, “Go report to John what you saw and heard: the blind see, the lame walk, those with *tzara'at* are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news proclaimed to them. ^{†23} Blessed is he who is not led to stumble because of Me.”

²⁴ And after John's messengers left, He began to speak about John to the crowds. “What did you go out to the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵ No? So what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine garments? Look, those who wear finery and live in luxury are in the palaces of kings! ²⁶ Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, even more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is the one about whom it is written,

“Behold, I send My messenger before You, who will prepare Your way before You.” ‡

²⁸ “I say to you, there is no one greater than John among those born of women; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

²⁹ And when all the people heard, even the tax collectors, they affirmed God's justice, because they had been immersed with John's immersion. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and *Torah* lawyers, not having been immersed by John, declared God's purpose invalid for themselves.

³¹ “So then, to what shall I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to each other, saying,

“We played the flute for you, and you didn't dance.

We sang a dirge, and you didn't weep.’

³³ “For John the Immerser has come not 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 Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children.”

An Unwelcome Woman Finds Favor

³⁶ Now one of the Pharisees was asking *Yeshua* if He would eat with him. Upon entering the Pharisee's home, He reclined at the table. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the town who was a sinner, when she discovered that *Yeshua* was reclining at the Pharisee's home, brought an alabaster jar of perfume. ³⁸ As she stood behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to drench His feet with tears and kept wiping them with her head of hair. Then she was kissing His feet and anointing them with perfume.

³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “If this were a prophet, He would know what sort of woman is touching Him—that she's a sinner.”

†† Isa. 35:5-6; 61:1-2a. ‡ Mal. 3:1.

⁴⁰ And answering, *Yeshua* said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

And he said, "Say it, Teacher!"

⁴¹ "A moneylender had two debtors. One owed him five hundred denarii, [†] but the other fifty. ⁴² When neither could repay him, he canceled both debts. So which of them will love him more?"

⁴³ Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

"You have judged correctly," *Yeshua* said. ⁴⁴ Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered into your house, and you didn't give Me water for My feet. But she has drenched My feet with tears and wiped them with her hair. ^{††45} You didn't greet Me with a kiss; but from the time she entered, she has not stopped kissing My feet. ⁴⁶ You didn't anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with perfume. ⁴⁷ For this reason I tell you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven—for she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little."

⁴⁸ He then said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."

⁴⁹ But those who were reclining at table with Him began to say to one another, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in *shalom*."

Sowing Good News from Town to Town

8 Soon afterward, *Yeshua* began traveling throughout towns and villages, preaching and proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God. The twelve were also with Him. ² And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities — Miriam, the one called Magdalene, out of whom seven demons had gone; ³ Joanna, the wife of Kuza, Herod's finance minister; Susanna; and many others—were supporting them out of their own resources.

⁴ And when a large crowd was gathering and those from various towns were traveling to Him, He spoke by means of a parable. ⁵ "The sower went out to spread his seed. As he sowed, some fell beside the road and was trampled; and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶ And other seed fell on rock; when it came up, that seed withered away because it had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. ⁸ And other seed fell into the good soil; and when it came up, it produced fruit a hundredfold." While saying these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

⁹ Now His disciples were asking Him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ Then *Yeshua* said to them, "To you has been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of God; but to the others it is given in parables, [‡] in order that

"Seeing, they may not see,

and hearing, they may not understand." ^{‡†}

¹¹ "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. ¹² Those beside the road are the ones who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ But those on the rocky places are the ones who, when they hear, accept the word with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a season, and in a time of testing fall away. ¹⁴ Now that which fell into the thorns are those who were hearing; but as they go along the way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and they do not bear mature fruit. ¹⁵ But the seed in the good soil are those with a praiseworthy and good heart, who have heard the word and hold it fast and bear fruit with patient endurance.

¹⁶ "Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it with some object or places it under a bed. But he puts it on a lampstand so that all those who enter may be able to see the light. ¹⁷ For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor secret that shall not be known and come into open view. ¹⁸ So pay attention how you listen. For whoever has, to him more will be given. And whoever does not have, even what he supposes he has will be taken away from him."

¹⁹ *Yeshua*'s mother and brothers came to Him, but were not able to reach Him through the crowd. ²⁰ Now it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see You."

²¹ But answering, He said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who are hearing the word of God and doing it."

Crossing a Stormy Sea

²² Now on one of those days *Yeshua* and His disciples got into a boat, and He said to them, "Let's move to the other side of the lake." So they set out. ²³ Then as they were sailing, He fell asleep. A violent windstorm came down on the lake, and they were swamped with water and in danger.

²⁴ They came to *Yeshua* and woke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we're perishing!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging wave of water. Then they stopped, and it became calm. ^{‡†}

²⁵ Then *Yeshua* said to them, "Where is your faith?" But they were afraid and marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!"

Not Welcome in the Gerasenes

²⁶ They sailed over to the country of the Gerasenes, which is on the opposite side of the Galilee. ²⁷ A demon-plagued man from the town met *Yeshua* as He was coming out onto the land. The man hadn't worn

[†] 1 denarius = 1 day's wage. ^{††} cf. Gen. 18:4-8. [‡] cf. Prov. 1:6.

^{‡†} cf. Isa. 6:9; Ezek. 17:2. ^{‡‡} cf. Ps. 65:8(7).

any clothing for a long time and was living not in a house but in the tombs.

²⁸ Seeing *Yeshua*, he cried out and fell down before *Yeshua*, and with a loud voice said, "What's between You and me, *Yeshua*, *Ben El Elyon*? I'm begging You, do not torment me!" ²⁹ For *Yeshua* commanded the defiling spirit to come out of the man. For many times it had seized him so that, even though he was restrained and bound with chains and shackles, he would break the chains and be driven by the demons into the desert.

³⁰ *Yeshua* questioned him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he said, for many demons had entered him. ³¹ They kept begging Him not to command them to depart into the abyss. ³² Now a large herd of pigs was feeding on the mountain. The demons urged *Yeshua* to let them enter these pigs, and He gave them permission. ³³ Then the demons came out of the man and entered into the pigs. The herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ But when the herdsmen saw what happened, they ran away and reported it in the town and countryside.

³⁵ People went out to see what had happened. They came to *Yeshua* and found the man from whom the demons had gone—clothed and in his right mind, sitting at the feet of *Yeshua*. And they were frightened. ³⁶ Now those who had seen it reported how the demon-plagued man had been restored. ³⁷ And all the people from the region surrounding the Gerasenes asked *Yeshua* to go away from them because they were overcome by great fear. So He got into a boat and returned.

³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with *Yeshua*. But *Yeshua* sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your home, and describe all that God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole town all that *Yeshua* had done for him.

Interrupted on the Way to a Miracle

⁴⁰ As *Yeshua* returned, the crowd welcomed Him, for they were all expecting Him. ⁴¹ And here came a man named Jairus, a leader in the synagogue. Falling at *Yeshua*'s feet, he begged Him to come to his house, ⁴² because his only daughter, about twelve years old, was dying. But as He made His way, the masses were crushing in upon Him.

⁴³ And there was a woman with a blood flow for twelve years, [†] who could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴ She came up from behind and touched the *tzitzit* of *Yeshua*'s garment. Immediately, her blood flow stopped. ⁴⁵ *Yeshua* said, "Who touched Me?"

When everyone denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds are surrounding You and pressing in!"

⁴⁶ But *Yeshua* said, "Someone touched Me, for I recognized power going out from Me." ⁴⁷ Then seeing

[†] cf. Rev. 9:1; 20:1-3. ^{††} cf. Lev. 15:25; some mss. add who had spent all her assets on doctors

that she did not escape notice, the woman came trembling and fell prostrate before Him. In the presence of all the people, she confessed why she had touched Him and how she had been healed immediately. ⁴⁸ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in *shalom*."

⁴⁹ While He was still speaking, someone comes from the house of the synagogue leader, saying, "Your daughter has died. Don't bother the Teacher anymore."

⁵⁰ But hearing this, *Yeshua* replied to him, "Do not fear—just keep trusting, and she shall be restored."

⁵¹ When *Yeshua* came into the house, He didn't let anyone enter with Him except Peter, John, Jacob, and the child's father and mother. ⁵² And everyone was weeping and lamenting her; but He said, "Don't weep, for she didn't die but is sleeping." ⁵³ But they were ridiculing Him, knowing she had died.

⁵⁴ But *Yeshua*, took her by the hand and called out, saying, "Child, get up!" ⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. *Yeshua* ordered food to be given to her to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were utterly astonished, but He ordered them to say nothing of what had happened.

Sending Out the Twelve

⁹ Now when *Yeshua* called the Twelve together, He gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases. ² He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. ³ And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey—no walking stick, no travel bag, no bread, no money, nor even to have two shirts. ⁴ Whatever house you enter, stay there and depart from there. ⁵ And whoever does not receive you, when you leave that town, shake off the dust from your feet as a witness against them." ⁶ So they went out and began traveling throughout the villages, proclaiming the Good News and healing everywhere.

⁷ Now Herod the tetrarch heard all that was happening. He was very confused, because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, ⁸ but others that Elijah had appeared, and others that some prophet from among the ancients had arisen. ⁹ But Herod said, "I beheaded John, but who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see Him.

A Hungry Crowd in a Desolate Place

¹⁰ When the emissaries returned, they described to *Yeshua* all they had done. Then He took them along and withdrew privately to a city named Bethsaida.

¹¹ But the crowds found out and followed Him. So *Yeshua* welcomed them and began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those in need of healing.

¹² Now the day began to wind down, and the twelve came and said to *Yeshua*, "Send the crowd away, so they might go into the nearby villages and countryside and find food and lodging; for we are in a desolate place here."

¹³ But *Yeshua* said to them, "You give them something to eat!"

But they said, "We have no more than five loaves of bread and two fish, unless we go to buy food for all these people." ¹⁴ For there were about five thousand men.

Then *Yeshua* said to His disciples, "Have the people recline in groups of about fifty each." ¹⁵ They did so, and all reclined. ¹⁶ And He took the five loaves and the two fish; and looking up to heaven, He offered the *bracha* and broke them. And He kept giving them to the disciples to set before the crowd. ¹⁷ Then they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of the fragments.

Secrets Revealed to the Disciples Alone

¹⁸ Once when *Yeshua* was praying alone and His disciples were near, He put a question to them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

¹⁹ They replied, "John the Immerser, but others Elijah, and others that some prophet from among the ancients has arisen."

²⁰ Then He said to them, "But who do you that say I am?"

Then Peter answered and said, "The Messiah of God."

²¹ But *Yeshua* warned them, and He ordered them not to tell this to anyone, ²² saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

²³ Then *Yeshua* was saying to everyone, "If anyone wants to follow Me, he must deny himself, 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 does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and the holy angels. ²⁷ But I tell you truthfully, there are some standing here who will never taste death until they see the kingdom of God."

Glorified on a Mountain

²⁸ About eight days after these teachings, *Yeshua* took Peter, John, and Jacob with Him and went up the mountain to pray. ²⁹ While He was praying, the appearance of His face changed, and His clothing flashed like white lightning. ³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with Him, Moses and Elijah. ³¹ Appearing in glory, they

were speaking of *Yeshua*'s departure, which was about to take place in Jerusalem.

³² Now Peter and those with him were overcome with sleep. But when they awakened, they saw *Yeshua*'s glory and the two men standing with Him. ³³ And as they were leaving *Yeshua*, Peter said to Him, "Master, it's good for us to be here. Let's make three *sukkot*: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he was saying.

³⁴ While he was yet saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, the One I have chosen. Listen to Him!" ³⁶ And after the voice happened, *Yeshua* was found alone. They kept quiet and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

Coming down from the Mountaintop

³⁷ On the next day as they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met *Yeshua*. ³⁸ Suddenly a man from the crowd shouted out loudly, saying, "Teacher, I'm begging You to look at my son, for he's my only child! ³⁹ You see, a spirit takes hold of him, and he immediately screams. It throws him into convulsions with frothing. It hardly ever leaves him—it's crushing him! ⁴⁰ I begged Your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn't."

⁴¹ Then answering, *Yeshua* said, "O faithless and twisted generation, † how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here." ⁴² And while the boy was still approaching *Yeshua*, the demon knocked him down to the ground and threw him into convulsions. But *Yeshua* rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and restored him to his father. ⁴³ And all were amazed at the mighty power of God. But as everyone was marveling at all He was doing, He said to His disciples, ⁴⁴ "Put these words into your ears: the Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." ⁴⁵ But they did not understand this statement; it was yet concealed from them so they could not grasp it. And they were afraid to ask Him about this statement.

⁴⁶ Now a dispute began between the disciples as to who might be the greatest among them. ⁴⁷ But *Yeshua*, knowing the reasoning of their heart, took a child and set him by His side. ⁴⁸ He said to them, "Whoever welcomes this child in My name, welcomes Me. And whoever welcomes Me, welcomes the One who sent Me. The one who is the least among all of you is the one who is great."

⁴⁹ John replied, "Master, we saw someone driving out demons in Your name, and we tried to stop him because he doesn't follow along with us."

⁵⁰ *Yeshua* said to him, "Do not stop him, for he who is not against you is for you."

† cf. Dan. 7:10.

†† cf. Ps. 2:7; Prov. 30:4; Isa. 9:5(6); Deut. 18:15. ‡ cf. Deut. 32:5.

Samaria Turns *Yeshua* Away

⁵¹ When the days were approaching for Him to be taken up, *Yeshua* was determined to go up to Jerusalem. ⁵² He sent messengers before Him, and they went and entered a Samaritan village to make His arrangements. ⁵³ But they did not receive Him, because He was focused on going up to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ When His disciples Jacob and John saw this, they said, "Master, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" ⁵⁵ But *Yeshua* turned and rebuked them. ††

⁵⁶ Then they moved on to another village. ⁵⁷ As they were traveling on the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go."

⁵⁸ But *Yeshua* said to him, "Foxes have dens and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ⁵⁹ He said to another, "Follow Me."

But that one said, "First let me go and bury my father."

⁶⁰ But *Yeshua* said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead. But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

⁶¹ Then another also said, "I will follow You, Master, but first let me say goodbye to those in my home."

⁶² But *Yeshua* said to him, "No one who has put his hand to the plow and looked back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Yeshua Sends Out the Seventy

10 Now after these things, the Lord assigned 70 † others and sent them out by twos before Him into every town and place where He Himself was about to go. ² And He was telling them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

³ "Go forth! Look, I am sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves. ⁴ Do not be burdened with a money belt, travel bag, or shoes; and do not greet anyone along the way. ⁵ Whatever home you enter, first say, 'Shalom be on this home.' ⁶ If a son of *shalom* is there, your *shalom* will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷ And remain in this same home, eating and drinking the things they offer, for the worker is deserving of his wage. Do not keep moving from house to house.

⁸ "Whatever town you enter and they welcome you, eat what they set before you. ⁹ Then heal the sick in that town, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' ¹⁰ But if you enter a town and they do not welcome you, then go out into its streets and say, ¹¹ 'Even the dust of your town sticking to our feet,

† Some mss. add just as Elijah did †† Some mss. add and said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you have—for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save." ‡ Some mss. say 72

we wipe off as a witness to you. But know this! The kingdom of God has come near.' ¹² I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom † on that day than for that town.

¹³ "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have turned long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ Yet it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the Judgment than for you! ††¹⁵ And you, Capernaum? You won't be lifted up to heaven, will you? No, you will go down as far as *Sheol*. ¹⁶ The one who listens to you hears Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me, and the one who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

Returning with a Good Report

¹⁷ Then the 70 returned with joy, saying, "Master, even the demons submit to us in Your name!"

¹⁸ And *Yeshua* said to them, "I was watching *satan* fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Behold, I have given you authority to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names have been written in the heavens." †††

²¹ In that very hour, He was overjoyed in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and said, "I praise You, Father, Master of the universe, that You have hidden these things from the wise and discerning and revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was pleasing to You. ²² All things have been handed over to Me by My Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him."

²³ Then turning to the disciples, He said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! ²⁴ For I tell you, many prophets and kings desired to see what you are seeing yet did not see, and to hear what you are hearing yet did not hear."

Who Is My Neighbor?

²⁵ Now a certain *Torah* lawyer stood up to entrap *Yeshua*, saying, "Teacher, what should I do to gain eternal life?"

²⁶ Then *Yeshua* said to him, "What has been written in the *Torah*? How do you read it?"

²⁷ And he replied, "You shall love *ADONAI* your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." †††

²⁸ *Yeshua* said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live."

²⁹ But wanting to vindicate himself, he said to *Yeshua*, "Then who is my neighbor?"

†† cf. Gen. 19:24-28. †† cf. Ezek. 26-28. ††† cf. Exod. 32:32; Dan. 12:1. ††† cf. Deut. 6:5(6:5 LXX), v'ahavta et *ADONAI* v'ahavta l'reiacha

³⁰ *Yeshua* replied, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was attacked by robbers, who stripped him and beat him. Then they left, abandoning him as half dead. ³¹ And by chance, a *kohen* was going down that road; but when he saw the man, he passed by on the opposite side. ³² Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side. ³³ But a Samaritan who was traveling came upon him; and when he noticed the man, he felt compassion. ³⁴ He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then setting him on his own animal, he brought him to a lodge for travelers and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii † and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him. And whatever else you spend, upon my return I will repay you myself.' ³⁶ Which of these three seems to you a neighbor to the one attacked by robbers?"

³⁷ And he said, "The one who showed mercy to him." Then *Yeshua* said to him, "Go, and you do the same."

At Home with Miriam and Martha

³⁸ Now while they were traveling, *Yeshua* entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ She had a sister called Miriam, who was seated at the Master's feet, listening to His teaching. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving; so she approached *Yeshua* and said, "Master, doesn't it concern you that my sister has left me to serve alone? Then tell her to help me!"

⁴¹ But answering her, the Lord said, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and bothered about many things; ⁴² but only one thing is necessary. For Miriam has chosen the good part, which will not be taken away from her." ††

Praying along the Way

11 Now *Yeshua* was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Master, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

² Then *Yeshua* said to them, "When you pray, say, 'Father, sanctified be Your Name, Your kingdom come. ‡

³ Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴ And forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation.'"

⁵ Then *Yeshua* said to them, "Which of you has a friend and will go to him in the middle of the night and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶ because a friend of mine has come to me on his journey and I have nothing to set before him.' ⁷ Then from within he may answer, saying, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in

bed. I can't get up to give you anything.' ⁸ I tell you, even if the friend will not get up and give him anything out of friendship, yet because of the man's persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

⁹ "So I say to you, 'Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.' ¹¹ What father, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² And if he asks for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* †† to those who ask Him!"

Crowds Demand a Sign from Heaven

¹⁴ Now *Yeshua* was driving out a demon, and it was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute one spoke and the crowds were amazed. ¹⁵ But some among them said, "By beelzebul, the ruler of demons, He drives out demons." ¹⁶ Others, testing Him, were demanding from Him a sign from heaven.

¹⁷ But *Yeshua*, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed, and a house against a house falls. ¹⁸ Now if *satan* is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say by beelzebul I drive out the demons. ¹⁹ But if by beelzebul I drive out demons, by whom do your sons drive them out? For this reason, they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if by the finger of God †† I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

²¹ "When a strong one, fully-armed, protects his own estate, his possessions are safe. ²² But as soon as someone stronger than he attacks and overpowers him, then he takes away the armor that he had trusted in and divides up his plunder. ²³ He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

²⁴ "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places looking for rest. Not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house where I came from.' ²⁵ And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and settle there. And that man's last condition becomes worse than the first."

²⁷ Then as *Yeshua* was saying these things, a certain woman in the crowd, raising her voice, said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that carried You and the breasts that nursed You!"

²⁸ But He said, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

²⁹ With the crowds increasing, *Yeshua* began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation. It demands a sign, yet no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, ††† so also the Son of Man will be to this gen-

† 1 denarius = 1 day's wages †† cf. Ps. 27:4. ‡ cf. Matt. 6:9-13.

†† cf. Joel 3:1-5(2:28-32); Zech. 12:10. ††† cf. Exod. 8:15(19).

eration.³¹ The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. † And behold, something greater than Solomon is here.³² The men of Nineveh will rise at the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at Jonah's proclamation. And indeed, one greater than Jonah is here.

³³ "No one lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on the lampstand so that those entering may see the light.³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light. But when it is sick, your body is full of darkness.³⁵ Therefore, watch out that the light in you is not darkness.³⁶ If then your body is full of light, with no part of it dark, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its gleam."

Dinner with a Pharisee

³⁷ As He spoke, a Pharisee asked *Yeshua* to eat with him, so He entered and sat down.³⁸ But the Pharisee was surprised when he saw that *Yeshua* did not do the ritual handwashing before the meal.³⁹ But the Lord said to him, "You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and plate, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.⁴⁰ Fools! Didn't He who created the outside also create the inside?⁴¹ But give as *tzedakah* those things that are within, and indeed everything is pure to you.

⁴² "But woe to you Pharisees, for you tithe mint, rue, and every garden herb, †† yet bypass justice and the love of God. It is necessary to do these things without neglecting the others.⁴³ Woe to you Pharisees, for you love the best seats in the synagogues and the greetings in the marketplaces.⁴⁴ Woe to you, for you are like unmarked tombs, and people walk over them without knowing."

⁴⁵ But answering, one of the *Torah* lawyers says to Him, "Teacher, when You say these things, You insult us too."

⁴⁶ Then *Yeshua* said, "Woe to you *Torah* lawyers as well, for you weigh the people down with burdens hard to carry, yet you yourselves will not touch the burdens with even a finger.

⁴⁷ "Woe to you, for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your own fathers killed!⁴⁸ So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers, for indeed they killed them and you are building their tombs.

⁴⁹ "For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and emissaries, and some of them they will kill and persecute,⁵⁰ so that the blood of the prophets shed since the foundation of the world might be required from this generation—⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the one who perished between the altar and the house of God. ‡

Yes, I tell you, it will be required from this generation.'

⁵² "Woe to you, *Torah* lawyers, for you have taken away the key of knowledge. You yourselves did not enter, and you stood in the way of those entering."

⁵³ When *Yeshua* left there, the *Torah* scholars and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to interrogate Him on many issues,⁵⁴ plotting against Him to catch Him in His words.

An Aside with the Disciples

12 Meanwhile, when thousands of people had gathered, so many that they were trampling one another, *Yeshua* began speaking first to His disciples, "Be on guard yourselves against the *hametz* of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.² There is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be made known.³ Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in private rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops.

⁴ "I say to you, My friends, you should not be afraid of those who kill the body, since after this they have nothing more they can do.⁵ But I will show you whom you should fear. Fear the One who, after the killing, has authority to cast into Gehenna. Yes, I tell you, fear this One!

⁶ "Aren't five sparrows being sold for two pennies? †† Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.⁷ Indeed, even the hairs of your head are all numbered.⁸ So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.⁹ Now I tell you, whoever acknowledges Me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge him before the angels of God.¹⁰ But the one who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.¹¹ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who slanders †† the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* will not be forgiven.¹² And when they bring you to the synagogues, rulers, and authorities, do not worry about how you should defend yourself or what you should say,¹³ because the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* will teach you at that time what is necessary to say."

A Request from the Crowd

¹³ Then someone from the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

¹⁴ But *Yeshua* said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or arbitrator over you?"¹⁵ Then He said to them, "Watch out! Be on guard against all kinds of greed, because one's life does not consist in the abundance of the material goods he possesses." †††¹⁶ And *Yeshua* told them a parable, saying, "The land of a certain rich man produced good crops.¹⁷ And he began thinking to himself, saying, 'What shall I do? I don't have a place to store my harvest!'¹⁸ And he said, 'Here's what I'll do! I'll

‡ cf. *Gen.* 4:8; 2 *Chron.* 24:20-21. †† *Lit. assarion*

††† *Lit. blasphemes* †††

††† cf. *Jonah* 3:4-5. † cf. *1 Kings* 10:1-10. †† cf. *Lev.* 27:30.

cf. *Exod.* 20:14(17).

tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I'll store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "O my soul, you have plenty of goods saved up for many years! So take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry." ²⁰ But God said to him, "You fool! Tonight your soul is being demanded back from you! And what you have prepared, whose will that be?" ²¹ So it is with the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich in God."

Instructions for the Disciples

²² Then *Yeshua* said to His disciples, "So I say to you, do not worry about life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will wear. ²³ For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens. They do not sow or reap, they have no store-room or barn, yet God feeds them. How much more valuable you are than birds!

²⁵ "And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? ^{†26} So if you cannot do even something very little, why do you worry about other things? ²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. ^{‡28} But if God so clothes the grass in the field—which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow—then how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?

²⁹ "So do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. ³⁰ For all the nations of the world strive after these things. But your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹ Instead, seek His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you. ³² Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father chose to give you the kingdom.

³³ "Sell your possessions and do *tzedakah*. Make money pouches for yourselves that do not get old—a treasure in the heavens that never runs out, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

³⁵ "Have your belt strapped on and lamps burning. ³⁶ Be like people waiting for their master to return from a wedding feast, so that when he comes and knocks, they may open to him immediately.

³⁷ "Happy are those slaves whose master finds them alert when he comes. Amen, I tell you, he will prepare himself and have them recline at table, and will come and serve them.

³⁸ "And if he comes in the second or even the third watch [‡] and finds them so, they will be happy. ³⁹ But understand this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you don't expect."

⁴¹ Then Peter said, "Master, are You telling this parable for us, or for everyone?"

⁴² And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their food portion at the proper time? ⁴³ Blessed is that servant whose master finds him so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴ Truly I tell you, his master will put him in charge of all his possessions.

⁴⁵ "But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is taking a long time to come,' and he begins to beat the young slave boys and girls and to eat and drink and get drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know. And he will cut him in two and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

⁴⁷ "That slave who knew his master's will but did not prepare or act according to his desire will be harshly whipped. ⁴⁸ But the one who did not know and did things worthy of a beating will be whipped lightly. From everyone given much, much will be required; and from the one for whom more is provided, all the more they will ask of him.

⁴⁹ "I came to pour out fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already ablaze! ⁵⁰ But I have an immersion to endure, [‡] and how distressed I am until it is finished!

⁵¹ "Do you suppose that I have come to bring *shalom* on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. ⁵² From now on there will be five in one house in opposition, three against two and two against three.

⁵³ "They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." ^{‡‡}

Lessons for the Crowds

⁵⁴ Then He also was saying to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, instantly you say, 'A rain-storm is coming'—and so it is. ⁵⁵ And when a south wind is blowing, you say, 'It will be a scorcher'—and so it is. ⁵⁶ Hypocrites! The surface of the earth and sky you know how to interpret yet you don't know how to interpret this present time? ⁵⁷ Why can't you judge for yourselves what is right? ⁵⁸ For while you are going with your accuser to the authorities, make an effort to come to a settlement with him—so he doesn't drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer of the court, and the officer of the court throw you into prison. ⁵⁹ I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid back the last little bit." ^{‡‡‡}

13 Now there were some present at the same time who told *Yeshua* about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² He answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans are worse sinners than the rest of the

† cf. Ps. 39:6(5); Job 27:8; Jer. 17:11. †† Or a cubit to his height
‡ cf. 1 Kings 10:4-7. ‡‡ Second watch: 9 pm – 12 am; third watch: 12 am – 3 am.

‡‡ cf. Mark 10:38. ‡‡‡ cf. Mic. 7:6-7(LXX). ‡‡‡ Lit. the last lepton

Galileans because they have suffered these things?

³ No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you all will perish the same way.

⁴ “Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and were killed, do you suppose that they are worse sinners than all the people living in Jerusalem?”

⁵ No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you all will perish the same way.”

⁶ Then *Yeshua* began telling this parable: “A man had a fig tree he had planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘Indeed, for three years I’ve come searching for fruit on this fig tree and found none. Remove it! Why does it use up the ground?’

⁸ “But answering, the gardener said to him, ‘Master, leave it alone for this year also, until I dig around it and apply fertilizer. ⁹ And if it bears fruit, good. But if not, cut it down.’”

Teaching by Example at the Synagogue

¹⁰ Now *Yeshua* was teaching in one of the synagogues on *Shabbat*. ¹¹ And behold, there was a woman with a disabling spirit for eighteen years, bent over and completely unable to stand up straight.

¹² When *Yeshua* saw her, He called out to her and said, “Woman, you are set free from your disability.” ¹³ Then He laid hands on her, and instantly she stood up straight and began praising God.

¹⁴ But the synagogue leader, indignant that *Yeshua* had healed on *Shabbat*, started telling the crowd, “There are six days in which work should be done †—so come to be healed on those days and not on *Yom Shabbat*!”

¹⁵ But the Lord answered him and said, “Hypocrites! On *Shabbat* doesn’t each of you untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it away to give it drink? ¹⁶ So this one, a daughter of Abraham incapacitated by *satan* for eighteen years, shouldn’t she be set free from this imprisonment on *Yom Shabbat*?” ¹⁷ When *Yeshua* said these things, all His opponents were put to shame; but the whole crowd was rejoicing at all the glorious things done by Him. ††

Teaching throughout the Towns and Villages

¹⁸ So *Yeshua* was saying, “What is the kingdom of God like? To what shall I compare it? ¹⁹ It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and dropped into his own garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.” ²⁰ Again He said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹ It is like *hametz*, which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened.

²² And He continued on His journey through the towns and villages, teaching and making His way to

Jerusalem. ²³ And someone said to Him, “Master, are only a few being saved?”

Then *Yeshua* said to them, ²⁴ “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. ²⁵ Once the Master of the household gets up and shuts the door, and you’re standing outside and begin knocking on the door, saying, ‘Master, open up for us,’ then He will say to you, ‘I don’t know where you come from.’ ²⁶ Then you will start to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your company, and You taught in our streets.’ ²⁷ But He will say, ‘I tell you, I don’t know where you come from. Get away from Me, all of you evildoers!’” †

²⁸ “There will be weeping and the gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. ²⁹ And they will come from the east and west and from the north and south, and they will recline at table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And indeed, some are last who shall be first, and some are first who shall be last.”

A Warning to Move on

³¹ In that hour, some Pharisees came up and said to *Yeshua*, “Get out and leave from here, because Herod wants to kill You!”

³² But *Yeshua* said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Indeed, I’m driving out demons and performing healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach My goal.’ ³³ But I must keep going today and tomorrow because it just can’t be that a prophet would perish outside Jerusalem.

³⁴ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. ³⁵ Look, your house is left to you desolate! † For I tell you, you will never see Me until you say, ‘*Baruch ha-Ba b’Shem ADONAI*. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’” ††

A Dinner Conversation on *Shabbat*

14 Now when *Yeshua* went into the home of one of the leaders of the Pharisees to eat a meal on *Shabbat*, they were watching Him closely. ² And there before Him was a man swollen with fluid. ³ So *Yeshua* said to the *Torah* lawyers and the Pharisees, “Is it permitted to heal on *Shabbat*, or not?”

⁴ But they kept silent. So *Yeshua* took hold of him and healed him, and He sent him away. ⁵ Then He said to them, “Which of you, with a son or an ox falling into a well on *Yom Shabbat*, will not immediately pull him out?” ††† And they could not reply to these things.

⁷ *Yeshua* began telling a parable to those who had been invited, when He noticed how they were choos-

† cf. Exod. 20:9; Deut. 5:13. †† cf. Ps. 132:18; Isa. 12:5. ‡ cf. Ezek. 17:23.

†† cf. Ps. 6:9(8). ††† Lit. your house is left to you
††† Ps. 118:26a. †††† cf. Exod. 21:33; Deut. 22:4.

ing the seats of honor. He said to them, ⁸“When you are invited by someone to a wedding, don’t take the seat of honor, for someone more highly esteemed than you may have been invited by him. ⁹Then the one who invited both of you will come to you and say, ‘Give up this seat.’ And with shame, you would proceed to take the lowest seat. ¹⁰But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest seat so that when the one who invited you comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you shall be honored in the presence of all those who are dining with you.

¹¹For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” †

¹²Then *Yeshua* was also saying to the one who invited Him, “When you host a luncheon or dinner, don’t invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors. Otherwise they might invite you in return as your payback. ¹³But when you host a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind; ¹⁴and you will be blessed, since they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

¹⁵Now hearing this, one of those dining with *Yeshua* said to Him, “Blessed is he who eats bread in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁶But *Yeshua* said to him, “A certain man was hosting a large banquet, and he invited many. ¹⁷At the time for the banquet, he sent his slave to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, everything is already prepared.’

¹⁸“But every one of them began to beg off. The first said to him, ‘I bought a farm, and I’m obligated to go out to see it. I’m asking you to have me excused.’

¹⁹Then another one said, ‘I’ve purchased five teams of oxen, and I’m going to check them out. I’m asking you to have me excused.’ ²⁰Still another said, ‘I’ve married a wife, so I cannot come.’ ††

²¹“The slave came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house got angry and said to his slave, ‘Quickly go out into the squares and alleys of the city and bring here the poor, the maimed, the blind, and the lame.’

²²“And the slave said, ‘Master, I have done as you instructed, and still there is room.’

²³“So the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the thoroughfares and fenced areas, and press them to come in so my home may be filled. ²⁴For I tell you, none of those men who were invited will taste my banquet.’”

Telling Parables along the Road

²⁵Now great crowds were traveling with *Yeshua*; and He turned and said to them, ²⁶“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters—and yes, even his own life—he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not

carry his own cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple.

²⁸“For which of you, wanting to build a tower, doesn’t first sit down and figure out the cost, to see if he has enough to finish it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and isn’t able to finish everything, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, ‘This man began to build and wasn’t able to finish!’

³¹“Or what king, going to make war against another king, won’t first sit down to consider whether he is able with ten thousand to confront the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³²If not, while the other is still far away, he sends an ambassador and asks for peace. ³³So in the same way, whoever does not renounce all that he has, cannot be My disciple.

³⁴“Therefore, salt is good; but if the salt should lose its flavor, how shall it be made salty again? ³⁵It is not suitable for the soil or for a manure heap—it is thrown out. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to hear *Yeshua*. ²The Pharisees and the *Torah* scholars began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³So He told this parable to them, saying, ⁴“Which man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, will not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until he finds it? ⁵When he has found it, he puts it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors and says, ‘Rejoice with me, for I’ve found my sheep that was lost!’ ⁷I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one repenting sinner than over the 99 righteous people who have no need of repentance.

⁸“Or which woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, † does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search thoroughly until she finds it?

⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I’ve found the coin I had lost!’ ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

¹¹Then *Yeshua* said, “A certain man had two sons, ¹²and the younger of them said to the father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that comes to me.’ So he divided his wealth between them.

¹³“Not many days later, the younger son gathered everything and traveled to a far country, and there he squandered his inheritance on wild living. ¹⁴Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine came against that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶And he was longing to fill up on the carob pods the pigs were eating, but no one was giving him any.

† cf. Prov. 20:18. †† Lit. drachma

† cf. Prov. 29:23. †† cf. Deut. 20:5-7; 24:5.

¹⁷ “But when he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have food overflowing, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I’ll get up and go to my father, and I’ll say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your presence. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers.’”

²⁰ “And he got up and went to his own father. But while he was still far away, his father saw him and felt compassion. He ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your presence. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it! Let’s celebrate with a feast! ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and has come back to life—he was lost and is found!’ Then they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his older son was out in the field. And as he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.

²⁶ And he called out to one of the servants and began to ask what these things could be.

²⁷ “The servant said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he got him back safe and sound.’

²⁸ “But the older son was angry and didn’t want to go in. So his father came outside and pleaded with him.

²⁹ But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look, so many years I’ve slaved away for you—not once did I ignore your order. Yet you’ve never given me a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came—the one who has squandered your wealth with prostitutes—for him you killed the fattened calf!’

³¹ “Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and everything that is mine is yours. ³² But it was right to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead but has come back to life! He was lost, but is found.’”

A Lesson for the Disciples

16 Now *Yeshua* was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a household manager, and this manager was accused of squandering his belongings. ² So he called the manager and said to him, ‘What’s this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’

³ “Then the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I’m not strong enough to dig; I’m ashamed to beg. ⁴ I know what I’ll do, so that when I’m put out of management others will welcome me into their homes.’ ⁵ So he called in each one of his master’s debtors, and he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

⁶ “He said, ‘One hundred units of olive oil.’

“The manager said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write 50.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘Now how much do you owe?’

“He said, ‘A hundred units of wheat.’

“The manager said to him, ‘Take your bill and write 80.’

⁸ “Now the master praised the crooked manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the sons of this age are smarter when dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. ⁹ I say to you, make friends for yourselves from the wealth of the world, so when it runs out, they will welcome you into the eternal shelters.

¹⁰ “One who is faithful in the smallest matters is also faithful in much, and the one unjust in the smallest matters will likewise be unjust in much. ¹¹ So then, if you cannot be trusted with unjust wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? ¹² Now if you have not been trustworthy with what belongs to another, who will give you anything of your own? ¹³ No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick by one and look down on the other. You cannot serve God and money.” †

The Pharisees Listen In

¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and sneering at *Yeshua*. ¹⁵ But He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves before the people, but God knows your hearts. †† For what is prized among men is de-stestable in God’s sight.

¹⁶ “The *Torah* and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since then, the Good News of the kingdom of God is being proclaimed, and everyone tries forcing his way in. ¹⁷ But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for a single serif ‡ of the *Torah* to fail. ¹⁸ Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery. And he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.

¹⁹ “Now there was a rich man dressed in purple and fine linen, living it up in luxury every day. ²⁰ But a poor man named Lazarus had been laid at his gate, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Besides, even the dogs were coming to lick his sores.

²² “It happened that the poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. Then the rich man also died and was buried. ²³ And from *Sheol*, as he was in torment, he raised his eyes. And he sees Abraham far off, and Lazarus at his side. ††²⁴ So he cried out and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me! And send Lazarus so he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, because I am suffering torment in this flame.’ ††

† *Lit. mammon*

wealth, property

†† *cf. 1 Sam. 16:7; Prov. 21:2*

‡ *Lit. one horn/projection/hook*

one crown/ornament/stroke

††† *Lit. bosom, chest*

‡‡ *cf. Isa. 66:24.*

²⁵ "But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your life you received your good things, even as Lazarus received the bad things. But now he is comforted here, and you are tormented. ²⁶ Besides all this, between us and you a great chasm is firmly set, so that those who want to cross over to you cannot, nor can those from there cross over to us.

²⁷ "Then the rich man said, 'I beg you then, Father Abraham, send Lazarus to my father's house! ²⁸ For I have five brothers to warn, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

²⁹ "But Abraham says, 'They have Moses and the Prophets. Let them listen to them.'

³⁰ "But he said, 'No, Father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

³¹ "But Abraham said, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead!'"

Back to Teaching His Own

17 Then *Yeshua* said to His disciples, "Stumbling blocks are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom they come! ² It would be better for him to have a millstone put around his neck and to be hurled into the sea, than for him to cause one of these little ones to stumble.

³ "Keep yourselves alert! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ Even if he sins against you seven times a day, and seven times returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

⁵ Then the emissaries said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

⁶ Then the Lord said, "If you have faith like a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. ⁷ But if you have a slave who is plowing or tending sheep, who among you will say to him when he comes in from the field, 'Come right in, and recline at table?'

⁸ But won't he instead say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat! Dress yourself and wait on me while I eat and drink; and afterward, you may eat and drink?'

⁹ He doesn't thank the slave because he did what he was commanded, does he? ¹⁰ So you too, when you've done everything you are commanded, say, 'We are unworthy slaves. We have done only what we were supposed to do.'"

On the Move through Samaria

¹¹ Now while going up to Jerusalem, *Yeshua* was passing between Samaria and the Galilee. ¹² As He entered a certain village, ten men with *tzara'at* came toward Him. They stood some distance away ^{†13} and raised their voices, saying, "*Yeshua*, Master, have mercy on us!"

¹⁴ When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the *kohanim* ." ^{††} And as they went,

† cf. Lev. 13:45-46. †† cf. Lev. 14:1-3ff.

they were cleansed. ¹⁵ Now one of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back, glorifying God with a loud voice. ¹⁶ And he fell at *Yeshua*'s feet, facedown, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Then *Yeshua* answered and said, "Weren't ten cleansed? But where are the nine? ¹⁸ Weren't any found who came back to give glory to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then *Yeshua* said to the man, "Stand up and go! Your faith has made you well."

²⁰ Now when *Yeshua* was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with signs to be seen. ²¹ Nor will they say, 'Look, here!' or 'There!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."

²² Then *Yeshua* said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. ²³ They will say to you, 'Look, there!' or 'Look, here!' Do not go and chase after them. ²⁴ For just as the lightning flashes from one part of the sky and lights up another part, so will the Son of Man be in His day. ²⁵ But first He must suffer much and be rejected by this generation. ²⁶ As it was in the days of Noah, [‡] so will it also be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ They were eating, drinking, marrying, and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

²⁸ "It was just the same in the days of Lot. ^{‡‡} They were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building. ²⁹ But on the day Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed them all. ³⁰ Things will be the same on the day when the Son of Man is made fully known. ³¹ In that day, the one who is on the roof, and his possessions in the house, must not go down to take them away. In the same way, the one who is in the field must not turn back. ³² Remember Lot's wife! ^{‡‡‡} Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life will preserve it.

³⁴ "I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken along and the other left.

³⁵ There will be two women grinding at the same place. One will be taken and the other left." (³⁶) ^{‡‡‡}

³⁷ "Where, Lord?" they replied.

And He said to them, "Where there is a corpse, there also will the vultures be gathered." ^{‡‡‡}

18 Then *Yeshua* told them a parable to show that they should always pray and not be discouraged, ² He said, "There was a judge in a certain city who neither feared God nor respected people. ³ And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me justice against my opponent.'

⁴ "He was unwilling at the time. But afterward he said to himself, 'Although I don't fear God or respect people, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I

‡ cf. Gen. 6:11-13. †† cf. Gen. 19:24-25. ‡‡ cf. Gen. 19:26. ‡‡‡ Some mss. add There will be two in the field. One will be taken along, and the other left ‡‡‡ cf. Rev. 19:17-19.

will give her justice so she won't wear me out by her incessant coming."

⁶ Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge is saying. ⁷ Won't God do justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He be slow to help them? ⁸ I tell you, He will quickly give them justice. But when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

⁹ Then *Yeshua* spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, while holding others in contempt. ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'O God, I thank You that I am not like other people—thieving, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and tithe on all that I get.'

¹³ "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, wouldn't even lift his eyes toward heaven, but beat his chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man, rather than the other, went down to his home declared righteous. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

¹⁵ Now they were bringing even their babies to *Yeshua*, so He might touch them. But when the disciples saw this, they began rebuking them. ¹⁶ But *Yeshua* called for them, saying, "Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ Amen, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

¹⁸ And a religious leader inquired of *Yeshua*, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

¹⁹ "Why are you calling Me good?" *Yeshua* said to him. "No one is good except One—that is God. ²⁰ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'" [†]

²¹ The man said, "All these I have kept since my youth."

²² When *Yeshua* heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all, as much as you have, and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me." ²³ But upon hearing these things, he became deeply distressed, for he was very rich.

²⁴ Gazing at him, *Yeshua* said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter into the kingdom of God! ²⁵ 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."

²⁶ Then those who heard said, "Then who can be saved?"

²⁷ But *Yeshua* said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God." [‡]

²⁸ Then Peter said, "Look, we've left everything of our own to follow You."

²⁹ And *Yeshua* said to them, "Amen, I tell you, there is no one who has left house 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 age; and in the *olam ha-ba*, eternal life."

³¹ Then *Yeshua* took the twelve aside and said to them, "Look, we're going up to Jerusalem, and everything written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be carried out. ³² He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and He will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. ³³ After they have scourged Him, they will kill Him. Yet on the third day, He will rise again." ³⁴ But they understood none of these things; this message was hidden from them, and they did not understand what He was saying.

Approaching Jericho

³⁵ Now as *Yeshua* was approaching Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting by the road, begging. ³⁶ But when he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. ³⁷ They told him that *Yeshua ha-Natzrati* was passing by. ³⁸ And he cried out, saying, "*Yeshua*, *Ben-David*, have mercy on me!"

³⁹ And those leading the way were scolding him, so he would be quiet. But he kept shouting all the more, "*Ben-David*, have mercy on me!"

⁴⁰ So *Yeshua* stopped and ordered the blind man to be brought to Him. And when he came near, *Yeshua* asked him, ⁴¹ "What do you want Me to do for you?"

And he said, "Master, I want to see again!"

⁴² *Yeshua* said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has made you well." ⁴³ Immediately the man received his sight and began following *Yeshua*, glorifying God. And when all the people saw it, they also gave praise to God.

Visiting Zacchaeus in Jericho

19 Now *Yeshua* entered Jericho and was passing through. ² And here was a man by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³ Zacchaeus was trying to see who *Yeshua* was, but he couldn't because of the crowd, for he was short in height. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see *Yeshua*, for He was about to pass through that way.

⁵ When *Yeshua* came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today."

⁶ Zacchaeus hurried and came down and welcomed Him joyfully.

⁷ But when everyone saw it, they began to grumble, saying, "*Yeshua* has gone to be the guest of a sinner!"

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord. "Look, Master, half of my possessions I give to the

[†] cf. Ezra 9:6. ^{††} Exod. 20:12-13(12-16); Deut. 5:16-17(16-20).

[‡] cf. Jer. 32:17.

poor, and if I have somehow cheated anyone, I repay four times as much!" †

⁹ Then *Yeshua* said to him, "Today salvation has come to this home, because he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

¹¹ As they were listening to this, *Yeshua* went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem and they supposed that the kingdom of God was about to appear at once. ¹² Therefore He said, "A certain nobleman went to a faraway land to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. ¹³ And calling ten of his own slaves, he gave them ten minas † and said to them, 'Do business until I come back.' ¹⁴ But his citizens detested him and they sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We don't want this fellow to reign over us!' ¹⁵ When he returned after receiving the kingdom, he called for those slaves to whom he had given the money. He wanted to know how much business they had done. ¹⁶ Now the first appeared, saying, 'Master, your one mina has made ten.' ¹⁷ The master said to him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you were faithful with so little, take charge over ten cities.' ¹⁸ Also, the second slave came, saying, 'Your mina, Master, made five.' ¹⁹ Then he also said to this one, 'You are likewise over five cities.' ²⁰ But another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina. I was keeping it safe in a handkerchief, ²¹ for I was afraid of you because you are a strict man. You take what you did not make and reap what you did not sow.' ²² He said to him, 'By the words of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked slave! You knew that I am strict, taking what I did not make and reaping what I did not sow? ²³ Then why didn't you put my money in the bank, so that when I came back I could have collected it with interest?' ²⁴ Then to the bystanders he said, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has ten minas.' ²⁵ But they said to him, 'Sir, he has ten minas!' ²⁶ 'I tell you, to everyone who has, more shall be given. But from the one who doesn't have, even what he does have shall be taken away. ²⁷ But those hostile to me, who didn't want me to reign over them, bring them here and execute them before me.'"

Riding into Jerusalem

²⁸ After saying these things, *Yeshua* was going on ahead, up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ When He got near Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, ‡ He sent two of the disciples, ³⁰ saying, "Go into the village ahead. As you enter, you will find a colt tied up, that no one has ever sat upon. Untie it and bring it. ³¹ And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Master needs it.'"

† cf. Exod. 22:1-3(2-4); 2 Sam. 12:6. †† 1 mina
‡ Lit. the mountain called "of Olives."

³² Those who were headed out found things just as He told them. ³³ Then as they were untying the colt, his owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

³⁴ They said, "The Master needs it." ³⁵ Then they brought it to *Yeshua*, threw their cloaks †† on the colt, and set *Yeshua* on it. ††³⁶ And as He went along, the people were spreading their cloaks on the road. ††³⁷ When *Yeshua* came near the slope of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began to rejoice. They praised God with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen, ³⁸ saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of *ADONAI*! †††

Shalom in heaven and glory in the highest!"

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples!"

⁴⁰ But answering, *Yeshua* said, "I tell you that if these keep silent, the stones will shout out!" §

⁴¹ As He drew near and saw Jerusalem, He wept over her, ⁴² saying, "If only you had recognized this day the things that lead to *shalom*! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³ For the days will come upon you when your enemies will surround you with barricades and hem you in on all sides. ††⁴⁴ And they will smash you to the ground—you and your children within you. And they won't leave within you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

Confrontation at the Temple

⁴⁵ Then *Yeshua* entered the Temple and began to drive out the merchants, ⁴⁶ saying to them, "It is written, "My house shall be a house of prayer," ††† but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" ††

⁴⁷ And He was teaching every day in the Temple. The ruling *kohanim* and the *Torah* scholars, even the leaders of the people, were trying to destroy Him; ⁴⁸ but they could not find any way to do it, because all the people were hanging on His words.

20 On one of the days while *Yeshua* was teaching the people in the Temple and proclaiming the Good News, the ruling *kohanim* and the *Torah* scholars, together with the elders, confronted Him. ² And they spoke, saying to Him, "Tell us by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is the one who gave You this authority?"

³ But answering, *Yeshua* said to them, "I also will ask you a question, and you tell Me: ⁴ the immersion of John—was it from heaven or from men?"

⁵ They reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why didn't you believe him?' ⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' then all the people will stone us, because they are convinced that John is a prophet." ⁷ So they answered that they didn't know where it came from.

†† Lit. garments, clothing ††† cf. Zech. 9:9. †††† cf. 2 Kings 9:13. †††† cf. Ps. 118:26a. § cf. Hab. 2:11. †††† cf. Isa. 29:3. †††† Isa. 56:7. †††† Jer. 7:11.

⁸ And *Yeshua* said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

⁹ Then He began to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, [†] leased it to tenant farmers, and went on a journey for a long time. ¹⁰ And at the season, he sent a servant to the tenants so that they would give him part of the vineyard’s fruit. But the tenants beat him up and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹ So he proceeded to send another servant. They beat him too and treated him shamefully, and they sent him away empty-handed. ¹² And he proceeded to send a third one. They wounded this one too, and they threw him out.

¹³ “Now the master of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love. Probably they will show him respect.’ ¹⁴ But when the tenants saw him, they discussed the matter among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir! Let’s kill him so the inheritance will be ours.’ ¹⁵ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the master of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others.”

But when they heard this, they said, “May it never happen!”

¹⁷ Then *Yeshua* looked right at them and said, “Then what is this that has been written,

“The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the chief cornerstone?” ^{††}

¹⁸ “Everyone who falls on that stone will be shattered; but the one upon whom it falls, it will crush him.” [‡]

¹⁹ The *Torah* scholars and the ruling *kohanim* tried to grab Him that very hour, because they realized that He spoke this parable against them—but they feared the people.

Silencing the Opposition

²⁰ Now they watched Him and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order to trap Him in His words so they could hand Him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹ And they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, we know that You tell it straight and You teach it straight. You show no partiality, but teach the way of God according to the truth. ²² Is it permitted for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

²³ But carefully considering their treachery, *Yeshua* said to them, ²⁴ “Show me a denarius. [‡] Whose image and inscription does it have?”

And they said, “Caesar’s.”

²⁵ Then He said to them, “Well then, give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²⁶ And they could not trap Him in His words in the presence of the people. Astonished by His answer, they kept silent.

²⁷ Then some of the Sadducees (who deny there is a resurrection) came and questioned *Yeshua*.

[†] cf. *Isa.* 5:1-7. ^{††} *Ps.* 118:22 (117:22 LXX). [‡] cf. *Isa.* 8:14-15; 28:16; *Dan.* 2:34, 44-45. ^{‡†} A Roman coin.

²⁸ “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that ‘if a man’s brother dies having a wife but no children, then his brother should take the widow and father children for his brother.’ ^{‡‡29} Now there were seven brothers, and the first took a wife and died childless; ³⁰ and the second ³¹ and the third took her, but in this same way, each of the seven brothers died and left no children. ³² Finally the woman died too. ³³ So in the resurrection, whose wife is she? For all seven had married her.”

³⁴ *Yeshua* said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those considered worthy to reach the *olam ha-ba* and the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶ For they can no longer die, because they are like angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷ But at the burning bush even Moses revealed that the dead are raised, when he calls *ADONAI* ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ ^{‡‡‡38} Now He is God not of the dead but of the living, for to Him they all are living.”

³⁹ Some of the *Torah* scholars replied, “Teacher, You have said it well.” ⁴⁰ For they no longer dared to question Him about anything.

⁴¹ Then *Yeshua* said to them, “How can they say that the Messiah is *Ben-David*? ⁴² For David himself says in the Book of Psalms,

“ADONAI said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,

⁴³ until I make Your enemies a footstool
for Your feet.” ^{‡‡}

⁴⁴ “David then calls Him ‘Lord’; so how is He his son?”

⁴⁵ Then with all the people listening, *Yeshua* said to the disciples, ⁴⁶ “Beware of the *Torah* scholars, who like to walk around in long robes. They love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at feasts. ⁴⁷ They devour widows’ houses and make long prayers as a show. These men will receive greater condemnation!”

Teaching in the Temple

21 Then *Yeshua* looked up and saw the rich dropping their gifts into the treasury box. ² He also saw a poor widow dropping in two small copper coins. ³ And He said, “Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all the rest. ⁴ For all these put in their gifts from their surplus. But she, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on.”

⁵ And while some were talking about the Temple, how it was decorated with beautiful stones and offerings, *Yeshua* said, ⁶ “As for these things you are looking at, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another. Every one will be torn down!”

⁷ And they questioned Him, saying, “Teacher, so when will these things happen? What will be the sign that these things are about to take place?”

^{‡‡} *Deut.* 25:5. ^{‡‡†} cf. *Exod.* 3:4-6. ^{‡‡‡} *Ps.* 110:1(109:1 LXX).
^S *Lit. lepta*

⁸ And He said, "Watch out that you are not led astray! For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He' and 'The time is near!' Do not follow them. ⁹ And when you hear of wars and chaos, do not be terrorized. For these things need to happen first, but the end will not come at once."

¹⁰ Then He continued telling them, "Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes along with famines and epidemics in various places, and there will be terrors along with great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all these things, they will grab you and persecute you, handing you over to the synagogues and prisons, and leading you away to kings and governors on account of My name. ¹³ This will lead you to be a witness. ¹⁴ So make up your minds not to prepare ahead of time to defend yourselves— ¹⁵ for I Myself will give you speech and wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. ¹⁶ But you will be handed over even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends—and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ And you will be hated by all because of My name. ¹⁸ Yet not a hair of your head will be lost. ¹⁹ By your endurance, you will gain your souls.

²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. ²¹ Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those inside the city must get out, and those in the countryside must not enter her. ²² For these are the days of punishment, to fulfill all that has been written. †

²³ "Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies 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 be led away captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ††

²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars. And upon the earth nations will be confused by the roaring of the sea and its waves. ‡²⁶ People will lose heart from fear and anticipation of what is overtaking the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ††²⁷ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ††²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, stand straight and lift up your heads, because your salvation is near!"

²⁹ Then *Yeshua* told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰ As soon as they sprout their leaves, you see it and you know at once that summer is near. ³¹ So also, when you see these all these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Amen, I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things happen. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. †††

† cf. Hos. 9:7; Dan. 9:24-27. †† cf. Dan. 8:13-14; Rom. 11:25.
‡ cf. Joel 3:3-4(2:30-31); Isa. 17:12. †† cf. Isa. 34:4 (LXX); Hag. 2:6. †† cf. Dan. 7:13-14. ††† cf. Isa. 40:8; 55:9-11.

³⁴ "But watch out so your hearts are not weighed down by carousing, strong drink, and the worries of life. Do not let that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come rushing upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ But stay alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things about to happen, and to stand before the Son of Man."

³⁷ So during the days *Yeshua* was teaching in the Temple, but in the nights He went out and stayed on the Mount of Olives. ††³⁸ And all the people would come early in the morning to hear Him in the Temple.

The Day before *Pesach*

22 Now the Feast of *Matzah*, which is called Passover, was approaching. ² The ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars were searching for a way to do away with *Yeshua*, for they were afraid of the people.

³ Then *satan* entered into Judah, the one from Kriot, one of the twelve. ⁴ And he went away and talked with the ruling *kohanim* and officers of the Temple guard about how he might deliver *Yeshua* over to them. ⁵ They were delighted and agreed to give him money. ⁶ So he agreed and began looking for a chance to hand *Yeshua* over to them without a crowd.

⁷ Then came the day of *matzah* when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸ Now *Yeshua* sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so we may eat."

⁹ Then they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?"

¹⁰ And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters. ¹¹ And say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'" ¹² And with that, he will show you a large upper room, fully furnished. Make preparations there." ¹³ So they left and found just what *Yeshua* had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

The *Seder* in the Upper Room

¹⁴ When the hour came, *Yeshua* reclined at table, and the emissaries with Him. ¹⁵ And He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will never eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

¹⁷ And when He had taken a cup and offered the *bracha*, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that I will never drink of the fruit of the vine from now on, until the kingdom of God comes."

¹⁹ And when He had taken *matzah* [§] and offered the *bracha*, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This

††† cf. Lit. the mountain called "of Olives." § Lit. bread

is My body, given for you. Do this in memory of Me.”

²⁰ In the same way, He took the cup after the meal, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you. ^{†21} But look, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. ^{††22} For indeed, the Son of Man is going as has been predetermined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!”

²³ So they began to discuss among themselves which of them it might be who would do this thing. ²⁴ But there was also a quarrel among them about which of them is considered the greatest. ²⁵ And *Yeshua* said to them, “The kings of the nations have mastery over them, and those exercising authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ ²⁶ But with you, it is not so. Rather, let the one who is greatest among you become like the youngest, and the one who leads like the one who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one who reclines or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines? But I am among you as one who serves.

²⁸ “You are the ones who have remained with Me in My times of testing. ²⁹ And just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, so I grant to you ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you shall sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹ “Simon, Simon! Indeed, *satan* has demanded to sift you all like wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

³³ But Simon said to Him, “Master, I am ready to go with You even to prison and to death!”

³⁴ But *Yeshua* said, “I tell you, Peter, a rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me.”

³⁵ And He said to them, “When I sent you out without a money pouch and travel bag and sandals, you didn’t lack anything, did you?”

They said, “No, nothing.”

³⁶ Then He said to them, “But now, whoever has a money pouch must carry it as well as a travel bag. And whoever does not own a sword must sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷ For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me: ‘And he was counted with the lawless.’ [‡] For what is written about Me is being fulfilled.”

³⁸ But they said, “Master, look here! Two swords!”

And He said to them, “It is enough.”

Yeshua Prays at the Mount of Olives

³⁹ And *Yeshua* came out and went as usual to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him.

⁴⁰ When he reached the place, He said to them, “Pray that you will not enter into temptation.” ⁴¹ And He pulled back about a stone’s throw from them, got on His knees, and began to pray, ⁴² saying, “Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.”

⁴³ Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him. ⁴⁴ And in His anguish, He was praying fervently; and His sweat was like drops of blood falling down on the ground. ⁴⁵ When He rose up from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them asleep, exhausted from grief. ⁴⁶ And He said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray, so that you won’t enter into temptation.”

Betrayed!

⁴⁷ While *Yeshua* was speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judah, one of the Twelve, approached *Yeshua* to kiss Him. ⁴⁸ But *Yeshua* said to him, “Judah, with a kiss you betray the Son of Man?” ^{‡†}

⁴⁹ When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Master, shall we strike with the sword?” ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the *kohen gadol* and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹ But *Yeshua* answered and said, “Stop this now!” And He touched the man’s ear and healed him.

⁵² Then *Yeshua* said to the ruling *kohanim*, officers of the Temple guard, and the elders who had come against Him, “Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a revolutionary? ⁵³ Every day I was with you in the Temple, yet you did not lay a finger on Me. But this is yours—the hour and the power of darkness.” ⁵⁴ Then they seized *Yeshua* and led Him away and brought Him into the house of the *kohen gadol*. But Peter was following from a distance.

Denied Three Times

⁵⁵ Now they had lit a fire in the center of the courtyard and sat down together, and Peter was sitting among them. ⁵⁶ Then a servant girl saw him sitting at the fire. She looked straight at him and said, “This one was with Him too!”

⁵⁷ But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I don’t know Him!”

⁵⁸ A little later, another saw him and said, “You, too, are one of them.”

But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”

⁵⁹ And about an hour later, another began to insist, saying, “Certainly this fellow was with Him, for he too is a Galilean!”

⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” And immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, ‘Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.’

⁶² And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Beaten by Roman Soldiers

⁶³ Now the men who were guarding *Yeshua* began mocking and beating Him. ⁶⁴ They blindfolded Him and kept asking Him, saying, “Prophecy! Who is the

† cf. Exod. 24:8; Jer. 31:31-34. †† cf. Ps. 41:10(9). ‡ Isa. 53:12.

‡† cf. Ps. 55:12-13, 20.

one who hit You?"⁶⁵ And reviling Him, they were saying many other things against Him.

Brought before the Council

⁶⁶ As it became day, the elders of the people gathered together, both ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars, and they led Him away to their council, saying,⁶⁷ "If You are *Mashiach*, tell us."

But *Yeshua* said to them, "If I tell you, you will never believe;⁶⁸ and if I ask you, you will never answer.⁶⁹ But from now on, the Son of Man is seated at the right hand of the power of God."[†]

⁷⁰ Then they all said, "Are You then *Ben-Elohim*?"

And to them He said, "You say that I am."

⁷¹ Then they said, "What further need do we have for testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth!"

Brought before Pilate

23 Then the entire assembly got up and brought *Yeshua* to Pilate.² And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this fellow subverting our nation, forbidding payment of taxes to Caesar and saying that He Himself is Messiah—a king."

³ So Pilate questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

"As you say," *Yeshua* replied.

⁴ Then Pilate said to the ruling *kohanim* and the crowds, "I find no case against this Man."

⁵ But they kept insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, starting from the Galilee to as far as here."

⁶ But when Pilate heard this, he asked whether the Man was a Galilean.⁷ And when he learned that *Yeshua* was from Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

Brought before Herod

⁸ Now Herod was overjoyed when he saw *Yeshua*, for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had heard about Him and was hoping to see some miracle done by Him.⁹ He was questioning *Yeshua* on many issues, but *Yeshua* did not answer at all.^{††10} And the ruling *kohanim* and the *Torah* scholars stood their ground, strongly accusing Him.

¹¹ Now Herod together with his soldiers were treating Him with contempt and mocking Him.[‡] They put splendid clothing on Him and sent Him back to Pilate.¹² And Herod and Pilate became friends with one another from that very day, for previously they had been enemies with one another.

Pilate's Decree

¹³ Now Pilate called together the ruling *kohanim*, the leaders, and the people.¹⁴ And he said to them, "You

[†] cf. Dan. 7:13(LXX); Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX). ^{††} cf. Isa. 53:7. [‡] cf. Isa. 53:3.

brought this Man to me as one who incites the people to revolt. But having examined Him in your presence, I have found no case against this Man regarding what you accuse Him of doing.¹⁵ Nor did Herod, for he sent Him back to us. Indeed, He has done nothing that is worthy of death.¹⁶ Therefore, I will scourge Him and release Him."⁽¹⁷⁾ ^{‡†}

¹⁸ But they shouted out all together, saying, "Take this fellow away! Release to us *Bar-Abba*!"^{‡†19} (He was someone who had been thrown into prison for a rebellion in the city and murder.)

²⁰ Again Pilate addressed them, wanting to release *Yeshua*; ²¹ but they kept shouting out, saying, "Execute, execute Him!"

²² And a third time he spoke to them, "Why? What evil has this One done? I have found in Him no fault deserving of death. Therefore, I will scourge and release Him."

²³ But they were insistent, demanding with loud shouts that He be executed. And their voices prevailed.²⁴ So Pilate decreed that their demand be put into effect.²⁵ And He released the one they were asking for, the one thrown in jail for insurrection and murder. But he handed over *Yeshua* to their will.

Executed on the Stake

²⁶ As they led Him away, they grabbed a man, Simon of Cyrene, coming in from the countryside. They placed on him the crossbeam,^{‡††} to carry behind *Yeshua*.

²⁷ Now a great multitude of people was following Him, including women who were mourning and singing dirges for Him.²⁸ But *Yeshua*, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but for yourselves and your children.²⁹ For indeed, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never gave birth, and the breasts that did not feed.'

³⁰ "Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!'

and to the hills, 'Cover us!' ^{‡‡†}

³¹ "For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

³² Others, two evildoers, were also led away to be put to death with Him.³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified Him and the evildoers, one on His right and the other on His left.

³⁴ But *Yeshua* was saying, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Then they cast lots, dividing up His clothing.[§]

³⁵ The people stood there watching. And even the leaders were sneering at Him, saying, "He saved oth-

^{‡†} Some mss. add Now Pilate needed to release one prisoner to them at the feast ^{‡††} Also Barabbas, Son of the Father ^{‡†††} Probably the patibulum

^{‡‡††} cf. Hos. 10:8. [§] cf. Ps.

22:19(18).

ers; let Him save Himself if He is the Messiah of God, the Chosen One!" †

³⁶ The soldiers likewise mocked Him, coming up and bringing Him sour wine, ††³⁷ and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself."

³⁸ Now there was also an inscription over Him: ‡ THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. ³⁹ One of the evildoers hanging there was jeering at Him, saying, "Aren't You the Messiah? Save Yourself—and us!"

⁴⁰ But the other one, rebuking him, replied, "Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence?"

⁴¹ We're getting what we deserve for our actions, and rightly so—but this One has done nothing wrong."

⁴² And he said, "Yeshua, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."

⁴³ Yeshua said to him, "Amen, I tell you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

Temple Curtain Torn in Two

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, ††⁴⁵ for the sun died out. And the curtain ‡ of the Temple was torn in two.

⁴⁶ And Yeshua, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, 'into Your hands I entrust My spirit.'" ††† When He had said this, He breathed His last.

⁴⁷ Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began glorifying God, saying, "Truly this was a righteous Man."

⁴⁸ And all the crowds assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had happened, began to turn back, beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ But all Yeshua's acquaintances, and the women who were following Him from the Galilee, were standing at a distance, watching these things.

Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb

⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and righteous man. ⁵¹ (He had not been in agreement with the council and their action.) He was from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for Yeshua's body. ⁵³ And he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb ††† cut out of the rock, where no one had ever yet been laid.

⁵⁴ Now it was the Day of Preparation, and Shabbat was approaching. ⁵⁵ The women who had come with Him from the Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how His body was laid. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. But on Shabbat they rested according to the commandment.

Women Visit the Garden Tomb

24 Now on the first day of the week, at daybreak, the women came to the tomb, carrying the spices they had prepared. ² They found the stone had been rolled away from the tomb; ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Yeshua.

⁴ And while they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵ The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you search for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but He is risen! Remember what He told you when He was still in the Galilee, ⁷ saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be executed, and on the third day rise up."

⁸ And they were reminded of His words. ⁹ And when they returned from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to everyone else. ¹⁰ Now it was Miriam from Magdala, Joanna, the Miriam of Jacob, and others together with them who were telling these things to the emissaries. ¹¹ But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them. ¹² But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. Leaning in, he sees only the linen cloths. And he went away to his home, marveling at what had happened.

Eyes Open in Emmaus

¹³ Now behold, two of them on that very day were traveling to a village named Emmaus, a distance of about seven miles § from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were speaking with one another about all the things that had been happening. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Yeshua Himself approached and began traveling with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing Him.

¹⁷ Then He said to them, "What are these things you are discussing with one another as you are walking along?"

They stood still, looking gloomy. ¹⁸ Then the one named Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that happened there in these days?"

¹⁹ Yeshua said to them, "What kind of things?"

And they said to Him, "The things about Yeshua from Natzeret, who was a Prophet, powerful in deed and word before God and all the people— ²⁰ how the ruling kohanim and our leaders handed Him over to be sentenced to death, and they executed Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that He was the One about to redeem Israel. Besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

²² "But also some women among us amazed us. Early in the morning they were at the tomb. ²³ When they didn't find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said He is alive!"

† cf. Ps. 22:7-9(6-8). †† cf. Ps. 69:22(21). ‡ Some mss. add in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew †† From noon until 3 p.m.

‡† Hebrew parokhet, veil inner curtain

††† Ps. 31:6(5), cf. Ps. 30:5 (LXX). ††† cf.

Isa. 53:9b.

§ Lit. 60 stadia

²⁴ Some of those with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women said, but they did not see Him."

²⁵ *Yeshua* said to them, "Oh foolish ones, so slow of heart to put your trust in all that the prophets spoke! ²⁶ Was it not necessary for Messiah to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them the things written about Himself in all the Scriptures.

²⁸ They approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther on. ²⁹ But they urged Him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is already gone." So He went in to stay with them.

³⁰ And it happened that when He was reclining at the table with them, He took the *matzah*, † offered a *bracha* and, breaking it, gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, and He disappeared from them.

Good News for the Disciples in Jerusalem

³² They said to one another, "Didn't our heart burn within us while He was speaking with us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?" ³³ And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and others with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed! He has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ Then they began telling about the events on the road and how He became recognized by them in the breaking of the *matzah*.

³⁶ While they were speaking of these things, *Yeshua* Himself stood in the midst of them and said, " *Shalom Aleichem!*" ³⁷ But they were startled and terrified, thinking they were seeing a ghost.

† *Lit. bread*

³⁸ Then He said to them, "Why are you so shaken? And why do doubts arise in your heart? ³⁹ Look at My hands and My feet—it is I Myself! Touch Me and see! For a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see I have." ⁴⁰ And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

⁴¹ But while they were still in disbelief due to joy and wonder, He said to them, "Do you have anything to eat here?"

⁴² They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and He took it and ate it in their presence. ⁴⁴ Then He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you—everything written concerning Me in the *Torah* of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and He said to them, "So it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the removal of sins †† is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Yeshua Ascends into Heaven

⁵⁰ Then *Yeshua* led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands †† and blessed them. ⁵¹ And while blessing them, He departed from them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² After worshiping Him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they were continually in the Temple, praising God.

†† *cf. Heb. 9:22; 10:18. ‡ cf. Mal. 1:11. †† cf. Num. 6:22-27.*

John

Introduction

John, one of the twelve original emissaries, wrote this fourth Gospel or . He was one of the sons of Zebedee, along with Jacob. Written in a style completely different than the other three, it probably dates from the end of the first century (about 90–95 C.E.). Writing many years after 's resurrection, John includes in his account the kinds of deep insights one would expect of a young student who was present with and has now grown into a mature and wise sage.

At one time, John was believed to be the least Jewish of the Gospels. Now that scholars have learned more about first-century Judaism (including the discovery and study of the Dead Sea Scrolls), John is recognized to be very Jewish indeed. Other Jewish writers of this period also attribute divinity to the Word (in Greek, in Aramaic). Some of the speeches of in John resemble a rabbinic commentary or , and a wealth of references point to the Jewish traditions and institutions dating from the time of the : Jacob's Ladder, , , , the serpent in the wilderness, and all make their appearance here.

John was written at a time when intra-Jewish conflicts over and the claims of His followers were running high. In some instances, Jewish believers in were no longer welcome in the synagogues. In this context, some believe that John wrote to Jewish non-believers to answer the question, "Who is the Messiah?" John's answer, of course, is , seen as both human and divine in nature, the Son of God or . Others think it was written primarily to encourage Jewish believers to pursue a deeper, persevering level of faith in light of the opposition. Either way, the audience appears to be largely Jewish. John works both to encourage those who believe in and to lead to faith those who do not yet put their trust in Him. 's words and deeds reveal who He is: the Word of God who tabernacled among us, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the Light of the World, and much more.

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 John's Witness

The Word Becomes Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word. [†] The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were made through Him, and apart from Him nothing was made that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it.

⁶ There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that through him everyone might believe. ⁸ He was not the light, but he came to bear witness concerning the light. ⁹ The true light, coming into the world, gives light to every man.

[†] cf. Gen. 1:1; Prov. 8:23.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him; but the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him. ¹² But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God. ¹³ They were born not of a bloodline, nor of human desire, nor of man's will, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. We looked upon His glory, ^{††} the glory of the one and only [‡] from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John testifies about Him. He cried out, saying, "This is He of whom I said, 'The One who comes after me is above me, because He existed before me.'" ¹⁶ Out of His fullness, we have all received grace on top of grace. ¹⁷ *Torah* was given through Moses; grace and

^{††} cf. Exod. 40:34. [‡] Lit. unique

only

begotten

truth came through *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; but the one and only God, † in the Father's embrace, has made Him known.

John's Witness to Israel's Leaders

¹⁹ This is John's testimony, when the Judean leaders sent *kohanim* and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

²⁰ He openly admitted and did not deny; he admitted, "I am not the Messiah."

²¹ "What then? Are you Elijah?" they asked him.

"I am not," said John.

"Are you the Prophet?"

"No," he answered.

²² So they said to him, "Who are you? Give us an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³ He said, "I am 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of *ADONAI*,'" †† as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴ Now those sent were from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, "If you're not the Messiah, Elijah, or the Prophet, why then are you immersing?"

²⁶ "I immerse in water," John answered. "Among you stands One you do not know, ²⁷ coming after me, whose sandals I'm not worthy to untie." ²⁸ These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was immersing.

Behold, the Lamb of God

²⁹ The next day, John sees *Yeshua* coming to him and says, "Behold, the Lamb ‡ of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the One about whom I told you, 'He who comes after me is above me, because He was before me.' ³¹ I didn't know Him, but I came immersing with water so that He might be revealed to Israel."

³² Then John testified, "I have seen the *Ruach* coming down like a dove out of heaven, and it remained on Him. ³³ I did not know Him; but the One who sent me to immerse in water said to me, 'The One on whom you see the *Ruach* coming down and remaining, this is the One who immerses in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.'"

³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is *Ben-Elohim* ." ††

Yeshua's First Disciples

³⁵ Again the next day, John was standing with two of his disciples ³⁶ and watched *Yeshua* walking by. He said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed *Yeshua* .

³⁸ *Yeshua* turned around and saw them following. He said to them, "What are you looking for?"

They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is translated Teacher), "where are you staying?"

³⁹ "Come and see," *Yeshua* tells them. So they came and saw where He was staying, and they spent that day with Him. It was about the tenth hour. ††

⁴⁰ Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John speak and followed *Yeshua* . ⁴¹ First he finds his own brother Simon and tells him, "We've found the Messiah!" (which is translated Anointed One).

⁴² Andrew brought Simon to *Yeshua* . *Yeshua* looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You shall be called Kefa (which is translated Peter)."

Disciples Offer Witness

⁴³ The next day, *Yeshua* decided to go to the Galilee. He finds Philip and says to him, "Follow Me!" ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the same town as Andrew and Peter.

⁴⁵ Philip finds Nathanael and tells him, "We've found the One that Moses in the *Torah* , and also the prophets, wrote about— *Yeshua* of *Natzeret* , the son of Joseph!"

⁴⁶ " *Natzeret* !" Nathanael answered. "Can anything good come from there?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

⁴⁷ *Yeshua* saw Nathanael coming toward Him. He said, "Look, a true Israelite! There's nothing false in him."

⁴⁸ Nathanael said to Him, "How do you know me?"

Yeshua answered, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

⁴⁹ "Rabbi," Nathanael answered, "You are *Ben-Elohim* ! You are the King of Israel!" †††

⁵⁰ "Because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree, you believe?" *Yeshua* replied to him. "You will see greater things than that!" ⁵¹ And He said, "Amen, amen I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man!" †††

Water to Wine

2 On the third day, there was a wedding at Cana in the Galilee. *Yeshua's* mother was there, ² and *Yeshua* and His disciples were also invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine ran out, *Yeshua's* mother said to Him, "They don't have any wine!"

⁴ *Yeshua* said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with you and Me? My hour hasn't come yet."

⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you."

⁶ Now there were six stone jars, used for the Jewish ritual of purification, each holding two to three measures. ⁷ *Yeshua* said to them, "Fill the jars with water!" So they filled them up to the top. ⁸ Then He said to them, "Take some water out, and give it to the headwaiter." And they brought it.

† Some mss. say the only Son †† Isa. 40:3. ‡ cf. Exod. 12:21; Num. 28:8; Isa. 53:5-7. †† cf. Ps. 2:7; Prov. 30:4.

‡‡ 4 p.m. ††† cf. Ps. 2:6-7. ††† cf. Gen. 28:12-13; Dan. 7:13. § About 20-25 gallons; 1 measure is about 9 gallons.

⁹ Now the headwaiter did not know where it had come from, but the servants who had drawn the water knew. As the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, he calls the bridegroom ¹⁰ and says to him, "Everyone brings out the good wine first, and whenever they are drunk, then the worse. But you've reserved the good wine until now!" ¹¹ *Yeshua* did this, the first of the signs, in Cana of the Galilee—He revealed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

Yeshua Purges the Temple

¹² After this *Yeshua* went down to Capernaum with His mother, brothers, [†] and disciples, and they stayed there a few days. ¹³ The Jewish feast of Passover was near, so *Yeshua* went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the Temple, He found the merchants selling oxen, sheep, and doves; also the moneychangers sitting there. ¹⁵ Then He made a whip of cords and drove them all out of the Temple, both the sheep and oxen. He dumped out the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those selling doves, He said, "Get these things out of here! Stop making My Father's house a marketplace!" ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it is written, "Zeal for your House will consume Me!" ^{††}

¹⁸ The Judean leaders responded, "What sign do You show us, since You are doing these things?"

¹⁹ "Destroy this Temple," *Yeshua* answered them, "and in three days I will raise it up."

²⁰ The Judean leaders then said to Him, "Forty-six years this Temple was being built, and You will raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was talking about the temple of His body. ²² So after He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He was talking about this. Then they believed the Scripture and the word that *Yeshua* had spoken.

²³ Now when He was in Jerusalem for the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, seeing the signs He was doing. ²⁴ But *Yeshua* did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all men. ²⁵ He did not need anyone to testify about man, for He knew what was in man.

A Pharisee Comes Seeking Truth

3 Now there was a man, a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jewish people. ² He came to *Yeshua* at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that You, a teacher, have come from God. For no one can perform these signs which You do unless God is with Him!"

³ *Yeshua* answered him, "Amen, amen I tell you, unless one is born from above, [‡] he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴ "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus said to Him. "He cannot enter his mother's womb a second time and be born, can he?"

[†] Some mss. say brethren ^{††} Ps. 69:10(9). [‡] Or born again

⁵ *Yeshua* answered, "Amen, amen I tell you, unless one is born of water and spirit, ^{‡†} he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be surprised that I said to you, 'You all must be born from above.' ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

The Father's Love Revealed

⁹ "How can these things happen?" Nicodemus said.

¹⁰ *Yeshua* answered him, "You're a teacher of Israel and you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Amen, amen I tell you, We speak about what We know and testify about what We have seen. Yet you all do not receive Our testimony! ¹² If you do not believe the earthly things I told you, how will you believe when I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has gone up into heaven except the One who came down from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, ^{‡†} so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life!

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ The one who believes in Him is not condemned; but whoever does not believe has been condemned already, because he has not put his trust in the name of the one and only *Ben-Elohim* .

¹⁹ "Now this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world and men loved the darkness instead of the light, ^{‡‡†} because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light, so that their deeds will not be exposed. ²¹ But whoever practices the truth comes to the light, so that it may be made known that his deeds have been accomplished in God."

The Living Word, Source of Life

²² Afterwards, *Yeshua* and His disciples came to the land of Judea. There He was staying with them and immersing. ²³ Now John also was immersing at Aenon near Salim, because much water was there and many were coming and being immersed; ²⁴ for John had not yet been thrown into prison.

²⁵ Now an argument came up between John's disciples and a Judean concerning purification. ²⁶ They came to John and said, "Rabbi, the One who was with you beyond the Jordan, the One you testified about—look, He is immersing, and all are coming to Him!"

^{‡†} cf. Ezek. 36:24-27. ^{‡‡} cf. Num. 21:8. ^{‡‡†} cf. Isa. 5:20.

²⁷ John answered, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah,' but rather, 'I am sent before Him.' ²⁹ The one who has the bride is the bridegroom, but the best man rejoices when he stands and hears the bridegroom's voice. So now my joy is complete! ³⁰ He must increase, while I must decrease."

³¹ The One who comes from above is above all. The one who is from the earth is of the earth, and of the earth he speaks. The One who comes from heaven is above all. ³² And what He has seen and heard, He testifies to that; yet no one receives His testimony. ³³ Whoever receives His testimony has certified that God is true.

³⁴ The One whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the *Ruach* without limit. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has given everything into His hand. ³⁶ He who trusts in the Son has eternal life. He who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Yeshua Offers Living Water

4 Now *Yeshua* knew that the Pharisees heard that He was making and immersing more disciples than John. ² (Although *Yeshua* Himself was not immersing, His disciples were.) ³ So He left Judea and went back again to the Galilee.

⁴ But He needed to pass through Samaria. ⁵ So He comes to a Samaritan town called Shechem, near the plot of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ¹⁶ Now Jacob's well was there. So *Yeshua*, exhausted from the journey, was sitting by the well. It was midday. ^{††}

⁷ A Samaritan woman comes to draw water. "Give me a drink," *Yeshua* tells her, ⁸ for His disciples had gone away to the town to buy food.

⁹ Then the Samaritan woman tells Him, "How is it that You, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jewish people don't deal with Samaritans.)

¹⁰ *Yeshua* replied to 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 "Sir," the woman tells Him, "You don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Then from where do You get this living water? ¹² You're not greater than our father Jacob, are You? He gave us this well. He drank out of it himself, with his sons and his cattle."

¹³ *Yeshua* replied to her, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. ¹⁴ But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty. The water that I give him will become a fountain of water within him, springing up to eternal life!"

¹⁵ "Sir," the woman tells Him, "give me this water, so I won't get thirsty or have to come all the way here to draw water!"

¹⁶ He tells her, "Go call your husband, and then come back here."

¹⁷ "I don't have a husband," the woman replied.

Yeshua tells her, "You've said it right, 'I have no husband.' ¹⁸ For you've had five husbands, and the man you have now isn't your husband. This you've spoken truthfully!"

¹⁹ "Sir," the woman tells Him, "I see that You are a prophet! ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you all say that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹ *Yeshua* tells her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But an hour is coming—it is here now—when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people as His worshipers. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

²⁵ The woman tells Him, "I know that Messiah is coming. (He who is called the Anointed One.) [‡] When He comes, He will explain everything to us."

²⁶ *Yeshua* tells her, "I—the One speaking to you—I am."

Ready for Harvest

²⁷ At this moment, His disciples came back. They were amazed that He was speaking with a woman. Yet no one said, "What do You want?" or "Why are You speaking with her?"

²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went back to the town. She tells the people, ²⁹ "Come see a man who told me everything I ever did! He couldn't be the Messiah, could He?" ³⁰ The people left the town and began coming to Him.

³¹ Meanwhile, the disciples were pressing Him, "Rabbi, eat!"

³² But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

³³ So the disciples were saying to each other, "No one brought Him food to eat, did they?"

³⁴ *Yeshua* tells them, "My food is to do the will of the One who sent Me and to accomplish His work. ³⁵ Don't you say, 'Four more months, and then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields! They are white and ready for harvest.

³⁶ "The reaper receives a reward and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷ For the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸ I sent you to reap what you haven't worked for. Others have worked hard, and you have joined in their work."

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town put their trust in Him because of the word of the woman testify-

† Most mss. say Sychar
†† Lit. about the sixth hour

‡ Christ Messiah Anointed
One

ing, "He told me everything I ever did!"⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to Him, they kept asking Him to stay with them. He stayed there two days,⁴¹ and many more believed because of His word.⁴² They kept telling the woman, "It's no longer because of your words that we believe. We've heard for ourselves! Now we know that this really is the Savior of the world!"

Life for a Dying Son

⁴³ After the two days, He went on from there into the Galilee.⁴⁴ Now *Yeshua* Himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.⁴⁵ But when He came into the Galilee, they welcomed Him. For they had seen all He had done at the feast in Jerusalem, since they also had gone up to celebrate.

⁴⁶ So He went again to Cana of the Galilee, where He had turned the water into wine. Now there was a nobleman whose son was sick in Capernaum.⁴⁷ When he heard that *Yeshua* had come from Judea to the Galilee, he went to Him and begged Him to come down and heal his son; for he was about to die.

⁴⁸ Then *Yeshua* said to him, "Unless you all see signs and wonders, you'll never believe!"

⁴⁹ The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

⁵⁰ *Yeshua* tells him, "Go! Your son lives!"

The man believed the word that *Yeshua* said to him and started off.⁵¹ While on his way down, his servants met him, saying that his son was living.⁵² So he asked them the hour when the boy began to get better. They said, "The fever left him yesterday at about the seventh hour."[†]

⁵³ Then the father realized that it was the same hour *Yeshua* said to him, "Your son lives!" Now he himself believed, along with his whole household.⁵⁴ *Yeshua* did this as the second sign, after He had come again from Judea into the Galilee.

Healing on *Shabbat*

5 After this there was a Jewish feast, and *Yeshua* went up to Jerusalem.² Now in Jerusalem there is a pool by the sheep gate, called Bethzatha in Aramaic,^{††} which has five porches.³ In these a crowd of invalids was lying around—blind, lame, disabled.[‡] (⁴)

⁵ Now a certain man had been an invalid there for 38 years.⁶ Seeing him lying there and knowing he had been that way a long time, *Yeshua* said to him, "Do you want to get well?"

⁷ The invalid answered Him, "Sir, I have nobody to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I'm trying to get in, somebody else steps down before me!"

[†] One o'clock. ^{††} Lit. in Hebrew. Bethesda House of Mercy. Bethzatha the place of poured out water [‡] ASV adds: They waited for the water to be moved because an angel of the Lord sometimes went to the pool and moved the water. Then, whoever went into the water first was healed from whatever disease he had

⁸ *Yeshua* tells him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk!"

⁹ Immediately, the man was healed! He took up his mat and started walking around. Now that day was *Shabbat*,¹⁰ so Judean leaders were saying to the man who was healed, "It's *Shabbat*! It's not permitted for you to carry your mat."

¹¹ But he answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Pick up your mat and walk?'"¹³ But the man who had been healed didn't know who it was, for *Yeshua* had slipped away into the crowd in that place.

¹⁴ Afterwards, *Yeshua* finds him in the Temple. He said to him, "Look, you've been healed! Stop sinning, so nothing worse happens to you."¹⁵ The man left and told the Judean leaders that it was *Yeshua* who had made him well.

Sent by the Father

¹⁶ Because *Yeshua* was doing these things on *Shabbat*, the Judean leaders started persecuting Him.

¹⁷ But *Yeshua* said to them, "My Father is still working, and I also am working."¹⁸ So for this reason the Judean leaders kept trying even harder to kill Him—because He was not only breaking *Shabbat*,[‡] but also calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

¹⁹ Therefore *Yeshua* answered them, "Amen, amen I tell you, the Son cannot do anything by Himself. He can do only what He sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise."²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows Him everything He does. He will show Him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever He wants.²² The Father does not judge anyone, but has handed over all judgment to the Son²³ so that all should honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

²⁴ "Amen, amen I tell you, whoever hears My word and trusts the One who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed over from death into life."²⁵ Amen, amen I tell you, an hour is coming and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of *Ben-Elohim*. Those who hear will live!²⁶ For just as the Father has life in Himself, so also He has granted the Son to have life in Himself.²⁷ Also He has given the Son authority to judge, because He is the Son of Man.

²⁸ "Do not be amazed at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice²⁹ and come out! ^{‡‡} Those who have done good will come to a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil will come to a resurrection of judgment."³⁰ I

^{‡‡} cf. Mark 2:27; Luke 13:16. ^{‡‡} cf. Ezek. 37:12; Ps. 16:10; Dan. 12:2.

can do nothing on My own. Just as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, for I do not seek My own will, but the will of the One who sent Me."

The Father Testifies about the Son

³¹ "If I testify about Myself, My witness is not valid. ³² There is another who testifies about Me, and I know that the testimony He gives is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ I do not receive the testimony of man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the lamp that was burning and shining, and you wanted to rejoice for a while in his light.

³⁶ "But the testimony I have is greater than that from John. The works the Father has given Me to finish—the very works I am doing—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent Me has testified concerning Me. You have never heard His voice nor seen His form. ³⁸ Nor do you have His Word living in you, because you do not trust the One He sent. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you suppose that in them you have eternal life. It is these that testify about Me. ⁴⁰ Yet you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life!

⁴¹ "I do not accept glory from men. ⁴² But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. ⁴³ I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me. But if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that comes from God alone?

⁴⁵ "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have put your hope. ⁴⁶ For if you were believing Moses, you would believe Me—because he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But since you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" †

New Manna in the Wilderness

6 Afterwards, *Yeshua* went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also known as the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following Him, because they were watching the signs He was performing on the sick. ³ Then *Yeshua* went up the mountainside and sat down there with His disciples. ⁴ Passover, the Jewish feast, was near.

⁵ Lifting up His eyes and seeing a large crowd coming to Him, *Yeshua* said to Philip, "Where will we buy bread so these may eat?" ⁶ Now *Yeshua* was saying this to test him, for He knew what He was about to do.

⁷ Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii †† isn't enough to buy bread for each to get a little bit!"

⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, ⁹ "There's a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish—but what's that for so many?"

† cf. Deut. 18:15-19. †† One denarius was the daily wage for a laborer.

¹⁰ *Yeshua* said, "Make the people recline." There was much grass in the area. So the men reclined, about five thousand in number. ¹¹ Then *Yeshua* picked up the loaves. And having given thanks, He distributed bread to everyone who was reclining. He did the same with the fish, as much as they wanted.

¹² When the people were full, *Yeshua* said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftovers, so nothing is wasted."

¹³ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had finished eating.

¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that *Yeshua* performed, they began to say, "This is most certainly the Prophet who is to come into the world!" ¹⁵ Realizing that they were about to come and seize Him by force to make Him king, *Yeshua* withdrew again to the mountain, Himself alone.

The Savior on the Sea

¹⁶ Now when evening came, *Yeshua's* disciples went down to the sea. ¹⁷ Getting into a boat, they set out to cross the sea toward Capernaum. By now it had become dark, and still *Yeshua* had not come to them. ¹⁸ A great wind began to blow, stirring up the sea.

¹⁹ After they had rowed about 25 or 30 stadia, † they catch sight of *Yeshua* walking on the sea, approaching the boat. They were terrified! ²⁰ But *Yeshua* says to them, "I am. Don't be afraid." ²¹ Then they wanted to take Him into the boat, and right away the boat reached the shore where they were headed.

The Bread from Heaven

²² The next day, the crowd remaining on the other side of the sea realized that no other boat had been there except the one, and that *Yeshua* hadn't gone into the boat with His disciples, but that His disciples had gone away alone. ²³ Some other boats from Tiberias came close to the place where they had eaten the bread after the Master had given thanks. ²⁴ So when the crowd realized that neither *Yeshua* nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats and set off for Capernaum to find Him. ²⁵ When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said, "Rabbi, when did You get here?"

²⁶ *Yeshua* responded to them, "Amen, amen I tell you, you seek Me not because you saw signs, but because you ate all the bread and were filled. ²⁷ Don't work for food that spoils, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him, God the Father has put the seal of approval."

²⁸ Then they said to Him, "What shall we do to perform the works of God?"

²⁹ *Yeshua* answered them, "This is the work of God, to trust in the One He sent."

‡ cf. Deut. 18:15. †† About three or four miles, halfway across the sea. †† Lit. I am. Don't be afraid

³⁰ So they said to Him, "Then what sign do You perform, so that we may see and believe You? What work do You do?" ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'Out of heaven He gave them bread to eat.'" †

³² *Yeshua* answered them, "Amen, amen I tell you, it isn't Moses who has given you bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the One coming down from heaven and giving life to the world."

³⁴ So they said to Him, "Sir, give us this bread from now on!"

³⁵ *Yeshua* said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty. ³⁶ But I told you that you have seen Me, yet you do not believe.

³⁷ Everyone the Father gives Me will come to Me, and anyone coming to Me I will never reject. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of the One who sent Me.

³⁹ "Now this is the will of the One who sent Me, that I lose not one of all He has given Me, but raise each one on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and trusts in Him may have eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day."

⁴¹ Some of the Judeans † started to grumble about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." ⁴² They were saying, "Isn't this *Yeshua* the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can He now say, 'I have come down from heaven?'"

⁴³ *Yeshua* answered, "Stop grumbling among yourselves! ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless My Father who sent Me draws him—and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, 'They will all be taught by God.' ‡ Everyone who has listened and learned from the Father comes to Me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father except the One who is from God—He has seen the Father.

⁴⁷ "Amen, amen I tell you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. This bread is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

⁵² Then the Jews began arguing with one another, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

⁵³ So *Yeshua* said to them, "Amen, amen I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

⁵⁵ "For My flesh is real food and My blood is real drink. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent Me and I live because of the Father, so the one who eats of Me will also live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven—not like the bread your fathers ate and then died. He who eats this bread will live forever."

⁵⁹ He said these things while teaching at the synagogue in Capernaum.

Fallout from a Hard Teaching

⁶⁰ So when many of His disciples heard this, they said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can listen to it?"

⁶¹ But *Yeshua* knew His disciples were murmuring, so He said to them, "Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man going back up to the place where He was before? ⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is of no benefit. The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and are life! ⁶⁴ Yet some of you do not trust." *Yeshua* knew from the beginning who were the ones who did not trust, as well as which one would betray Him.

⁶⁵ Then He told them, "For this reason I've told you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by the Father."

⁶⁶ From this time, many of His disciples left and quit walking with Him. ⁶⁷ So *Yeshua* said to the Twelve, "You don't want to leave also, do you?"

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life! ⁶⁹ We have trusted and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God."

⁷⁰ *Yeshua* answered them, "Didn't I choose you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is the adversary!" ⁷¹ Now He was speaking of Judah, the son of Simon of Kriot—for he, one of the Twelve, was about to betray Him.

Anticipating Hostility at Sukkot

7 After these events, *Yeshua* was walking about in the Galilee. He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Judean leaders wanted to kill Him. ² Now the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles †† was near. ³ Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go to Judea, so Your disciples also may see the works You are doing. ⁴ No one who wants to be well known does everything in secret. If You are doing these things, show Yourself to the world!" ⁵ For not even His brothers were trusting in Him.

⁶ Therefore *Yeshua* said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always at hand. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify that its works are evil. ⁸ You go on up to the Feast. I'm not going to this feast, because My time hasn't yet fully come." ⁹ After saying these things, He stayed in the Galilee.

† Ps. 78:24; cf. Exod. 16:4-36; Neh. 9:15. †† Perhaps Galileans

‡ cf. Isa 54:13.

‡† cf. Deut. 16:16.

¹⁰ But after His brothers went to the Feast, He also went, not openly but secretly. ¹¹ Then the Judean leaders were searching for Him at the Feast and kept asking, "Where is that fellow?" ¹² There was a lot of murmuring about Him in the crowds. Some were saying, "He is good." But others were saying, "Not so! He leads the people astray." ¹³ Yet no one spoke openly about Him for fear of the Judean leaders.

Teaching at the Temple

¹⁴ About halfway through the Feast, *Yeshua* went up to the Temple and began teaching. ¹⁵ Then the Judean leaders were amazed, saying, "How does this man know so much, having never been taught?" †

¹⁶ *Yeshua* answered, "My teaching is not from Me, but from Him who sent Me. ¹⁷ If anyone wants to do His will, he will know whether My teaching comes from God or it is Myself speaking. ¹⁸ Whoever speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true and there is no unrighteousness in Him. ¹⁹ Hasn't Moses given you the *Torah*? Yet none of you keeps it. Why are you trying to kill Me?"

²⁰ The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who's trying to kill you?"

²¹ *Yeshua* answered, "I did one good work, and all of you are amazed. ²² Because Moses has given you circumcision (though it is not from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a man on *Shabbat*. ²³ If a man receives circumcision on *Shabbat* so that the *Torah* of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry that I healed a man's whole body on *Shabbat*? ²⁴ Do not judge by appearance, but judge righteously."

²⁵ Then some of the people from Jerusalem were saying, "Isn't this the person they're trying to kill? ²⁶ Look, He speaks openly and they're saying nothing to Him. Can it be that the leaders know He is the Messiah? ²⁷ But we know where this person is from. But the Messiah, whenever He may come, no one knows where He is from."

²⁸ Then, while teaching in the Temple courts, *Yeshua* cried out, "You know both who I am and where I am from! I have not come on My own, but the One who sent Me is true. You do not know Him, ²⁹ but I know Him because I am from Him and He sent Me."

³⁰ Then they were trying to seize Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

³¹ Yet many from the crowd believed in Him and were saying, "When the Messiah comes, He won't perform more signs than this person has, will He?" ³² The Pharisees heard people in the crowd murmuring these things about Him, and the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees sent guards to arrest Him.

³³ *Yeshua* said, "I am with you only a little while longer, and then I am going to the One who sent Me.

³⁴ You will look for Me but will not find Me. Where I am, you cannot come."

† Lit. knows letters, not having learned

³⁵ The Judean leaders then said among themselves, "Where is this person about to go that we shall not find Him? He's not going to the Diaspora to teach the Greeks, is He? ³⁶ What did He mean by saying, 'You will look for Me but will not find Me. Where I am, you cannot come?'"

Satisfying Spiritual Thirst

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the Feast, *Yeshua* stood up and cried out loudly, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture says, 'out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" †³⁹ Now He said this about the *Ruach*, whom those who trusted in Him were going to receive; for the *Ruach* ‡ was not yet given, since *Yeshua* was not yet glorified.

⁴⁰ When they heard these words, some of the crowd said, "This man really is the Prophet." ⁴¹ Others were saying, "This is the Messiah." Still others were saying, "The Messiah doesn't come from the Galilee, does He? ⁴² Didn't the Scripture say that the Messiah comes from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, David's town?" †⁴³ So a division arose in the crowd because of *Yeshua*. ⁴⁴ Some wanted to capture Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

Religious Adversaries

⁴⁵ Then the guards returned to the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring Him?"

⁴⁶ "Never has anyone spoken like this man," the guards answered.

⁴⁷ The Pharisees responded, "You haven't been led astray also, have you? ⁴⁸ Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed in Him? ⁴⁹ No, but this mob that doesn't know the *Torah* —they are cursed!"

⁵⁰ Nicodemus, the one who had come to *Yeshua* before and was one of them, said to them, ⁵¹ "Our *Torah* doesn't judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he's doing, does it?"

⁵² They answered him, "You aren't from the Galilee too, are you? Search, and see that no prophet comes out of the Galilee!" ‡

⁵³ Then everyone went to his own house.

Mercy for a Sinful Woman

8 But *Yeshua* went to the Mount of Olives. ² At dawn, He came again into the Temple. All the people were coming to Him, and He sat down and began to teach them.

³ The *Torah* scholars and Pharisees bring in a woman who had been caught in adultery. After putting her in the middle, ⁴ they say to *Yeshua*, "Teacher, this woman

†† cf. Isa. 44:3; 55:1; 58:11; Ezek. 47; Zech. 14:8. ‡ Some mss. read Holy Spirit *Ruach ha-Kodesh* †† cf. Mic. 5:1(2).

‡‡ The earliest manuscripts do not include John 7:53-8:11. Others locate the passage after 7:36 or after 21:25.

has been caught in the act of committing adultery. ⁵ In the *Torah*, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do You say?" ⁶ Now they were saying this to trap Him, so that they would have grounds to accuse Him.

But *Yeshua* knelt down and started writing in the dirt with His finger. ⁷ When they kept asking Him, He stood up and said, "The sinless one among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸ Then He knelt down again and continued writing on the ground.

⁹ Now when they heard, they began to leave, one by one, the oldest ones first, until *Yeshua* was left alone with the woman in the middle. ¹⁰ Straightening up, *Yeshua* said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"

¹¹ "No one, Sir," she said.

"Then neither do I condemn you," *Yeshua* said. "Go, and sin no more."

The Light of the World

¹² *Yeshua* spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows Me will no longer walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

¹³ Then the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself, so Your testimony is not valid."

¹⁴ *Yeshua* answered them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is valid. For I know where I came from and where I am going. But you don't know where I come from or where I am going. ¹⁵ You judge according to the flesh, but I do not judge anyone. ¹⁶ Yet even if I do judge, My judgment is true, because it is not I alone but I with the Father who sent Me. ¹⁷ Even in your *Torah* it is written that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸ I am one witness for Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness for Me."

¹⁹ Then they said to Him, "Where is your Father?"

Yeshua answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you knew Me, you would also know My Father." ²⁰ He spoke these words in the treasury while teaching in the Temple, but no one arrested Him because His hour had not yet come.

²¹ Then again *Yeshua* spoke to them, "I am going away. You will look for Me and die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."

²² "He won't kill Himself, will He?" the Judeans asked. "Is that why He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?"

²³ *Yeshua* said, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

²⁴ Therefore I told you that you will die in your sins. If you don't believe that I am, you will die in your sins."

²⁵ So they asked Him, "Who are you?"

Yeshua replied, "What have I been telling you from the beginning? ²⁶ I have much to say and judge about you. But the One who sent Me is true, and I tell the world what I heard from Him." ²⁷ They didn't understand that He was talking to them about the Father.

† cf. Deut. 17:6; 19:15.

²⁸ So *Yeshua* said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am. I do nothing by Myself, but speak just what the Father has taught Me. ²⁹ The One who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to Him."

³⁰ As He was speaking these things, many people put their trust in Him.

³¹ Then *Yeshua* said to the Judeans who had trusted Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly My disciples. ³² You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!"

³³ They answered Him, "We are Abraham's children and have never been slaves to anyone! How can you say, 'You will become free'?"

³⁴ *Yeshua* answered them, "Amen, amen I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ Now the slave does not remain in the household forever; the son abides forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed! ³⁷ I know you are Abraham's children; yet you are trying to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. ³⁸ I tell of what I have seen with the Father; so also you do what you heard from the Father."

††

³⁹ "Abraham is our father," they replied to Him.

Yeshua said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham. ⁴⁰ But now you are seeking to kill Me—a Man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. This Abraham did not do! ⁴¹ You are doing the deeds of your father."

They said to Him, "We were not born as illegitimate children—we have one Father, God Himself!"

⁴² *Yeshua* said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for from God I came and now I am here. For I have not come on My own, but He sent Me. ⁴³ Why don't you understand My speech? Because you're not able to hear My word! ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks lies he is just being himself—for he is a liar and the father of lies.

⁴⁵ "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶ Which one of you convicts Me of sinning? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe Me? ⁴⁷ He who belongs to God hears the words of God. The reason you don't hear † is because you do not belong to God."

⁴⁸ The Judean leaders responded, "Aren't we right to say you are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

⁴⁹ *Yeshua* answered, "I do not have a demon! I honor My Father, yet you dishonor Me. ⁵⁰ But I do not seek My own glory; there is One who is seeking and judging. ⁵¹ Amen, amen I tell you, if anyone keeps My word, he will never see death."

⁵² "Now we know You have a demon!" the Judean leaders said to Him. "Abraham and the prophets died. Yet You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never

†† Some mss. say My Father... your father † Deut. 6:4; Exod. 24:7.

taste death.’⁵³ You are not greater than our father Abraham who died, are You? The prophets also died! Who do You make Yourself out to be?”

⁵⁴ *Yeshua* answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father who gives Me glory—the One of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’^{†55} Yet you do not know Him, but I know Him. If I say I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you. Yet I do know Him and keep His Word.⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was thrilled.”

⁵⁷ Then the Judeans said to Him, “You’re not even 50 years old and you’ve seen Abraham?”^{††}

⁵⁸ *Yeshua* answered, “Amen, amen I tell you, before Abraham was, I am!”

⁵⁹ Then they picked up stones to throw at Him, but *Yeshua* hid Himself and went out from the Temple.[‡]

Bringing Light to the Blind

9 As *Yeshua* was passing by, He saw a man who had been blind since birth.² His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?”

³ *Yeshua* answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned. This happened so that the works of God might be brought to light in him.⁴ We must do the work of the One who sent Me, so long as it is day! Night is coming when no one can work.⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

⁶ Having said these things, He spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud on the blind man’s eyes.⁷ He told him, “Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam” (which is translated Sent). So he went away, washed, and came back seeing.

⁸ Therefore his neighbors and those who had seen him as a beggar kept saying, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?”

⁹ “This is the one!” some said.

“No, but it looks like him,” said others.

But the man himself kept saying, “I am!”

¹⁰ So they asked him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”

¹¹ He answered, “The Man who is called *Yeshua* made mud, rubbed it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went away and washed, and then I received my sight!”

¹² “Where is He?” they asked him.

“I don’t know,” he said.

¹³ They bring to the Pharisees the man who once was blind.¹⁴ Now the day was *Shabbat* when *Yeshua* made the mud and opened the man’s eyes.¹⁵ So again the Pharisees were asking him how he received his sight. He responded, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see!”

¹⁶ So some of the Pharisees began saying, “This man isn’t from God, because He doesn’t keep *Shabbat*!”

† Some mss. say your God †† Some mss. say has Abraham seen You? ‡ Some mss. add passing through their midst, he went away in this manner

But others were saying, “How can a sinner perform such signs?” So there was a split among them.

¹⁷ Again they say to the blind man, “What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?”

And he said, “He’s a prophet.”

¹⁸ So the Judean leaders didn’t believe that he had been blind and received his sight until they called his parents.¹⁹ They questioned them, “Is this your son, whom you say was born blind? Then how does he see now?”

²⁰ Then his parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.²¹ We don’t know how he now sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him—he’s old enough. He will speak for himself.”²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Judean leaders. For the Judean leaders had already agreed that anyone who professed *Yeshua* to be Messiah would be thrown out of the synagogue.

²³ That’s why his parents said, “He’s old enough—ask him.”

²⁴ So a second time they called the man who had been blind and said, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner!”

²⁵ The man replied, “I don’t know whether He’s a sinner. One thing I do know is that I was blind, but now I see!”

²⁶ So they asked him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

²⁷ “I told you already and you didn’t listen!” the man responded. “What, do you want to hear it again? You don’t want to become His disciples too, do you?”

²⁸ They railed at him and said, “You’re a disciple of that One, but we’re disciples of Moses!²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this fellow, we don’t know where He is from.”

³⁰ The man replied to them, “That’s amazing! You don’t know where He is from, yet He opened my eyes!

³¹ We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners; but if anyone fears Him and does His will, He hears this one.

³² Since the beginning of the world, no one has ever heard that anyone has opened the eyes of a man born blind.³³ If this man were not from God, He couldn’t do anything.”

³⁴ They replied to him, “You were born completely in sin, and you’re teaching us?” And they threw him out.

Is Seeing Believing?

³⁵ *Yeshua* heard that they had thrown him out. Finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”^{††}

³⁶ The man answered, “Who is He, Sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in Him!”

³⁷ *Yeshua* said, “You have seen Him—He is the One speaking with you.”

³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

³⁹ *Yeshua* said, “For judgment I came into this world, so that those who don’t see may see, and the ones who do see may become blind.”

†† Some mss. say the Son of God

⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard Him say this and asked, "We're not blind too, are we?"

⁴¹ *Yeshua* said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin. But now you say, 'We see.' So your sin remains."

The Faithful Hear the Shepherd's Voice

10 "Amen, amen I tell you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice. The shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

⁴ "When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them; and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶ *Yeshua* told them this parable, but they did not understand what He was telling them.

⁷ So *Yeshua* said again, "Amen, amen I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All those who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate! [†] If anyone comes in through Me, he will be saved. He will come and go and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal, slaughter, and destroy. I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly!

¹¹ "I am the Good Shepherd. ^{††} The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. ¹² The hired worker is not the shepherd, and the sheep are not his own. He sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and flees. Then the wolf snatches and scatters the sheep. ¹³ The man is only a hired hand and does not care about the sheep.

¹⁴ "I am the Good Shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father. And I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not from this fold; those also I must lead, and they will listen to My voice. So there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

¹⁷ "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life, so that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it up again. This command I received from My Father."

¹⁹ Again a division arose among the Judeans because of these words. ²⁰ Many of them were saying, "He has a demon. He's insane! Why listen to Him?" ²¹ Others said, "These are not the sayings of someone who is plagued by a demon. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can it?"

Some Despise the Light and Harden

²² Then came *Hanukkah*; [‡] it was winter in Jerusalem. ²³ *Yeshua* was walking in the Temple around Solomon's Colonnade. ²⁴ Then the Judean leaders surrounded Him, saying, "How long will You hold us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us outright!"

²⁵ *Yeshua* answered them, "I told you, but you don't believe! The works I do in My Father's name testify concerning Me. ²⁶ But you don't believe, because you are not My sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice. I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life! They will never perish, 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 is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

³¹ Again the Judean leaders picked up stones to stone Him. ³² *Yeshua* answered them, "I've shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these are you going to stone Me?"

³³ The Judean leaders answered, "We aren't stoning you for a good work, but for blasphemy. Though You are a man, You make Yourself God!"

³⁴ *Yeshua* answered them, "Isn't it written in your Writings, ^{††} 'I have 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 of Him, the One the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You speak blasphemy,' because I said, 'I am *Ben-Elohim*'?"

³⁷ "If I don't do the works of My Father, don't believe Me! ³⁸ But if I do, even if you don't trust Me, trust the deeds. Then you may come to know and continue to understand that the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father." ³⁹ Therefore they tried to capture Him again, but He escaped from their hand.

⁴⁰ Again He went back across the Jordan to the place where John first started immersing, and He stayed there. ⁴¹ Many people came to Him and were saying, "John performed no sign, but all John said about this man was true." ⁴² And many trusted in Him there.

Lazarus Is Dead

11 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Miriam and her sister Martha. ² This was the same Miriam who anointed the Master with perfume and wiped His feet with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. ³ So the sisters sent a word to *Yeshua*, saying, "Master, the one you love is sick!"

⁴ When *Yeshua* heard this, He said, "This sickness will not end in death. It is for God's glory, so that *Ben-Elohim* may be glorified through it." ⁵ Now *Yeshua* loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ However, when

† Or door †† cf. Gen. 48:15; Ps. 23; Ezek. 37:24.

‡ Lit. Rededication †† Lit. Law

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He heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed where He was for two more days.

⁷ Then after this, He said to His disciples, "Let's go up to Judea again."

⁸ "Rabbi," the disciples say to Him, "just now the Judean leaders were trying to stone You! And You're going back there again?"

⁹ *Yeshua* answered, "Aren't there twelve hours in the day? If a man walks in the day, he doesn't stumble, because he sees the light of the world. ¹⁰ But if a man should walk around at night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

¹¹ After He said this, He tells them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I'm going there to wake him up."

¹² So the disciples said to Him, "Master, if he has fallen asleep, he will get better." ¹³ Now *Yeshua* had spoken about his death, but they thought He was talking about ordinary sleep.

¹⁴ Then *Yeshua* told them clearly, "Lazarus is dead! ¹⁵ I'm glad for your sake I wasn't there, so that you may believe. Anyway, let's go to him!"

¹⁶ Then Thomas called the Twin † said to the other disciples, "Let's go too, so that we may die with Him!"

Comforting the Mourners

¹⁷ So when *Yeshua* arrived, He discovered that Lazarus had been in the tomb already for four days.

¹⁸ Bethany was less than two miles †† from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many of the Judeans had come to Martha and Miriam to console them about their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that *Yeshua* was coming, she went out to meet Him; but Miriam sat in the house.

²¹ Martha said to *Yeshua*, "Master, if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died! ²² But I know, even now, that whatever You may ask of God, He will give You."

²³ *Yeshua* said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

²⁴ Martha said to Him, "I know, he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

²⁵ *Yeshua* said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life! Whoever believes in Me, even if he dies, shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

²⁷ She says to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, *Ben-Elohim* who has come into the world." ²⁸ After she said this, she left and secretly told her sister Miriam, "The Teacher is here, and He's calling for you." ²⁹ As soon as Miriam heard, she quickly got up and was coming to Him. ³⁰ Now *Yeshua* had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met Him. ³¹ The Judeans, who were with Miriam in the house and comforting her, seeing how quickly she got up and went out, followed her. They thought she was going to the tomb to weep there.

† Grk. *Didymus*

†† Lit. 15 stadia

³² So when Miriam came to where *Yeshua* was, she saw Him and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Master, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!"

³³ When *Yeshua* saw her weeping, and the Judeans who came with her weeping, He was deeply troubled in spirit and Himself agitated. ³⁴ "Where have you laid him?" He asked.

"Come and see, Master," they tell Him.

³⁵ *Yeshua* wept. ³⁶ So the Judeans said, "See how He loved him!"

³⁷ But some of them said, "Couldn't this One, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have also kept this man from dying?"

Yeshua's Word Raises the Dead

³⁸ So *Yeshua*, again deeply troubled within Himself, comes to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ *Yeshua* says, "Roll away the stone!"

Martha, the dead man's sister, said to Him, "Master, by this time he stinks! He's been dead for four days!"

⁴⁰ *Yeshua* says to her, "Didn't I tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

⁴¹ So they rolled away the stone. *Yeshua* lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴² I knew that You always hear Me; but because of this crowd standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

⁴³ And when He had said this, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ He who had been dead came out, wrapped in burial clothes binding his hands and feet, with a cloth over his face. And *Yeshua* tells them, "Cut him loose, and let him go!"

Better that One Man Die

⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Judeans, who had come to Miriam and had seen what *Yeshua* had done, put their trust in Him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what *Yeshua* had done.

⁴⁷ So the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we doing?" they asked. "This Man is performing many 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 holy place and our nation."

⁴⁹ But one of them, Caiaphas, who was *kohen gadol* that year, said to them, "You know nothing! ⁵⁰ You don't take into account that it is better for you that one man die for the people rather than for the whole nation to be destroyed."

⁵¹ Now he did not say this by himself; but as the *kohen gadol* that year, he prophesied that *Yeshua* would die for the nation. ⁵² And not for the nation only, but also so that He might gather together into one the scattered children of God. †

‡ cf. *Isa.* 53:8. †† cf. *Isa.* 11:10-11; 56:6-7; *Jer.* 3:17; *Mic.* 2:12-13.

⁵³ So from that day on, they plotted to kill Him.
⁵⁴ Therefore *Yeshua* no longer walked openly among the Judeans, but went from there to the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim. He stayed there with His disciples.

⁵⁵ Now the Jewish Passover was near; and many people went up out of the regions to Jerusalem before Passover, to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ So they were searching for *Yeshua*, saying to one another as they stood in the Temple, "What do you think? Won't He come to the feast at all?" ⁵⁷ Now the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it so that they might arrest Him.

Miriam Anoints the Messiah

12 Six days before Passover, *Yeshua* came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom *Yeshua* had raised from the dead. ² So they prepared a dinner there for *Yeshua*. Martha was serving, and Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. ³ Then Miriam took a pound [†] of very expensive oil of pure nard and anointed *Yeshua's* feet, and she wiped His feet dry with her hair. Now the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

⁴ But Judah from Kriot, one of His disciples, the one who was about to betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why wasn't this oil sold for three hundred denarii ^{††} and the money given to the poor?" ⁶ Now he said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief. Since he had the moneybox, he used to steal from what was put in it.

⁷ Therefore *Yeshua* said, "Leave her alone! She set it aside for the day of My burial. ⁸ You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have Me."

⁹ Now a large crowd of Judeans knew He was there and came, not only for *Yeshua* but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the ruling *kohanim* made plans to kill Lazarus also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jewish people were going and putting their trust in *Yeshua*.

Israel's King Has Come

¹² The next day, the huge crowd that had come up for the feast heard that *Yeshua* was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting,

" *Hoshia-na! Baruch ha-Ba b'Shem ADONAI!*

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the *LORD!* [‡]
 The King of Israel!"

¹⁴ Finding a young donkey, *Yeshua* sat on it, as it is written,

¹⁵ "Fear not, Daughter of Zion!

Look! Your King is coming,
 sitting on a donkey's colt." ^{‡‡}

[†] a Roman pound, about 12 ounces. ^{††} One denarius was the daily wage for a laborer. [‡] Ps. 118:25a, 26a. ^{‡‡} Zech. 9:9.

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first. But when *Yeshua* was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that the crowd had done these things for Him.

¹⁷ So the crowd, which had been with *Yeshua* when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, kept on telling everyone about it. ¹⁸ It was also for this reason that the crowd came out to meet Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign. ¹⁹ So the Pharisees said to each other, "You see that you can't do anything. Look, the whole world has taken off after Him!"

Fallen Seed Produces a Harvest

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast. ²¹ These came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in the Galilee. "Sir," they said, "we want to see *Yeshua*." ²² Philip comes and tells Andrew; Andrew and Philip come and tell *Yeshua*.

²³ *Yeshua* answers them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified! ²⁴ Amen, amen I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. ²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it forever. ²⁶ If any man serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there also will My servant be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷ "Now My soul is troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour?' But it was for this reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify Your name!"

Then a voice came out of heaven, "I have glorified it, and again I will glorify it!"

²⁹ Therefore the crowd that was standing there and heard it was saying that it had thundered. Others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him."

³⁰ *Yeshua* responded, "This voice hasn't come for My sake, but for yours. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world! Now the prince of this world will be driven out! ³² And as I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to Myself." ³³ He said this to show the kind of death He was about to die.

³⁴ The crowd answered Him, "We've heard from Scripture ^{‡‡} that the Messiah remains forever. How can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

Choose Either the Light or the Darkness

³⁵ Therefore *Yeshua* said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness will not overtake you. The one who walks in darkness doesn't know where he is going.

³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light so that

^{‡‡} Lit. Law

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you may become sons of light." *Yeshua* spoke these things, then left and hid Himself from them.

³⁷ But even though He had performed so many signs before them, they weren't trusting in Him. ³⁸ This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet, who said, "ADONAI, who has believed our report?

To whom has the arm of ADONAI been revealed?" †

³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah also said,

⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so they might not see with their eyes nor understand with their hearts and turn back, and I would heal them." ††

⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

⁴² Nevertheless many, even among the leaders, put their trust in Him. But because of the Pharisees, they were not confessing *Yeshua*, ‡ so they would not be thrown out of the synagogue; ††⁴³ for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

⁴⁴ *Yeshua* cried out, "Whoever puts trust in Me believes not in Me but in the One who sent Me! ⁴⁵ And whoever beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me.

⁴⁶ As light I have come into the world, so that everyone who trusts in Me should not remain in darkness.

⁴⁷ "If anyone hears My words but doesn't keep them, I do not judge him; for I came to save the world, not to judge the world. ⁴⁸ The one who rejects Me and doesn't receive My words has a judge; the word I spoke will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ For I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has commanded Me what to say and speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that His commandment is life everlasting. Therefore what I say, I say just as the Father has told Me."

Modeling Servanthood

13 Now it was just before the feast of Passover. *Yeshua* knew that His hour had come to depart from this world to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them until the end. †

² While the *seder* meal was happening, the devil had already put in the heart of Judah from Kriot that he should hand over *Yeshua*. ³ *Yeshua* knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was returning to God. ⁴ So He gets up from the meal and lays aside His outer garment; and taking a towel, He wrapped it around His waist. ⁵ Then He pours water into a basin. He began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel wrapped around Him.

⁶ Then He comes to Simon Peter, who says to Him, "Master, are You going to wash my feet?"

⁷ *Yeshua* responded, "You don't know what I am doing now, but you will understand after these things."

† Isa. 53:1(LXX). †† cf. Isa. 6:10. ‡ cf. John 9:22. †† Lit. from the synagogue

‡‡ cf. John 19:30.

⁸ Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Yeshua answered him, "If I don't wash you, you have no part with Me."

⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, "Master, then not only my feet, but also my hands and my head!"

¹⁰ *Yeshua* said to him, "He who has bathed has no need to wash, except the feet; he is completely clean. And you all are clean, though not every one." ¹¹ He knew who was betraying Him; for this reason, He said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² So after He had washed their feet and put His robe back on and reclined again, He said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you? ¹³ You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Master'—and rightly you say, for I am. ¹⁴ So if I, your Master and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash each other's feet. ¹⁵ I have given you an example—you should do for each other what I have done for you.

¹⁶ "Amen, amen I tell you, a servant isn't greater than his master, and the one who is sent isn't greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them!"

Yeshua Reveals His Betrayer

¹⁸ "I am not speaking to all of you—I know whom I have chosen. But so the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.' ††¹⁹ From now on I am telling you, before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe that I am.

²⁰ Amen, amen I tell you, he who receives the one I send, receives Me; and he who receives Me, receives the One who sent Me."

²¹ After He said these things, *Yeshua* was agitated in spirit and testified, "Amen, amen I tell you, one of you will betray Me!"

²² The disciples began looking at each other, perplexed—who was He talking about? ²³ One of His disciples, whom *Yeshua* loved, was reclining at His side.

²⁴ Simon Peter nods to him and says, "Ask Him—who is He talking about?"

²⁵ Then he who leaned on *Yeshua's* chest says to Him, "Master, who is it?"

²⁶ *Yeshua* answers, "It's the one I will give this bit of *matzah* to, after I dip it." After dipping the *matzah*, ††† He takes it and gives it to Judah from Kriot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ And with that bit, *satan* entered into him. Then *Yeshua* tells him, "What you're about to do, do quickly!"

²⁸ But no one reclining at the table knew why *Yeshua* said this to him. ²⁹ Since Judah had the moneybox, some thought *Yeshua* was telling him, "Buy what we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ So after Judah received the bit of *matzah*, he left immediately. Now it was night.

††† cf. Ps. 41:10(9). ††† Lit. bit, small piece

Leaving a Legacy of Love

³¹ Then when Judah had gone out, *Yeshua* said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him! ³² If God is glorified in Him, [†] God will glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will search for Me; and just as I told the Judean leaders, so I say to you now, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

³⁴ "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also you must love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

³⁶ "Master, where are You going?" Simon Peter said to Him.

Yeshua answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow Me later."

³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Master, why can't I follow You now? I'll lay down my life for You!"

³⁸ *Yeshua* answers, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Amen, amen I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times!"

The Way to the Father's House

14 "Do not let your heart be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. ² In My Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to Myself, so that where I am you may also be. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going." ^{††}

⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Master, we don't know where You are going. How can we know the way?"

⁶ *Yeshua* said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life! No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ If you have come to know Me, you will know My Father also. From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him."

⁸ Philip said to Him, "Master, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

⁹ *Yeshua* said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time, and you haven't come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on My own; but the Father dwelling in Me does His works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me—or at least believe because of the works themselves.

¹² "Amen, amen I tell you, he who puts his trust in Me, the works that I do he will do; and greater than these he will do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask Me [‡] anything in My name, I will do it."

[†] Early mss. missing this first part. ^{††} Some mss. say Where I am going you know, and the way you know [‡] Some mss. omit Me

The Believer's Helper

¹⁵ "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. ¹⁶ I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper ^{††} so He may be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him. You know Him, because He abides with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not abandon you as orphans; ^{‡‡} I will come to you. ¹⁹ In a little while, the world will no longer behold Me, but you will behold Me. Because I live, you also will live!

²⁰ "In that day, you will know that I am in My Father, you are in Me, and I am in you. ²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and reveal Myself to him."

²² Judah (not the one from Kriot) said to Him, "Master, what has happened, that You are about to reveal Yourself to us and not the world?"

²³ *Yeshua* answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words. And the word you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. ²⁵ These things I have spoken to you while dwelling with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I said to you.

²⁷ " *Shalom* I leave you, My *shalom* I give to you; but not as the world gives! Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid. ²⁸ You've heard Me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe!

³⁰ "I will not talk with you much longer, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has nothing on Me. ³¹ But in order that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.

"Get up, let's go from here!"

Abiding in the Vine

15 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He trims so that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I will abide in you. The branch cannot itself produce fruit, unless it abides on the vine. Likewise, you cannot produce fruit unless you abide in Me.

⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for apart

^{††} *Intercessor, Advocate, Comforter Counselor Paraclete* ^{‡‡} cf. Exod. 22:21-23(22-24); Jer. 49:11.

from Me, you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away like a branch and is dried up. Such branches are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned.

⁷ "If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ In this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples.

⁹ "Just as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love! ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

¹¹ These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be full.

¹² "This is My commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this: that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do what I command you.

¹⁵ "I am no longer calling you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing. Now I have called you friends, because everything I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

¹⁶ "You did not choose Me, but I chose you. I selected you so that you would go and produce fruit, and your fruit would remain. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.

¹⁷ "These things I command you, so that you may love one another."

The World Hates God's Own

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But you are not of the world, since I have chosen you out of the world; therefore the world hates you.

²⁰ "Remember the word I spoke to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' ^{††} If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

²¹ "But all these things they will do to you for the sake of My name, because they do not know the One who 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 "He who hates Me also hates My Father. ²⁴ If I had not done works among them that no one else did, they would have no sin. But now they have seen and have hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵ So is fulfilled the word written in their Scripture, [‡] 'They hated Me for no reason.' ^{‡‡}

²⁶ "When the Helper comes—whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—He will testify about Me. ²⁷ And you also testify, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

† cf. Lev. 19:18. †† John 13:16. ‡ Lit. Torah the Law
‡‡ cf. Ps. 35:19; 69:5(4); (Hebrew *sinat chinam*)

16 "I have spoken these things to you so that you may be kept from stumbling. ² They will throw you out of the synagogues. Yes, an hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. ³ They will do these things because they have never known the Father or Me. ⁴ But I have spoken these things to you so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. I did not tell you these things from the beginning, because I was with you."

The *Ruach* Reveals Truth

⁵ "But now I am going to the One who sent Me, and not one of you is asking Me, 'Where are you going?' ⁶ Because I have spoken these things to you, grief has filled your heart. ⁷ But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away! For if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

⁸ "When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: ⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see Me; ¹¹ and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

¹² "I still have much more to tell you, but you cannot handle it just now. ¹³ But when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on His own; but whatever He hears, He will tell you. And He will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, because He will take from what is Mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ Everything that the Father has is Mine. For this reason I said the *Ruach* will take from what is Mine and declare it to you."

Death and Resurrection Foretold

¹⁶ "A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again in a little while, you will see Me."

¹⁷ Then some of His disciples said to one another, "What does He mean by telling us, 'A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again in a little while, you will see Me'? And, 'Because I am going to the Father?'"

¹⁸ They kept on saying, "What's this He's saying, 'A little while'? We don't know what He's talking about!"

¹⁹ *Yeshua* knew that they wanted to question Him, so He said to them, "Are you asking each other about this, that I said, 'A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again in a little while, you will see Me'? ²⁰ Amen, amen I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will celebrate. You will be filled with sorrow, but your sorrow will turn to joy!

²¹ "When a woman is in labor, she has pain because her hour has come. ^{‡‡} But when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, because of the joy that a human being has been born into the

‡‡ cf. Isa. 26:17; Mic. 4:9-10.

world. ²² So also you have sorrow now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you!

²³ "In that day, you will ask Me nothing. Amen, amen I tell you, whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you. ²⁴ Up to now, you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be full.

²⁵ "These things I have spoken to you in metaphors. An hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in metaphors, but will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day, you will ask in My name—and I'm not telling you that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from God. ²⁸ I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again I am leaving the world and going to the Father."

²⁹ His disciples say, "See, now You're speaking plainly and not in metaphors. ³⁰ Now we know that You know everything and have no need to be asked anything. By this we believe that You came forth from God."

³¹ *Yeshua* answered them, "Do you now believe? ³² Look, the hour is coming—indeed has come—when you will be scattered, each to his own, and you will abandon Me. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³ These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have *shalom*. In the world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world!"

The Son Glorifies the Father

17 *Yeshua* spoke these things; then, lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, so the Son may glorify You. ² Even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, so may He give eternal life to all those You have given Him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and *Yeshua* the Messiah, the One You sent. ⁴ I glorified You on earth by finishing the work that You have given Me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world came to be."

Yeshua Prays for His Disciples

⁶ "I have made Your name known to the men of this world that You gave Me. They were Yours; You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. ⁷ Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You. ⁸ The words, which You gave Me, I have given to them. They received them and truly understood that I came from You, and they believed that You sent Me. ⁹ I ask on their behalf. Not on behalf of the world do I ask, but on behalf of those You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ All Mine are Yours, and 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 that You have given Me, so that they may be one just as We are. ¹² While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name that You have given Me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the son of destruction, [†] so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³ "But now I am coming to You. I say these words while I am still in the world, so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I am not asking that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

¹⁷ "Make them holy in the truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ Just as You sent Me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I make Myself holy, so that they also may be made holy in truth."

Interceding for All Believers

²⁰ "I pray not on behalf of these only, but also for those who believe in Me through their message, ²¹ that they all may be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, so also may they be one in Us, so the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² The glory that You have given to Me I have given to them, that they may be one just as We are one— ²³ I in them and You in Me—that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them as You loved Me.

²⁴ "Father, I also want those You have given Me to be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory—the glory You gave Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ Righteous Father, the world did not know You, but I knew You; and these knew that You sent Me. ²⁶ I made your Name known to them, and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

Betrayed and Arrested

18 When *Yeshua* had said these things, He went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, ^{††} where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ² Now Judah, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because *Yeshua* had often met there with His disciples. ³ So Judah, having taken a band of soldiers and some officers from the ruling *kohanim* and Pharisees, comes there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Then *Yeshua*, knowing all the things coming upon Him, went forward. He said to them, "Who are you looking for?"

⁵ " *Yeshua ha-Natzrati*," they answered Him. *Yeshua* tells them, "I am." Now Judah, the one betraying Him, was also standing with them. ⁶ So when

[†] cf. Ps. 41:10(9). ^{††} cf. 2 Sam. 15:23.

Yeshua said to them, "I am," they drew back and fell to the ground.

⁷ So again He asked them, "Who are you looking for?"

And they said, "*Yeshua ha-Natzrati*."

⁸ *Yeshua* answered, "I told you, I am! If you're looking for Me, let these men go their way."⁹ This was so the word would be fulfilled that He spoke: "I did not lose one of those You have given Me."[†]

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the *kohen gadol*, and cut off his right ear. Now the servant's name was Malchus.¹¹ So *Yeshua* said to Peter, "Put the sword into the sheath! The cup the Father has given Me—shall I never drink it?"

Interrogated and Tried

¹² Then the band of soldiers, with the captain and the officers of the Judeans, seized *Yeshua* and tied Him up.¹³ They led Him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the *kohen gadol* that year.¹⁴ Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Judean leaders that it was better for one man to die on behalf of the people.

¹⁵ Simon Peter was following *Yeshua* with another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the *kohen gadol*, so he went with *Yeshua* into the court of the *kohen gadol*.¹⁶ But Peter was left standing outside by the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the *kohen gadol*, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper and brought Peter in.

¹⁷ The maidservant at the door says to Peter, "Aren't you one of this Man's disciples too?"

He says, "No, I'm not."¹⁸ The servants and officers were standing around a fire they had made, because it was cold and they were warming themselves. And Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself.

¹⁹ The *kohen gadol* then questioned *Yeshua* about His disciples and His teaching.²⁰ "I have spoken openly to the world," *Yeshua* answered him. "I always taught in the synagogues and the Temple, where all the Jewish people come together. I spoke nothing in secret.²¹ Why question Me? Ask those who have heard what I spoke to them. Look, they know what I said."

²² When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby gave *Yeshua* a slap, saying, "Is that the way you answer the *kohen gadol*?"

²³ *Yeshua* answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, give evidence of the wrong; but if rightly, why hit Me?"

²⁴ Then Annas sent Him, still tied up, to Caiaphas, the *kohen gadol*.

²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing outside and warming himself. So they said to him, "Aren't you one of His disciples too?"

He denied it and said, "No, I'm not!"

²⁶ One of the servants of the *kohen gadol*, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Didn't I see you in the garden with Him?"

²⁷ Again Peter denied it, and immediately a rooster crowed.

²⁸ Then they led *Yeshua* from Caiaphas to the Praetorium.^{††} It was early. They themselves did not enter the Praetorium, so they would not become unclean but might eat the Passover.²⁹ Therefore Pilate came out to them and said, "What charge do you bring against this man?"

³⁰ They answered, "If He weren't an evildoer, we wouldn't have handed Him over to you."

³¹ Then Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him by your *Torah*!"

The Judean leaders responded, "We are not authorized to put anyone to death."³² This happened so that the word *Yeshua* spoke would be fulfilled, signifying what kind of death He was about to die.

³³ So Pilate went back into the Praetorium, called for *Yeshua*, and asked Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

³⁴ "Are you saying this on your own," *Yeshua* answered, "or did others tell you about Me?"

³⁵ Pilate answered, "I'm not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and ruling *kohanim* handed You over to me! What have You done?"

³⁶ *Yeshua* answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I wouldn't be handed over to the Judean leaders. But as it is, My kingdom is not from here."

³⁷ So Pilate said to Him, "Are you a king, then?"

Yeshua answered, "You say that I am a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, so that I might testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

³⁸ Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" After he said this, he went out again to the Judean leaders. He said to them, "I find no case against Him.³⁹ But it's your custom that I release someone for you at Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

⁴⁰ They shouted back, "Not this One, but *Bar-Abba*!" Now *Bar-Abba*[‡] was a revolutionary.

Bound and Sentenced

¹⁹ Then Pilate took *Yeshua* and had Him scourged.² The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and dressed Him in a purple robe.³ They kept coming up to Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and slapping Him over and over.

⁴ Pilate came out again. He said to them, "Look, I'm bringing Him out to you, to let you know that I find no case against Him."⁵ So *Yeshua* came out, wearing the

[†] Similar to John 6:39; 17:12.

^{††} The Roman governor's Jerusalem residence; cf. John 19:9.

[‡] Also Barabbas, Son of the Father

crown of thorns and the purple robe. "Behold, the Man!" Pilate said to them.

⁶ When the ruling *kohanim* and officers saw Him, they yelled out, "Execute Him! Execute Him!" †

Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and execute Him! For I don't find a case against Him."

⁷ The Judean leaders answered him, "We have a law, †† and according to the *Torah* He must die, because He claimed to be *Ben-Elohim*!"

⁸ When Pilate heard this word, he became even more fearful. ⁹ He went into the Praetorium again and said to *Yeshua*, "Where are You from?" But *Yeshua* gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to Him, "You aren't speaking to me? Don't You know that I have the authority to release You, and I have the authority to crucify You?"

¹¹ *Yeshua* answered, "You would have no authority over Me if it hadn't been given to you from above. For this reason, the one who handed Me over to you has the greater sin."

¹² Pilate tried to let Him go after this; but the Judean leaders cried out, saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar!"

¹³ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought *Yeshua* out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place called the Stone Pavement (but in Aramaic, ‡ *Gab-batha*). ¹⁴ It was the Day of Preparation for Passover, about the sixth hour. †† And Pilate said to the Judean leaders, "Behold, your king!"

¹⁵ They shouted back, "Take Him away! Take Him away! Execute Him!"

Pilate said to them, "Should I execute your king?"

The ruling *kohanim* answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"

¹⁶ Finally, Pilate handed *Yeshua* over to be crucified.

A Sacrificial Death

¹⁷ Then they took *Yeshua*. He went out, carrying His own crossbar, to the Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic †† is called *Golgotha*. ¹⁸ There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on each side and *Yeshua* in between.

¹⁹ Pilate also wrote a sign and put it on the execution stake. It was written, " *YESHUA HA-NATZRATI, THE KING OF THE JEWS.*" ²⁰ Many Judeans read this sign, because the place where *Yeshua* was executed was near the city; it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

²¹ The ruling *kohanim* of the Judeans were saying to Pilate, "Don't write, 'The King of the Jews,' but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"

²² "What I have written, I have written," Pilate answered.

²³ So the soldiers, when they executed *Yeshua*, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part for each soldier. They took His tunic also, but it was seamless, woven top to bottom in one piece. ²⁴ So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be." This was so the Scripture would be fulfilled,

"They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." †††
So the soldiers did these things.

²⁵ Standing near the execution stake of *Yeshua* were His mother, His mother's sister, Miriam the wife of Clopas, and Miriam from Magdala. ²⁶ *Yeshua* saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby. He tells His mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷ Then He tells the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" From that very hour, the disciple took her into his own home.

²⁸ After this, when *Yeshua* knew that all things were now completed, to fulfill the Scripture He said, "I am thirsty." †††²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was sitting there, so they put a sponge soaked with the sour wine on a hyssop branch and brought it to His mouth. ³⁰ When *Yeshua* tasted the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

³¹ It was the Day of Preparation, and the next day was a festival *Shabbat*. So that the bodies should not remain on the execution stake during *Shabbat*, the Judean leaders asked Pilate to have the legs broken and to have the bodies taken away.

³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then the other who had been executed with *Yeshua*. ³³ Now when they came to *Yeshua* and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ He who has seen it has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. ³⁶ These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, "Not a bone of His shall be broken." ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced." ††

Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb

³⁸ After these things, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take *Yeshua's* body away. Joseph was a disciple of *Yeshua*, but secretly for fear of the Judean leaders. Pilate gave permission, so Joseph came and took the body away. ³⁹ Nicodemus, who had first visited *Yeshua* at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. †††⁴⁰ Then they took the body of *Yeshua* and wrapped it in linen with the spices, as is the Jewish burial custom.

⁴¹ Now in the place where He was executed, there was a garden. In the garden was a new tomb †† where

† Lit. crucify crucified

†† cf. Lev. 24:16. ‡ Lit. in Hebrew

†† i.e. Noon. †† Lit. in Hebrew

††† Ps. 22:19(18). ††† cf. Ps. 69:21. § cf. Exod. 12:46; Num. 9:12; Ps. 34:21(20). †† Zech. 12:10. ††† Roman pound=12 oz; 100 Roman pounds=75 pounds. §† cf. Isa. 53:9.

no one had yet been buried. ⁴² Because it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid *Yeshua* there.

The Lamb of God is Resurrected

20 Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it is still dark, Miriam from Magdala comes to the tomb. She sees that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. ² So she comes running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one *Yeshua* loved. She tells them, "They've taken the Master out of the tomb, and we don't know where they've put Him!"

³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out, going to the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and arrived at the tomb first. ⁵ Leaning in, he sees the linen strips lying there. But he didn't go in.

⁶ Then Simon Peter comes following him, and he entered the tomb. He looks upon the linen strips lying there, ⁷ and the face cloth that had been on His head. It was not lying with the linen strips, but was rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ So then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also entered. He saw and believed. ⁹ For they did not yet understand from Scripture that *Yeshua* must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ So the disciples went back to their own homes.

Yeshua Appears to Miriam

¹¹ But Miriam stood outside the tomb weeping. As she was weeping, she bent down to look into the tomb. ¹² She sees two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where *Yeshua's* body had been lying.

¹³ "Woman, why are you crying?" they say to her.

She says to them, "Because they took away my Master, and I don't know where they've put Him." ¹⁴ After she said these things, she turned around. And she sees *Yeshua* standing there. Yet she didn't know that it was *Yeshua*.

¹⁵ *Yeshua* says to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?"

Thinking He's the gardener, she says to Him, "Sir, if You've carried Him away, tell me where You've put Him, and I will take Him away."

¹⁶ *Yeshua* says to her, "Miriam!"

Turning around, she says to Him in Aramaic, ^{††} "*Rabboni!*" (which means Teacher).

¹⁷ *Yeshua* says to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet gone up to the Father. Go to My brothers and tell them, 'I am going up to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'"

¹⁸ Miriam from Magdala comes, announcing to the disciples, "I've seen the Lord," and what He had said to her.

Yeshua Appears to the Disciples

¹⁹ It was evening on that day, the first of the week. When the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Judean leaders, *Yeshua* came and stood in their midst! And He said to them, "*Shalom aleichem!*" ²⁰ After He said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ *Yeshua* said to them again, "*Shalom aleichem!* As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

²² And after He said this, He breathed on them. And He said to them, "Receive the *Ruach ha-Kodesh!* ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; but if you hold back, they are held back."

²⁴ One of the Twelve, Thomas called the Twin, was not with them when *Yeshua* came. ²⁵ The other disciples were saying to him, "We've seen the Lord!"

But he replied to them, "Unless I see the nail prints in His hands, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand in His side, I will never believe!"

²⁶ Eight days later the disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them. *Yeshua* comes, despite the locked doors. He stood in their midst and said, "*Shalom aleichem!*" ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at My hands. Reach out your hand and put it into My side. Stop doubting and believe!"

²⁸ Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹ *Yeshua* said to Him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed? Blessed are the ones who have not seen and yet have believed!"

The Reason for Signs and Wonders

³⁰ *Yeshua* performed many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹ But these things have been written so that you may believe that *Yeshua* is *Mashiach Ben-Elohim*, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

Fish for Breakfast with the Risen One

21 After these things, *Yeshua* revealed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Now here is how He appeared. ² Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in the Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two of the other disciples were together.

³ Simon Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing."

"We're coming with you too," they said. They went out and got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

⁴ At dawn, *Yeshua* stood on the beach; but the disciples didn't know that it was *Yeshua*. ⁵ So *Yeshua* said to them, "Boys, you don't happen to have any fish, do you?"

"No," they answered Him.

† cf. Ps. 16:10. †† Lit. in Hebrew

⁶ He said to them, "Throw the net off the right side of the boat, and you'll find some." So they threw the net, and they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

⁷ Therefore, the disciple whom *Yeshua* loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied his outer garment around himself—for he was stripped down for work—and threw himself into the sea. ⁸ But the other disciples came in the boat from about two hundred cubits † offshore, dragging the net full of fish.

⁹ So when they got out onto the land, they saw a charcoal fire with fish placed on it, and bread. ¹⁰ *Yeshua* said to them, "Bring some of the fish you've just caught." ¹¹ Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net to shore. There were 153 fish, many of them big; but the net was not broken. ¹² *Yeshua* said to them, "Come, have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing it was the Lord. ¹³ *Yeshua* comes and takes the bread and gives it to them, and likewise the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that *Yeshua* was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Love Restores Peter

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, *Yeshua* said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he said to Him, "You know that I love you."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs!"

¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

"Yes, Lord," he said, "You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Take care of My sheep!"

† One cubit is about 18 inches.

¹⁷ He said to him a third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

Peter was grieved because He said to him for a third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know everything! You know that I love You!"

Yeshua said to him, "Feed My sheep!" ††

¹⁸ "Amen, amen I tell you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." ¹⁹ Now this He said to indicate by what kind of death Peter was going to glorify God. And after this, *Yeshua* said to him, "Follow Me!"

²⁰ Peter, turning around, sees the disciple following. This was the one whom *Yeshua* loved, who also had reclined against *Yeshua's* chest at the *seder* meal and said, "Master, who is the one who is betraying You?"

²¹ Seeing him, Peter said to *Yeshua*, "Lord, what about him?"

²² *Yeshua* said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!" ²³ Therefore this saying went out among the brothers and sisters, that this disciple would not die. Yet *Yeshua* did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"

John's Witness

²⁴ This is the disciple who is an eyewitness of these things and wrote these things. We know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ There are also many other things that *Yeshua* did. If all of them were to be written one by one, I suppose that not even the world itself will have room for the books being written!

†† Some mss. add Simon, son of Jonah

Acts

Introduction

Acts is the second volume of Luke's historical account that began with his Gospel. It falls into two parts: chapters 1–12 focus on Peter in Jewish and Samaritan geographic regions, while chapters 13–28 are concerned with Paul in largely Gentile areas. Rather abruptly, Acts ends with Paul's house arrest in Rome, around 62 C.E.—and with no mention of the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., this book was likely written between those two events. Acts is above all about God's work through the , filling and empowering the emissaries and other Jews to spread the Good News. It has been observed that Acts pauses to summarize the growth and spread of God's Word five times (6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, and 19:20). Thus, Acts shows that 's statement in Acts 1:8 is being fulfilled—a fulfillment whose promise stretches back to Genesis 12:1-3.

Along the way, we see that the inclusion of Gentiles in God's plan—one of Luke's key themes—occurs amidst dissension, debate (including the issue of the place of the for Gentiles), and compromise. Yet through the riots and imprisonments, arguments and personality conflicts, Luke shows that the is at work. In fact, the is another key theme of Luke, as are the ideas that we are living in the "last days" and that salvation comes through forgiveness and the removal of sins.

In writing Acts, Luke may have wanted to help Jewish and Gentile believers reconcile. He may also be spreading the Good News to Romans (much of Acts consists of Paul's trials and defenses), as well as to Jews (to show that Paul was not opposed to Jewish compliance with the written). Luke is also concerned about helping both Gentile and Jewish believers work out the question of their identity in a pluralistic world and vis-à-vis the opposing claims of the Jewish leadership. All this makes Acts relevant for believers today. Luke's message to us is that despite competing religious voices and official opposition to from Jewish leadership, God will continue to fulfill His promised plan of salvation.

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 Paul Keeps Spreading the Good News

When Will *Yeshua* Restore the Kingdom?

¹ I wrote the first volume, Theophilus, about all that *Yeshua* began to do and teach—² up to the day He was taken up, after He had given orders by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* to the emissaries He had chosen.

³ To them He showed Himself to be alive after His suffering through many convincing proofs, appearing to them for 40 days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴ Now while staying with them, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father promised—which, He said, "You heard from Me. ⁵ For John immersed with water, but you will be immersed in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* not many days from now."

⁶ So when they gathered together, they asked Him, "Lord, are You restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?"

⁷ He said to them, "It is not your place to know the times or seasons which the Father has placed under His own control. ⁸ But you will receive power when the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and through all Judah, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

⁹ After saying all this—while they were watching—He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While they were staring into heaven as He went up, suddenly two men stood with them in white clothing. ¹¹ They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you keep standing here staring into heaven? This *Yeshua*, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven."

Appointing a New Emissary

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives † (which is near Jerusalem, a *Shabbat* day's journey ††). ¹³ When they had entered, they went up to the upper room where they were staying—Peter and John and Jacob and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; Jacob son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judah son of Jacob. ¹⁴ All these with one mind were continuing together in prayer—along with the women and Miriam, *Yeshua*'s mother, and His brothers.

¹⁵ In those days, Peter stood up among the brothers and sisters (the number of names all together was about 120) and said, ¹⁶ “Brothers, ‡ the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* foretold by the mouth of David, concerning Judah—who became a guide to those who seized *Yeshua*. ¹⁷ For he was counted among us and received his share of this office.” ¹⁸ (Now this man Judah bought a field with the reward of his wickedness. Falling headfirst, he burst open in the middle and his intestines splattered out. ¹⁹ And it became known to all those living in Jerusalem, so in their own language that field was called Akeldama ††—that is, “Field of Blood.”)

²⁰ For it is written in the Book of Psalms, “Let his dwelling place become desolate, and let there be no one living in it’ †† and ‘Let another take his position.’ †††

²¹ “Therefore, one of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord *Yeshua* went in and out among us— ²² beginning with His immersion by John until the day He was taken up from us—must become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

²³ So they nominated two—Joseph, called Barsabbas (also called Justus), and Matthias. ²⁴ And they prayed and said, “You, O Lord, who knows the hearts of all men, show us which of these two You have chosen ²⁵ to take the position in this office as emissary, from which Judah turned aside to go to his own place.”

²⁶ Then they cast lots for them, and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was added to the eleven emissaries.

The *Ruach* Fills the Disciples

2 When the day of *Shavuot* ††† had come, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ And tongues like fire spreading out appeared to them and settled on each one of them. ⁴ They were all filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and began to speak in other tongues as the *Ruach* enabled them to speak out.

† Lit. the hill called Olivet olive grove †† About one-half mile. ‡ Lit. men brothers

†† Greek. *Hakeldamach*
Chakel-d'ma †† cf. Ps. 69:26(25). ††† cf. Ps. 109:8(108:8 LXX).
††† Greek Pentecost *Shavuot*

⁵ Now Jewish people were staying in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And when this sound came, the crowd gathered. They were bewildered, because each was hearing them speaking in his own language. ⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “All these who are speaking—aren't they Galileans? ⁸ How is it that we each hear our own birth language? ⁹ Parthians and Medes and Elamites and those living in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ⁹ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and parts of Libya toward Cyrene, and visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jewish people and proselytes), Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring in our own tongues the mighty deeds of God!” ¹² And they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to each other, “What does this mean?”

¹³ Others, poking fun, were saying, “They are full of sweet new wine!”

Peter Speaks to the *Shavuot* Crowd

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: “Fellow Judeans and all who are staying in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words. ¹⁵ These men are not drunk, as you suppose—for it's only the third hour of the day! ¹⁶ But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “‘And it shall be in the last days,’ says God, ‘that I will pour out My *Ruach* on all flesh.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on My slaves, male and female, I will pour out My *Ruach* in those days, and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will give wonders in the sky above and signs on the earth beneath— blood, and fire, and smoky vapor.

²⁰ The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood

before the great and glorious Day of *ADONAI* comes.

²¹ And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of *ADONAI* shall be saved.’ ²² †

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words! *Yeshua ha-Natzrati*—a Man authenticated to you by God with mighty deeds and wonders and signs God performed through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know— ²³ this *Yeshua*, given over by God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge, nailed to the cross by the hands of lawless men, you killed. ²⁴ But God raised Him up, releasing Him from the pains of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held by it. ²⁵ For David says about Him,

‘I saw *ADONAI* always before me,

§ The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey); cf. Acts 6:9; 16:6; 19:10,22,26,27,31; 20:4,16,18; 21:27; 24:19; 27:2. † 9 a.m. †† cf. Joel 2:28-32.

for He is at my right hand so that I might not be shaken.

²⁶ Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced;

moreover, my body also will live in hope,
²⁷ because You will not abandon my soul to *Sheol*
or let Your Holy One see decay.

²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
You will fill me with joy in Your presence.[†]

²⁹ “Brothers, I can confidently tell you that the patriarch David died and was buried—his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ So because he was a prophet and knew God had sworn with an oath to him to seat one of his descendants on his throne,^{††31} David saw beforehand and spoke of Messiah’s resurrection—that He was not abandoned to *Sheol*, and His body did not see decay.[‡]

³² “This *Yeshua* God raised up—we all are witnesses!
³³ Therefore, being exalted to the right hand of God and receiving from the Father the promise of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, He poured out this—what you now see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens; yet he himself says,

“*ADONAI* said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,

³⁵ until I make Your enemies a footstool
for Your feet.”^{‡†}

³⁶ “Therefore let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him—this *Yeshua* whom you had crucified—both Lord and Messiah!”

Teshuvah —Thousands Immersed

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the emissaries, “Fellow brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Messiah *Yeshua* for the removal of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far away—as many as *ADONAI* our God calls to Himself.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them and kept urging them, saying, “Save yourselves from this twisted generation!”^{‡†41} So those who received his message were immersed, and that day about three thousand souls were added.

New Covenant Community Begins

⁴² They were devoting themselves to the teaching of the emissaries and to fellowship, to breaking bread, and to prayers. ⁴³ Fear lay upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were happening through the emissaries. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together, having everything in common. ⁴⁵ They began selling their property and possessions and sharing them with all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day they continued with

one mind, spending time at the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house. They were sharing meals with gladness and sincerity of heart,⁴⁷ praising God, and having favor with all the people. And every day the Lord was adding to their number^{‡††} those being saved.

A Lame Beggar Walks

3 Now Peter and John were going up to the Temple at the ninth hour,^{‡††} the time of prayer. ² A man lame from birth was being carried—every day they used to put him at the Temple gate called Beautiful, so he could beg for *tzedakah* from those entering the Temple. ³ When he saw Peter and John about to go into the Temple, he began asking to receive *tzedakah*.

⁴ But Peter, along with John, looked straight at him and said, “Look at us!” ⁵ So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ But Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give to you—in the name of *Yeshua ha-Mashiach ha-Natzrati*, get up and walk!” ⁷ Then grabbing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately the man’s feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ Jumping up, he stood and began walking; and he went with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God!

⁹ Now all the people saw him walking and praising God. ¹⁰ They began to realize he was the one who used to sit begging for *tzedakah* at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, and they were filled with wonder and astonishment over what had happened to him.

Peter Speaks at the Temple

¹¹ While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people together came running toward them in the place called Solomon’s Portico. ¹² But when Peter saw, he responded to the people, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us—as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant[§] *Yeshua*—the One you handed over and disowned before Pilate, though he had decided to release Him. ¹⁴ But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you. ¹⁵ You killed the Author of life—the One God raised from the dead! We are witnesses of it. ¹⁶ Now through faith in the name of *Yeshua*, His name has strengthened this man whom you see and know. Indeed, the faith through *Yeshua* has given this man perfect health in front of you all.

¹⁷ “Now brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your leaders did. ¹⁸ But what God foretold through the mouth of all His prophets—that His Messiah was to suffer—so He has fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent, therefore, and return—so your sins might be blotted

† cf. Ps. 16:8-11. †† cf. Ps. 132:11; 2 Sam. 7:12ff.; Ps. 89:3ff.
‡ cf. Ps. 16:10. †† Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX). ‡† cf. Deut. 32:5.

‡†† Some mss. read to the community *ekklesia* ‡††
3 p.m., the time of the daily offering, *minchah* § cf. Isa.
52:13-53:12.

out, ²⁰ so times of relief might come from the presence of *ADONAI* and He might send *Yeshua*, the Messiah appointed for you. ²¹ Heaven must receive Him, until the time of the restoration of all the things that God spoke about long ago through the mouth of His holy prophets. ²² Moses said, ' *ADONAI* your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your brothers. Hear and obey Him in all that He shall say to you. ²³ And it shall be that every soul that will not listen to that Prophet shall be completely cut off from the people.' ^{†24} Indeed, all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel on have announced these days. ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and also of the covenant that God cut with your fathers, ^{††} saying to Abraham, 'In your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'
^{‡26} God raised up His Servant and sent Him first to you, to bless you all by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Standing before the Sanhedrin

4 As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the *kohanim* and the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees came up to them. ² They were indignant because Peter and John were teaching the people and announcing in *Yeshua* the resurrection of the dead. ³ So they grabbed them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ But many who heard the message believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

⁵ On the next day, the rulers and elders and *Torah* scholars were gathered together in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the *kohen gadol* was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all those who were of high-priestly descent. ⁷ When they had placed Peter and John in their midst, they began to inquire, "By what power or in what name did you do this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are on trial today for a *mitzvah* done for a sick man, as to how this fellow was healed, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of *Yeshua ha-Mashiach ha-Natzrati*—whom you had crucified, whom God raised from the dead—this one stands before you whole. ¹¹ This *Yeshua* is 'the stone—rejected by you, the builders—that has become the chief cornerstone.'
^{‡12} There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved!"

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and figured out they were laymen without training, they were amazed. They began to realize that these men had been with *Yeshua*. ¹⁴ But seeing the healed man standing with them, they had nothing to say in response. ¹⁵ When they had ordered Peter and John to go out of the council chamber, they began to confer with one another, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do

with these men? For indeed, it's obvious to everyone living in Jerusalem that a remarkable miracle has happened through them, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But so it won't spread any further among the people, let's warn them not to speak anymore to anyone in this name."

¹⁸ So they called them in and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of *Yeshua*. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you decide. ²⁰ For we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

²¹ After threatening them again, they let them go—finding no way they could punish them on account of the people, because they all were glorifying God for what had happened. ²² For the man in whom this miracle of healing had happened was more than 40 years old.

Prayer for Courage

²³ As soon as they were released, Peter and John went to their own people and reported all that the ruling *kohanim* and elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "O Sovereign Master, 'You made heaven and earth and the sea, and everything in them.'
^{‡25} You said by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, through the mouth of our father David Your servant,

"Why did the nations rage and the peoples plot foolish things?"

²⁶ The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers were gathered together against *ADONAI* and against His Anointed One.' ^{‡‡}

²⁷ "For truly both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together in this city against Your holy Servant *Yeshua*, whom You anointed. ²⁸ They did whatever Your hand and Your purpose predetermined to happen. ²⁹ And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant Your servants to speak Your word with utmost courage—³⁰ while You stretch out Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy Servant *Yeshua*."

³¹ When they had prayed, the place where they were gathered was shaken. And they were all filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

Ruach-Filled Community Life

³² Now the whole group of those who believed was one in heart and mind. No one would say anything he owned was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³ With great power the emissaries were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord *Yeshua*, and abundant favor was upon them all. ³⁴ No one among

† cf. Deut. 18:15-19(LXX); Lev. 23:29(LXX). †† cf. Exod. 24:8; Heb. 10:16. ‡ cf. Gen. 12:3; 22:18. †† Ps. 118:22.

‡‡ cf. Exod. 20:11; Ps. 146:6; Neh. 9:6. ‡‡‡ Ps. 2:1-2(LXX).

them was needy, for all who were owners of lands or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds³⁵ and set them at the feet of the emissaries. And the proceeds were distributed according to the need each one had.

³⁶ Now Joseph, also called Barnabas by the emissaries (which is translated Son of Encouragement), was a Levite and native of Cyprus. ³⁷ He sold a field that he owned and brought the money and laid it at the feet of the emissaries.

Ananias and Sapphira Lie to the *Ruach*

5 On the other hand, a man named Ananias together with his wife, Sapphira, sold a property. ² He kept back some of the proceeds, with his wife's full knowledge, and brought part of it and set it at the feet of the emissaries.

³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has *satan* filled your heart to lie to the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and keep back part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, it was your own, wasn't it? And after it was sold, wasn't it at your disposal? How did this deed get into your heart? You haven't lied to men but to God."

⁵ As soon as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and died. Great fear came upon all who heard about it. ⁶ The young men got up and wrapped him in a shroud, then carried him out and buried him.

⁷ After an interval of about three hours, his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. ⁸ Peter responded to her, "Tell me if you sold the land for this much."

She said, "Yes, for that much."

⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How did you agree to test the *Ruach ADONAI*? Look, the feet of those who buried your husband are at the door—they will carry you out, too!"

¹⁰ Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came back in, they found her dead and carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ¹¹ And great fear came over the whole community and all who heard these things.

Signs and Wonders, Angelic Jailbreak, and Bold Witness

¹² Meanwhile, through the hands of the emissaries many signs and wonders were happening among the people. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. ¹³ But no one else dared to join them, though the people continued to think highly of them. ¹⁴ Yet more than ever those trusting in the Lord were added—large numbers of men and women. ¹⁵ They even carried the sick into the streets and laid them on stretchers and cots, so that when Peter passed by at least his shadow might fall on some of them.

¹⁶ Crowds were also gathering from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing those who were sick or tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all being healed.

¹⁷ But the *kohen gadol* rose up, and all those with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. ¹⁸ They grabbed the emissaries and put them in a public jail. ¹⁹ But during the night an angel of *ADONAI* opened the prison doors, and leading them out he said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the Temple and speak to the people the whole message about this Life." ²¹ Now when they heard that, they entered the Temple at daybreak and began teaching.

When the *kohen gadol* and those with him arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin, even the council of elders of *Bnei-Yisrael*, and sent to the prison to have the prisoners brought in. ²² But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison. So they returned and reported, ²³ saying, "We found the prison locked with maximum security and the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened up, we found no one inside."

²⁴ When the captain of the Temple and the ruling *kohanim* heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering where this would lead. ²⁵ But someone came and reported to them, "The men you put in prison are standing in the Temple and teaching the people!" ²⁶ Then the captain went off with the officers and brought the emissaries—but not with force, because they feared they might be stoned by the people.

²⁷ When they had brought them, they placed them before the Sanhedrin. The *kohen gadol* questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name—and look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring on us the blood of this Man!"

²⁹ Peter and the emissaries replied, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up *Yeshua*, whom you seized and had crucified. ³¹ This One God exalted at His right hand as Leader and Savior, ³² to give repentance to Israel and removal of sins. ³³ And we are witnesses of these events—as is the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

³⁴ Now when they heard this, they became enraged and wanted to kill them. ³⁵ But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the *Torah* respected by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. ³⁶ Then he said to them, "Men of Israel, be careful what you are about to do with these men. ³⁷ For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody; and a number of men, maybe four hundred, joined up with him. He was killed, and all who followed him were scattered and came to nothing. ³⁸ After this fellow, Judah the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and got people to follow him. He also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁹ So now I tell you, stay away from these men and leave them alone. For if this plan or undertaking is of men, it will come to an

† Lit. killed by hanging Him on a tree †† cf. Ps. 27:1(26:1 LXX); Acts 13:23.

end;³⁹ but if it is of God, you will not be able to stop them. You might even be found fighting against God.” They took his advice,⁴⁰ called in the emissaries, flogged them, ordered them not to continue speaking in the name of *Yeshua*, and let them go.

⁴¹ So they left the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were considered worthy to be dishonored on account of His name.^{†42} And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming *Yeshua* as the Messiah.

Appointed for Service

6 Now in those days, when the disciples were multiplying, grumbling arose^{††} among the Hellenists against the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily support.² So the Twelve called together the whole group of the disciples and said, “It is not right for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.³ So, brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this duty.⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the Word.”

⁵ The statement pleased the whole group; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.⁶ They placed these men before the emissaries; and after praying, they laid hands on them.[‡]

⁷ The word of God kept on spreading, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem greatly multiplied; even a great number of the *kohanim* were becoming obedient to the faith.

Stephen’s Testimony and Martyrdom

⁸ Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.⁹ But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen—both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, as well as some from Cilicia and Asia^{‡†}—stood up and began arguing with Stephen.¹⁰ But they could not withstand the wisdom and the *Ruach* by whom he was speaking.

¹¹ Then they secretly instigated men into saying, “We have heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God!”¹² They also incited the people, the elders, and the *Torah* scholars; and they rushed at Stephen, seized him, and led him away to the Sanhedrin.¹³ They set up false witnesses who said, “This man never stops speaking words against this holy place and the *Torah*.¹⁴ For we have heard him saying that this *Yeshua ha-Natzrati* will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.”¹⁵ Watching him intently, everyone who was sitting in the Sanhedrin saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

† *Lit. the name* †† *cf. Exod. 16:7-8. ‡ cf. Num. 8:10; 27:18; Deut. 34:9. †† The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey).*

7 Then the *kohen gadol* said, “Are these things so?”² Stephen declared, “Brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran.³ He said to him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives, and come here to the land that I will show you.’⁴ Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. From there, after his father died, God moved him to this land where you now live.⁵ He gave him no inheritance in it—not even a foothold—yet He promised ‘to give it to him as a possession to him and to his descendants after him,’ even though he had no child.

⁶ “But God spoke in this way, that his ‘descendants would be foreigners in a land belonging to others, and they would enslave and mistreat them for four hundred years.⁷ But I will judge the nation they serve as slaves,’ God said, ‘and afterward they shall come out and serve Me in this place.’^{‡‡}

⁸ “Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision.^{‡‡‡} So he became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day, and so Isaac with Jacob, and Jacob with the twelve patriarchs.⁹ The patriarchs became jealous of Joseph and sold him into Egypt. Yet God was with him.¹⁰ He rescued him out of all his troubles and granted him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him governor over Egypt and all his household.

¹¹ “Famine and great suffering came over all Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers could find no food.¹² But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers there the first time.¹³ On the second visit, Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and his family became known to Pharaoh.¹⁴ So Joseph sent and called for Jacob and all his relatives—75 persons.¹⁵ Jacob went down to Egypt and died, he and our fathers.¹⁶ They were carried to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

¹⁷ “But as the time drew near for the promise God had sworn to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt—¹⁸ until ‘there arose another king over Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph.’^{‡‡‡‡19} Dealing with our people with cruel cunning, this king mistreated our fathers and forced them to abandon their infants so they would not survive.

²⁰ “At this time Moses was born—extraordinary before God. For three months he was nurtured in his father’s house.²¹ And when he was set outside, Pharaoh’s daughter took him and raised him as her own son.²² Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was powerful in his words and deeds.

²³ “When he was approaching 40 years of age, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, *Bnei-Yisrael*.²⁴ When he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he went to the defense of the oppressed man and

‡‡ *Gen. 15:13-14. ‡‡‡ Hebrew brit milah ‡‡‡ Exod. 1:8.*

avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.²⁵ He was assuming that his brothers understood that by his hand God was delivering them, but they did not understand.²⁶ So on the next day he appeared to them as they were fighting. He tried to reconcile them in *shalom*, saying, 'Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong one another?'

²⁷ "But the one doing wrong to his neighbor pushed him away, saying, 'Who appointed you ruler and judge over us?' ²⁸ You don't want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?' ²⁹ At this remark, Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰ "When 40 years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai in the flame of a burning bush. ³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight. But when he came up to look, there came the voice of *ADONAI*: ³² 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.' ^{††}

"Moses trembled in fear and did not dare to look. ³³ But *ADONAI* said to him, 'Take the sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. ³⁴ I have surely seen the oppression of My people in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. Now come—let Me send you to Egypt.'

³⁵ "This Moses—whom they rejected, saying, 'Who appointed you as ruler and judge?'—is the one whom God sent as both ruler and redeemer, by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶ This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for 40 years. ³⁷ This is the Moses who said to *Bnei-Yisrael*, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers.' [‡]

³⁸ "This is the one who was in the community in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living words to pass on to us. ³⁹ Our fathers did not want to be obedient to him, but shoved him aside. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, ⁴⁰ saying to Aaron, 'Make gods for us who will go before us. For this Moses who led us out of the land of Egypt—we have no idea what has happened to him.' ^{‡†}

⁴¹ "And they made a calf in those days, offered a sacrifice to the idol, and were rejoicing in the works of their hands. ⁴² But God turned and gave them over to serve the host of heaven, just as it is written in the book of the Prophets:

"It was not to Me that you brought sacrifices and offerings

for 40 years in the wilderness, was it, O House of Israel?

⁴³ You also took up the tent of Moloch
and the star of your god Rephan,
the images you made to worship.

† Exod. 2:14. †† Exod. 3:6. ‡ Exod. 12:41; 33:1. †† Exod. 32:1, 23.

And I will deport you beyond Babylon.' ^{‡‡}

⁴⁴ "Our fathers had the Tent of Witness in the wilderness—just as the One speaking to Moses had directed him to make it according to the design he had seen.

⁴⁵ Our fathers received it in turn and brought it in with Joshua when they took possession of the land of the nations that God drove out before our fathers. So it remained until the days of David, ⁴⁶ who found favor in God's sight. He asked to find a dwelling place for the God ^{‡‡†} of Jacob. ⁴⁷ But Solomon built a house for Him. ⁴⁸ However, *Elyon* does not dwell in man-made houses. As the prophet says,

⁴⁹ "Heaven is My throne,
and the earth is the footstool of My feet.

What kind of house will you build for Me, says *ADONAI*,

or what is the place of My rest?

⁵⁰ Did not My Hand make all these things? ^{‡‡‡}

⁵¹ "O you stiff-necked people! You uncircumcised of heart and ears! You always resist the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*; just as your fathers did, you do as well. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed the ones who foretold the coming of the Righteous One. Now you have become His betrayers and murderers— ⁵³ you who received the *Torah* by direction of angels and did not keep it!"

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they became enraged and began gnashing their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God—and *Yeshua* standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ And he said, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

⁵⁷ But they covered their ears; and crying out with a loud voice, they rushed at him with one impulse. ⁵⁸ Driving him out of the city, they began stoning him, and the witnesses laid down their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he was calling out, "Lord *Yeshua*, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" After he said this, he died. [§]

Saul Persecutes Messiah's Community

8 Now Saul was in agreement with Stephen's execution. On that day a great persecution arose against Messiah's community in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, except the emissaries. ² Some devout men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him.

³ But Saul was destroying Messiah's community, entering house after house; and dragging off men and women, he was throwing them into prison.

‡‡ Amos 5:25-27. ‡‡† Lit. house
Isa. 66:2. § Lit. he fell asleep

‡‡‡

The Good News Spreads to Samaria

⁴ Now those who had been scattered went around proclaiming the Word. ⁵ Philip went down to the main city of Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them. ⁶ The crowds were paying close attention to what Philip was saying—as they both heard and saw the signs that he was doing. ⁷ For unclean spirits were coming out of many who were plagued, shrieking with a loud voice. Many paralyzed and crippled were healed also. ⁸ So there was great joy in that city.

⁹ Now a man named Simon had been practicing magic in the city and astonishing the people of Samaria, saying he was someone great. ¹⁰ They all were paying special attention to him, saying, “This man is the power of God that is called ‘Great.’” ¹¹ And they kept paying attention to him, because for a long time he had astonished them with his magical arts. ¹² But when they believed Philip proclaiming the Good News about the kingdom of God and the name of Messiah *Yeshua*, both men and women were immersed. ¹³ Even Simon himself believed; and after being immersed, he continued with Philip. And when he saw signs and great miracles happening, he was continually amazed.

¹⁴ Now when the emissaries in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the message of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ They came down and prayed for them to receive the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ¹⁶ For He had not yet come upon them; they had only been immersed in the name of the Lord *Yeshua*. ¹⁷ Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.

¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* was given through the laying on of hands by the emissaries, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, “Give this power to me, too—so that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.”

²⁰ Peter said to him, “May your silver go to ruin, and you with it—because you thought you could buy God’s gift with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this matter, because your heart is not right before God. ²² Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be pardoned. ²³ For I see in you the poison of bitterness and the bondage of unrighteousness!”

²⁴ Simon replied, “Pray for me, so that none of what you have said may come upon me.”

²⁵ So when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the Good News to many Samaritan villages.

An Ethiopian Asks about Isaiah 53

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Get up, and go south on the road going down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is a desert road.) ²⁷ So he got

† cf. 2 Kings 5:20–27.

up and went. And behold, an Ethiopian eunuch—an official who was responsible for all the treasure of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians—had traveled to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was now returning. Sitting in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹ The *Ruach* said to Philip, “Go, catch up with this chariot.”

³⁰ Philip ran up and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹ “How can I,” he said, “unless someone guides me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² Now the passage of Scripture that he was reading was this:

“He was led as a sheep to slaughter;
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so He opens not His Mouth.

³³ In His humiliation justice was denied Him.
Who shall recount His generation?

For His life is taken away from the earth.” ††

³⁴ The eunuch replied to Philip, “Please tell me, who is the prophet talking about—himself or someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he proclaimed the Good News about *Yeshua*.

³⁶ Now as they were going down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, “Look, water! What’s to prevent me from being immersed?”

³⁷ ††† He ordered the chariot to stop. They both got down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and Philip immersed him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the *Ruach ADONAI* snatched Philip away. †† The eunuch saw no more of him, for he went on his way, rejoicing.

⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus. And as he passed through, he kept proclaiming the Good News to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Saul Turns from Murder to Messiah

9 Now Saul, still breathing out threats and murder against the Lord’s disciples, went to the *kohen gadol*. ² He requested letters of introduction from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any men or women belonging to the Way, he might bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

³ As he was traveling, approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

⁵ “Who are You, Lord?” Saul said.

“I am *Yeshua*—whom you are persecuting. ††† But get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” †††

†† Isa. 53:7-8. † Some mss. include And he said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” He replied, “I believe that *Yeshua* the Messiah is the Son of God!” †† cf. 1 Kings 18:12. †† Some mss. add It is hard for you to kick against the goads ††† Some mss. begin So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “But get up...”

⁷ The men traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. ¹⁸ Saul got up from the ground—but opening his eyes, he could see nothing. They led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he could not see, and he did not eat or drink.

¹⁰ Now there was a disciple named Ananias in Damascus. The Lord said to him, “Ananias.”

He said, “Here I am, Lord.”

¹¹ The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to the street named Straight, and ask in the house of Judah for someone from Tarsus named Saul. For look, he is praying; ¹² and in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight.”

¹³ But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man—how much harm he has done to your *kedoshim* in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And here he has authority from the ruling *kohanim* to tie up all who call on Your name.”

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a choice instrument to carry My name before nations and kings and *Bnei-Yisrael*. ¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

¹⁷ So Ananias left and entered into the house. Laying hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—*Yeshua*, the One who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming—has sent me, so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.”

¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was immersed; ¹⁹ and when he had taken food, he was strengthened. Now for several days, he was with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰ Immediately he began proclaiming *Yeshua* in the synagogues, saying, “He is *Ben-Elohim*.”

²¹ All those hearing him were amazed. They were saying, “Isn’t this the one who made havoc in Jerusalem for all those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to bring them as prisoners before the ruling *kohanim*?” ²² But Saul kept growing stronger, and he was confounding the Jewish people living in Damascus by proving that *Yeshua* is the Messiah. ²³ When many days had passed, these Jewish people plotted to kill him— ²⁴ but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night, to kill him. ²⁵ But the disciples took Saul by night and let him down over the wall, lowering him in a basket.

²⁶ When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he made attempts to join up with the disciples—but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him in and brought him to the emissaries. He described to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road and the Lord had spoken to him, and how he had spoken boldly in the name of *Yeshua*.

† cf. Dan 10:7.

²⁸ So Saul was with them, going in and out in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.

²⁹ He was speaking and arguing with the Hellenists, but they were trying to kill him. ³⁰ When the brothers found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

³¹ So Messiah’s community throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had *shalom* and was built up. Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, it kept multiplying.

Signs and Wonders Follow Peter

³² Peter went here and there among them all. He came down as well to the *kedoshim* living in Lydda.

³³ There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years—he was paralyzed.

³⁴ Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Messiah *Yeshua* heals you. Get up and pack up your bed.” Immediately, he got up! ³⁵ All who lived in Lydda and the Plain of Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

³⁶ In Joppa, there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translates as Dorcas). She was full of *mitzvot* and *zedakah*, which she continually did. ³⁷ In those days, she became ill and died. When they had washed her for burial, they placed her in an upstairs room.

³⁸ Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples—hearing that Peter was there—sent two men to him, begging him, “Please come to us without delay!”

³⁹ So Peter got up and went with them. When he arrived, they took him to the upstairs room. All the widows were crying, showing all the tunics and other clothing Dorcas had made while she was with them. ⁴⁰ But Peter sent them all outside, and he got down on his knees and prayed. Then, turning to the body, he said “Tabitha, get up!” She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and raised her up. Then he called the *kedoshim* and widows and presented her alive. †

⁴² It became known throughout Joppa, and many came to believe in the Lord. ⁴³ So it happened that Peter stayed on in Joppa for several days with Simon, a tanner. ‡

The Centurion’s Vision

10 Now in Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Cohort. ² He was a devout man, revering God with all his household. He gave *zedakah* generously to the people and prayed to God continually. ³ About the ninth hour of the day, †† he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming and saying to him, “Cornelius!”

⁴ He stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?”

†† cf. Elijah raising a child in 1 Kings 17:18-23. ‡ Either a profession (e.g. Simon, a leatherworker) or a surname (e.g. Simon Burseus; Simon Tanner); cf. Acts 10:6,32. †† 3 p.m., *minchah*

The angel said to him, “Your prayers and *tzedakah* have gone up as a memorial offering before God.

⁵ Now send men to Joppa and call for Simon, also named Peter. ⁶ He is being entertained as a guest by Simon the tanner, whose house is beside the sea.”

⁷ When the angel speaking to him had left, he called two of his servants and a soldier from among those attached to his command. ⁸ After he explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter’s Vision

⁹ The next day, as the soldiers were traveling and approaching the city, Peter went up to the rooftop to pray, at about the sixth hour. ¹⁰ Now he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they were preparing something, he fell into a trance. ¹¹ He saw the heavens opened, and something ^{††} like a great sheet coming down, lowered by its four corners to the earth. ¹² In it were all sorts of four-footed animals and reptiles and birds of the air.

¹³ A voice came to him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.”

¹⁴ But Peter said, “Certainly not, Lord! For never have I eaten anything unholy or unclean.” [‡]

¹⁵ Again a voice came to him, a second time: “What God has made clean, you must not consider unholy.”

¹⁶ This happened three times, and the sheet was immediately taken up to heaven.

¹⁷ Now while Peter was puzzling about what the vision he had seen might mean, behold, the men sent by Cornelius found Simon’s house and appeared before the gate. ¹⁸ They called out and began to ask whether Simon, also called Peter, was staying in this place as a guest.

¹⁹ Now while Peter was mulling over the vision, the *Ruach* said to him, “Look here, three men are looking for you. ²⁰ But get up, go downstairs, and go with them without hesitating, because I Myself have sent them.”

²¹ Going down to the men, Peter said, “Here, I’m the one you’re looking for. What is the reason for your coming?”

²² And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well-spoken of by all the Jewish people, was directed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear a message from you.”

²³ So Peter invited them in to be his guests. The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.

Peter Goes to Cornelius

²⁴ The following day he entered Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ As Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.

²⁶ But Peter pulled him up, saying, “Stand up! I too am just a man.”

²⁷ Talking with him, Peter went inside and found many people gathered. ²⁸ He said to them, “You yourselves know that it is not permitted for a Jewish man to associate with a non-Jew or to visit him. Yet God has shown me that I should call no one unholy or unclean. ²⁹ So I came without objection when I was sent for. I ask, then, what is the reason why you sent for me?”

³⁰ Cornelius declared, “Four days ago at this hour, I was praying *minchah* ^{††} in my house. Suddenly, a man stood in front of me in shining clothes. ³¹ He says, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your *tzedakah* remembered before God. ³² Therefore send to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is also called Peter. He is staying in the house of Simon the tanner, by the sea.’ ³³ So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.”

³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth and said, “I truly understand that God is not one to show favoritism, ^{‡‡} but in every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him. ³⁶ You know the message He sent to *Bnei-Yisrael*, proclaiming *shalom* through Messiah *Yeshua*—He is Lord of all.

³⁷ You know the message that has spread throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the immersion that John proclaimed. ³⁸ You know how God anointed *Yeshua of Natzeret* with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and power—how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him. ³⁹ We are witnesses to all He did, both in the Judean countryside and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging Him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised Him up on the third day and caused Him to be visible—⁴¹ not to all the people, but to us, witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God. We ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. ⁴² And He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to testify that He is the One ordained by God as Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about Him—that everyone who puts his trust in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name.”

The *Ruach* Falls on the Gentiles

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* fell on all those hearing the message.

⁴⁵ All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were astonished, because the gift of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* had been poured out even on the Gentiles.

⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and magnifying God.

Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ “Can anyone refuse water for these to be immersed, who have received the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* just as we did?” ⁴⁸ So he commanded

† Noon. †† Lit. thing, object, vessel
10:10; 11:7-45; Deut. 14:4-20; Ezek. 4:14; Dan. 1:8.

‡ cf. Lev.

†† Lit. the ninth hour
Deut. 10:17; 2 Chron. 19:7.

‡‡ cf.

them to be immersed in the name of Messiah *Yeshua*. Then they asked him to stay for a few days.

Peter's Report to Jerusalem

11 Now the emissaries and brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² But when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision took issue with him, ³ saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them!"

⁴ So Peter began explaining to them point by point, saying, ⁵ "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision—something like a great sheet coming down, being lowered from heaven by its four corners, and it came right to me. ⁶ I looked inside, considering it carefully, and saw four-footed creatures of the earth, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'

⁸ "But I said, 'Certainly not, Lord! For never has anything unholy or unclean entered my mouth.' ⁹ But a voice from heaven answered a second time, 'What God has made clean, you must not consider unholy.' ¹⁰ This happened three times, and then everything was pulled up to heaven.

¹¹ "At that very moment, three men arrived at the house where we were, sent to me from Caesarea.

¹² The *Ruach* told me to go with them without hesitating. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³ He reported to us how he had seen an angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon called Peter. ¹⁴ He will speak words to you by which you will be saved—you and all your household.'

¹⁵ "As I began to speak, the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* fell on them, just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John immersed with water, but you will be immersed in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.' ¹⁷ Therefore if God gave them the same gift as also to us after we put our trust in the Lord Messiah *Yeshua*, who was I to stand in God's way?"

¹⁸ When they heard this they became quiet, and they glorified God, saying, "Then even to the Gentiles God has granted repentance leading to life!"

Discipling in Diaspora

¹⁹ Now those scattered because of the persecution that happened in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Judeans. ²⁰ However, there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Hellenists also, proclaiming the Lord *Yeshua*. ²¹ The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

²² News about these things reached the ears of the community in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to

Antioch. ²³ When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he was thrilled. He encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with heartfelt devotion. ²⁴ For Barnabas was a good man, full of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and faith. And a large number was added to the Lord.

²⁵ Then Barnabas left for Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met together with Messiah's community and taught a large number. Now it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called "Christianoi." †

²⁷ Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, named Agabus, stood up and predicted through the *Ruach* that there was going to be a great famine over all the world. (This took place during the reign of Claudius.) ²⁹ So the disciples decided to send relief to those brothers and sisters living in Judea, each according to his ability. ³⁰ This they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Persecution and Deliverance

12 Now at that time Herod the king seized some from Messiah's community to do them harm. ² He had Jacob, John's brother, put to death with the sword. ³ Seeing it pleased the Judean leaders, he proceeded to capture Peter as well. This was during the Days of *Matzah*. ⁴ After seizing him, he put him in prison, handing him over to four squads with four soldiers each to guard him. He was intending to bring him before the people after Passover. ⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but prayer for him was being offered fervently to God by Messiah's community.

⁶ Now that very night when Herod was about to bring him out, Peter was sleeping—bound with two chains between two soldiers, while guards before the gate were keeping watch over the prison. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the cell. He poked Peter on the side and woke him up, saying, "Get up! Quick!" And the chains fell off his hands. ⁸ Then the angel said to him, "Get dressed and put on your sandals," and he did so. Then he tells him, "Put on your cloak and follow me." ⁹ Peter went out and kept following him—he didn't know that what was happening with the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰ After they passed a first guard and a second, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them by itself. They went out and walked along a narrow street. Suddenly the angel left him.

¹¹ When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for real that the Lord has sent His angel †† and delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Judean people were expecting." ¹² When he realized this, he went to the house of Miriam, the mother of

† Greek *Christianoi*
anointed ones

M'shichim

†† cf. Ps. 34:7;

Dan. 3:28; 6:22.

John (also called Mark), where many were assembled together and praying. ¹³ When he knocked on the door of the entrance gate, a maid named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴ Although she recognized Peter's voice, out of joy she did not open the gate but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. ¹⁵ They said to her, "You're crazy!" But she kept insisting it was so. But they were saying, "It is his angel."

¹⁶ But Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the gate, they saw him and were amazed! ¹⁷ But he motioned with his hand for them to be silent, and he explained to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. He said, "Go tell these things to Jacob and the brothers." Then he left and went to another place.

¹⁸ When day came, there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. ¹⁹ After Herod made a search for him and did not find him, he interrogated the guards and commanded that they be led away to execution. Then he went down from Judea and stayed in Caesarea.

Herod Gets His Due

²⁰ Now it happened that Herod was furious with the people of Tyre and Sidon. So they came to him, united. Having won over Blastus, the king's personal aide, they began asking for peace—because their country was supplied with food from the king's country.

²¹ On an appointed day, Herod donned his royal robes and, taking his seat upon the throne, began to make a speech to them. ²² The people were shouting, "The voice of a god and not a human!" ²³ Immediately, an angel of the Lord struck him down—because he did not give God the glory. And he was eaten by worms and died.

²⁴ But the word of God kept on growing and multiplying. ²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their service, taking along John (who was also called Mark).

Sent out from Antioch

13 Now in the Antioch community, there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaen (brought up since childhood with Herod the Tetrarch), and Saul. ² While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then after fasting, praying, and laying hands on them, they sent them off.

⁴ So, sent out by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they began to proclaim the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. They also had John [†] as a helper.

⁶ When they had gone throughout the whole island as far as Paphos, they found a man who was a magi-

[†] cf. Acts 12:25.

cian—a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Yeshua. ⁷ He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the magician (for so his name is translated) was opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ But Saul, who is also Paul, filled with the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, fixed his gaze on him ¹⁰ and said, "O you, full of all deceit and trickery, son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness—will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? ^{††11} Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, [‡] and you shall be blind and not see the sun for awhile." Immediately, cloudiness and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. ¹² When he saw what had happened, the proconsul believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

Paul's Message in Diaspora Synagogues

¹³ Setting sail from Paphos, Paul's company came to Perga in Pamphylia. John left them and returned to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ But they passed on from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia. Entering the synagogue on the *Shabbat*, they sat down. ¹⁵ After the reading of the *Torah* and the Prophets, the synagogue leaders sent to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, speak."

¹⁶ So Paul, standing up and motioning with his hand, said, "Men of Israel and God-fearers, listen. ¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, ^{††} and with an outstretched arm He led them out of there. ¹⁸ For about 40 years He put up with them in the wilderness. ^{†††19} And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He gave their land as an inheritance ^{†††}— ²⁰ all of this took about 450 years. After that, he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. ²¹ Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, for 40 years. ²² After removing him, He raised up David to be their king. He also testified about him and said, 'I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do My will.' ^{†††}

²³ "From this man's seed, in keeping with His promise, God brought to Israel a Savior [§]— *Yeshua*. ²⁴ Before His coming, John had proclaimed an immersion of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵ As John was completing his service, he said, 'What do you suppose me to be? I am not He. But behold, One is coming after me, whose sandal I'm not worthy to untie.'

²⁶ "Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham and those among you who are God-fearers, it is to us the message of this salvation has been sent. ²⁷ For those

^{††} cf. Deut. 32:4-6; Prov. 10:9; 11:20. [‡] cf. 1 Sam. 5:6-7; Job 19:21. ^{††} cf. Exod. 6:1, 6; 13:14, 16; Deut. 7:6-8. ^{†††} cf. Num. 14:34. ^{††††} cf. Deut. 7:1; Josh. 19:51. ^{†††††} cf. Ps. 89:20; 1 Sam. 13:14. [§] cf. 1 Sam. 13:14; Ps. 27:1(26:1 LXX).

who live in Jerusalem and their rulers—not recognizing Him or the sayings of the Prophets that are read every *Shabbat*—fulfilled these words by condemning Him. ²⁸ Though they found no charge worthy of a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have Him executed. ²⁹ When they had carried out all that had been written about Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised Him from the dead! ³¹ For many days He appeared to those who had come up from the Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now His witnesses to the people.

³² “And we proclaim to you Good News—the promise to the fathers has arrived! ³³ For God has fulfilled this promise to the children—to us—by raising up *Yeshua*, as it is also written in the second psalm:

“You are My Son.

Today I have become Your Father.’ [†]

³⁴ “But since He raised Him up from the dead, never to return to decay, He has spoken in this way, ‘I will give you the holy and sure mercies of David.’ ^{††35} Therefore He also says in another psalm, ‘You will not permit Your Holy One to see decay.’ ^{‡36} For after David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he went to sleep and was laid with his fathers and saw decay. ³⁷ But the One whom God raised up did not see decay.

³⁸ “Therefore, let it be known to you, brothers, that through this One is proclaimed to you the removal of sins, including all those from which you could not be set right by the *Torah* of Moses. ³⁹ Through this One everyone who keeps trusting is made righteous.

⁴⁰ “Be careful, then, so that what is said in the Prophets may not come upon you:

⁴¹ “Look, you scoffers,

be amazed and vanish away.

For I am doing a work in your days—

a work you will never believe,

even if someone tells it to you in detail.’ ^{‡‡}

⁴² As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people kept begging them to speak these things to them the next *Shabbat*. ⁴³ When the synagogue meeting broke up, many of the Jewish people and God-fearing inquirers followed Paul and Barnabas, who were speaking with them and trying to persuade them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴ The following *Shabbat*, almost the entire city came together to hear the word of the Lord. ⁴⁵ When the Jewish leaders saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and tried to contradict what Paul was saying by reviling him. ⁴⁶ Both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken to you first. Since you reject it and judge yourselves unfit for eternal life—behold, we turn to the Gentiles.

⁴⁷ “For so the Lord has commanded us,

‘I have placed you as a light to the nations,

so that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth.’ ^{‡‡‡}

⁴⁸ When the Gentiles heard this, they were thrilled and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as had been inscribed for eternal life believed. ^{‡‡‡}

⁴⁹ Now the word of the Lord spread throughout the whole region. ⁵⁰ But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and they drove them out of their district. ⁵¹ But Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet against them, ^{‡‡‡} and they went on to Iconium. ⁵² And the disciples were filled with joy and the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.

Mixed Crowds Believe amidst Persecution

14 Now in Iconium, the same thing happened—they entered as usual into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a large number of Jewish and Greek people believed. ² But the Jewish people who would not believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

³ So they stayed there a considerable time, speaking boldly in the Lord—who was testifying to the message of His grace, granting signs and wonders to come about by their hands. ⁴ But the population of the city split; some were with the Jewish leaders and some were with the emissaries. ⁵ Now it happened that an attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jewish people, along with their rulers, to abuse and stone them. ⁶ But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding countryside. ⁷ There they proclaimed the Good News.

⁸ Now a man was sitting in Lystra without strength in his feet, lame from birth, who had never walked. ⁹ This man heard Paul speaking. When Paul looked intently at him and saw that he had faith to be healed, ¹⁰ he said with a loud voice, “Stand right up! On your feet!” And the man leaped up and began to walk around!

¹¹ Now the crowd, seeing what Paul had done, lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, “The gods have become like men and come down to us!” ¹² And they began calling Barnabas “Zeus” and Paul “Hermes” (because he was the main speaker).

¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was before the front gate of the city, brought bulls and garlands; he wanted to offer a sacrifice with the people. ¹⁴ But when the emissaries Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out among the crowd, crying out ¹⁵ and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We too are human, just like you! We proclaim the Good News to you, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. ^{§16} In past generations He allowed all the na-

[†] Ps. 2:7; cf. 2 Sam. 7:14. ^{††} Isa. 55:3. [‡] Ps. 16:10. ^{‡‡} Hab. 1:5.

^{‡‡} Isa. 49:6. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Exod. 32:33; Ps. 69:28; Dan. 12:1. ^{‡‡‡‡} cf. Matt. 10:14; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5. [§] cf. Exod. 20:11; Ps. 146:6.

tions to go their own ways. ¹⁷ Yet He did not leave Himself without a witness—He did good by giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with joy and gladness.” ¹⁸ Even saying these things, they barely restrained the crowd from sacrificing to them.

¹⁹ But Jewish people came from Antioch and Iconium; and after they won the crowd over and stoned Paul, they were dragging him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. ²⁰ But while the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went back into the city. On the next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe. ²¹ After proclaiming the Good News to that city and making many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch. ²² They were strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to persevere in faith, and saying, “It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God.” ²³ When they had hand-picked elders for them in every community, and prayed with fasting, they placed them in the care of the Lord—in whom they had put their trust.

²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. ²⁵ After speaking the message in Perga, they went down to Attalia. ²⁶ From there they sailed back to Antioch (where they had been entrusted to the gracious care of God for the work now completed). ²⁷ When they arrived and gathered together Messiah’s community, they began to report all that God had done in helping them and that He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ And they stayed quite awhile with the disciples.

Jerusalem Council Rules on Circumcision

15 Now some men coming down from Judea were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” ² When Paul and Barnabas had a big argument and debate with them, the brothers appointed Paul and Barnabas with some others from among them to go up to Jerusalem to the emissaries and elders about this issue.

³ So they were sent on their way by the Antioch community. They were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and they were bringing great joy to all the brothers and sisters. ⁴ When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the community and the emissaries and the elders. They reported all that God had done in helping them.

⁵ But some belonging to the party of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the *Torah* of Moses.”

⁶ The emissaries and elders were gathered together to examine this issue. ⁷ After much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in

† cf. Ps. 81:12; Mic. 4:5. †† cf. Deut. 11:14; Ps. 65:10; Ezek. 34:26; Joel 2:23.

the early days God chose from among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the message of the Good News and believe. ⁸ And God, who knows the heart, testified to them by giving them the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*—just as He also did for us. ⁹ He made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts through faith. ¹⁰ Why then do you put God to the test by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples—which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

¹¹ But instead, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord *Yeshua*, in the same way as they are.”

¹² Then the whole group became silent and were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were describing in detail all the signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. ¹³ After they finished speaking, Jacob answered, “Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has described how God first showed His concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for His Name. ¹⁵ The words of the Prophets agree, as it is written:

¹⁶ “After this I will return
and rebuild the fallen tabernacle of David.
I will rebuild its ruins
and I will restore it,

¹⁷ so that the rest of humanity may seek the Lord—
namely all the Gentiles who are called by My name—
says *ADONAI*,
who makes these things ¹⁸ known from of old.’ ¹⁹

¹⁹ Therefore, I judge not to trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God— ²⁰ but to write to them to abstain from the contamination of idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what is strangled, and from blood. ²¹ For Moses from ancient generations has had in every city those who proclaim him, since he is read in all the synagogues every *Shabbat*.”

Letter to Diaspora Communities

²² Then it seemed good to the emissaries and elders, with the whole community, to choose men from among themselves to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judah (also called Barsabbas) and Silas, leading men among the brethren, ²³ and this letter along with them:

“The emissaries and the elders, your brothers,
To the Gentile brothers of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:
Greetings!

²⁴ “Since we have heard that some from among us have troubled you with words disturbing to your souls, ²⁵ although we gave them no such authorization, ²⁶ it seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul— ²⁷ men who have risked their lives for the

‡ Amos 9:11-12(LXX); cf. Zech. 8:20-23; Dan. 9:19. †† cf. Isa. 45:21(LXX). ††† cf. Exod. 22:31; 34:15-17; Lev. 3:17; 17:8-13; 18:6-26. ††† Some mss. add saying, “You must be circumcised and keep the law,”

name of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ²⁷ We therefore have sent to you Judah and Silas, who themselves will report to you the same things by word of mouth. ²⁸ It seemed good to the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* and to us not to place on you any greater burden than these essentials: ²⁹ that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. By keeping away from these things, you will do well.

Shalom!"

³⁰ So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch; and when they had gathered the whole group together, they delivered the letter. ³¹ The people read it and rejoiced over its encouragement. ³² Judah and Silas, prophets themselves, encouraged the brothers and sisters with a long message and strengthened them.

³³ After spending some time there, they were sent off with *shalom* by the brothers and sisters to those who had sent them. ³⁴ ^{†35} But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, teaching and proclaiming the word of the Lord with many others.

New Teams Strengthen Communities

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's return and visit the brothers and sisters in every city where we have proclaimed the word of the Lord, to see how they are." ³⁷ Barnabas was planning to take along John, called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul was insisting that they shouldn't take him along—the one who had deserted them in Pamphylia, not accompanying them in the work. ³⁹ A sharp disagreement took place, so that they split off from one another. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. ⁴⁰ But Paul selected Silas and went out, being entrusted by the brothers and sisters to the gracious care of the Lord. ⁴¹ He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the communities.

16 Now Paul came to Derbe and Lystra. There was a disciple there named Timothy, son of a woman who was a Jewish believer and a Greek father, ² who was well-spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted this man to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him for the sake of the Jewish people in those places—for they all knew that his father was Greek.

⁴ As they were traveling through the cities, they were handing down the rulings that had been decided upon by the emissaries and elders in Jerusalem, for them to keep. ⁵ So Messiah's communities were strengthened in the faith and kept increasing daily in number.

Going West to Macedonia

⁶ They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* to

[†] Some mss. add verse 34 But it seemed good to Silas to remain there

speak the word in Asia. ^{††7} When they came to Mysia, they were trying to proceed into Bithynia, but the *Ruach* of *Yeshua* would not allow them. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas.

⁹ Now a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man from Macedonia was standing and pleading with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" ¹⁰ As soon as he had seen the vision, immediately we tried to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to proclaim the Good News to them.

¹¹ So we put out to sea from Troas and made a straight course for Samothrace, the next day on to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi—which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia as well as a Roman colony. We stayed in this city for several days.

¹³ On *Yom Shabbat*, we went outside the gate to the river, where we expected a place of prayer to be. We sat down and began speaking with the women who had gathered. ¹⁴ A woman named Lydia—a seller of purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, a God-fearer—was listening. The Lord opened her heart to respond to what Paul was saying.

¹⁵ When she was immersed, along with her household, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my house." And she insisted. [‡]

¹⁶ It so happened that as we were going to prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit of divination, who was bringing her masters much profit from her fortune-telling. ^{††17} Following after Paul and us, she kept shouting, saying, "These men are servants of *El Elyon*, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."

¹⁸ She kept doing this for many days. But Paul was irritated and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Messiah *Yeshua* to come out of her!" And it came out of her that very moment.

¹⁹ But when her masters saw that the hope of profit was gone, they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities.

²⁰ And when they brought them to the chief authorities, they said, "These men are throwing our city into an uproar! Being Jewish, ²¹ they advocate customs which are not permitted for us to accept or practice, [‡] being Romans."

²² Then the crowd joined in the attack on them. So the chief authorities ripped their clothes off them and commanded them to be beaten with rods. ²³ After inflicting many blows on them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to guard them securely.

²⁴ Having received this charge, he threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. ^{†††}

Salvation for a Jailer's Household

²⁵ But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were lis-

^{††} The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey). [‡] cf. 2 Kings 4:8-10. ^{††} cf. Lev. 19:26; Deut. 18:9-10; Jer. 27:9-10. ^{‡‡} cf. Esth. 3:8. ^{†††} cf. Jer. 20:2-3.

tening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a great earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors were unlocked, and everyone's chains came loose.

²⁷ When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Don't harm yourself! We're all here!"

²⁹ The jailer called for lights and rushed in; and trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas.

³⁰ After he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They said, "Put your trust in the Lord *Yeshua* † and you will be saved—you and your household!"

³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him, along with everyone in his household. ³³ He took them that very hour and washed their wounds, and at once he was immersed—he and all his household. ³⁴ The jailer brought them to his house and set food before them, and he was overjoyed that he with his entire household had put their trust in God.

³⁵ When day came, the chief authorities sent their police officers, saying, "Release those men."

³⁶ But the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The chief authorities have sent orders to release you. So come out now, and go in *shalom*."

³⁷ But Paul said to the officers, "They have beaten us publicly without a trial—men who are Roman citizens—and have thrown us into prison. And now they are sending us away secretly? No! Let them come themselves and lead us out!"

³⁸ The police officers reported these words to the chief authorities. They became afraid when they heard they were Romans, ³⁹ so they came and apologized to them. After they escorted them out, they kept begging them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ When Paul and Silas went out of the prison, they visited Lydia's house. And when they saw the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed.

Synagogue Responses Vary

17 After passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As was his custom, Paul went to the Jewish people; and for three *Shabbatot*, he debated the Scriptures with them. ³ He opened them and gave evidence that Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead, saying, "This *Yeshua*, whom I declare to you, is the Messiah." ⁴ Some of them were convinced and became attached to Paul and Silas, as were a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and no small number of the leading women.

⁵ But some of the Jewish people became jealous. Taking some wicked fellows of the marketplace and gathering a crowd, they stirred the city into an uproar. They attacked Jason's house, trying to bring Paul and Silas

out to the mob. ⁶ When they did not find them, they instead began dragging Jason and some of the brethren before the city officials, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here too, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them! They are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, *Yeshua*." ⁸ Hearing these things, the crowd and the city officials were confused. ⁹ But after receiving bail from Jason and the rest, they released them.

¹⁰ As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. Upon arrival, they made their way to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, because they received the message with goodwill, searching the Scriptures each day to see whether these things were true. ¹² Therefore many of them believed, as well as quite a few prominent Greek women and men.

¹³ But when the Jewish people of Thessalonica learned that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Berea, they came there too, agitating and inciting the people. ¹⁴ Then the brothers immediately sent Paul away to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there. ¹⁵ Those escorting Paul brought him as far as Athens. After receiving an order for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, they left.

An Unknown God in Athens

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was aroused within him when he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he was debating in the synagogue with the Jewish people and the God-fearers, as well as in the marketplace every day with all who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What's this babbler trying to say?" while others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign deities"—because he was proclaiming the Good News of *Yeshua* and the resurrection. ¹⁹ So they took Paul to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are talking about? ²⁰ For you are bringing some strange things to our ears, so we want to know what these things mean." ²¹ Now all the Athenians and foreigners visiting there used to pass their time doing nothing but telling or hearing something new.

²² So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I see that in all ways you are very religious. ²³ For while I was passing through and observing the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: 'To an Unknown God.' Therefore what you worship without knowing, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, †† does not live in temples made by hands. ††²⁵ Nor is He served by human hands, as if He needed anything, †† since He Himself gives to everyone life and breath and

† Some mss. add the Messiah

†† cf. Isa. 42:5; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 115:16. ‡ cf. 1 Kings 8:27.

†† cf. Job 22:2; Ps. 50:10-12.

all things. ^{†26} From one He made every nation of men to live on the face of the earth, having set appointed times and the boundaries of their territory. ^{††27} They were to search for Him, and perhaps grope around for Him and find Him. Yet He is not far from each one of us, ^{‡28} for 'In Him we live and move and have our being.'

"As some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His offspring.' ^{‡†29} Since we are His offspring, we ought not to suppose the Deity is like gold or silver or stone, an engraved image of human art and imagination. ^{‡‡30} Although God overlooked the periods of ignorance, now He commands everyone everywhere to repent. ³¹ For He has set a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness, through a Man whom He has appointed. ^{‡‡†} He has brought forth evidence of this to all men, by raising Him from the dead." ³² Now when they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some began scoffing. But others said, "We will hear from you again about this." ³³ So Paul left from their midst. ³⁴ But some men joined with him and believed—among them Dionysius (a member of the council of the Areopagus), a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Many Respond in Corinth

18 After these things, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² There he found a Jewish man named Aquila—a native of Pontus having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all Jewish people to leave Rome. Paul went to see them; ³ and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and began working, for by trade they were tent-makers. ⁴ And he was debating every *Shabbat* in the synagogue, trying to persuade both Jewish and Greek people.

⁵ Now when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul became occupied with the message, urgently testifying to the Jewish people that *Yeshua* is the Messiah. ⁶ But when they resisted and reviled him, he shook out his garments ^{‡‡} and said, "Your blood be upon your own heads—I am clean! ⁵ From now on, I will go to the Gentiles."

⁷ After leaving there, Paul went into the house of a man named Titius Justus, a God-fearer whose house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸ Crispus, the synagogue leader, put his faith in the Lord, along with his whole household. And many of the Corinthians, upon hearing, were believing and being immersed.

⁹ Now the Lord said to Paul through a vision in the night, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent! ¹⁰ For I am with you and no one shall attack you to harm you—many people in this city are for Me."

† cf. Gen. 2:7; Job 27:3. †† cf. Deut. 32:8; Job 12:23. ‡ cf. Deut. 4:7; Jer. 23:23. ††† Quotes from Epimenides and Aratus. ‡‡ cf. Isa. 40:18-19. ‡‡‡ cf. Ps. 2; 9:8; 96:13; 98:9. ‡‡‡ cf. Neh. 5:13. § cf. 2 Sam. 1:16; 1 Kings 2:33; Ezek. 18:13.

¹¹ So he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

¹² But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jewish leaders made a united attack against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat, ¹³ saying, "This man persuades men to worship God contrary to the *Torah*."

¹⁴ But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jewish people, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or a vicious crime, there would be a reason to put up with you, O Jews. ¹⁵ But since it is issues about words, names, and your own law, see to it yourselves. I do not wish to be a judge of these." ¹⁶ And he drove them from the judgment seat. ¹⁷ Then they all grabbed Sosthenes, the synagogue leader, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio paid no attention to these things.

Sailing East to Revisit Communities

¹⁸ Paul, having stayed many more days, said farewell to the brothers and set sail to Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchrea Paul had his hair cut off, for he was keeping a vow. ¹⁹ When they arrived at Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there. But he himself went into the synagogue and debated with the Jewish people. ²⁰ When they asked him to stay longer, he declined, ²¹ instead taking leave of them while saying, "God willing, I'll return to you again."

He set sail from Ephesus. ²² After landing at Caesarea, he went up and greeted Messiah's community; then he went down to Antioch. ²³ After spending some time there, he departed and went one place after another throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

Discipling New Leaders

²⁴ Now a Jewish man named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, well versed in the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. With a fervent spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the facts about *Yeshua*—while only being acquainted with the immersion of John. ²⁶ This man began speaking out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God more accurately.

²⁷ When Apollos wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. Upon arrival, he greatly helped those who by grace had believed. ²⁸ For he powerfully refuted the Jewish people in public, demonstrating through the Scriptures that the Messiah was *Yeshua*.

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul traveled through the upper region and came to Ephesus. He found some disciples ² and said to them, "Did you receive the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* when you believed?"

They replied to him, "No, we've never even heard that there is a *Ruach ha-Kodesh*."

³ He said, "Into what were you immersed?"

They said, "Into John's immersion."

⁴ Paul said, "John immersed with an immersion of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the One coming after him—that is, in *Yeshua*."

⁵ When they heard this, they were immersed in the name of the Lord *Yeshua*. ⁶ And when Paul laid hands upon them, the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* came upon them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷ In all, there were about twelve men.

God's Power Displayed in Ephesus

⁸ Paul went into the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, debating and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when they were hardening and refusing to believe, speaking evil of the Way before the whole group, he withdrew from them, taking the disciples with him, debating daily in the hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia [†] heard the word of the Lord—Jewish as well as Greek people.

¹¹ God was doing extraordinary miracles by Paul's hands, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that touched his skin were brought to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

¹³ But some traveling Jewish exorcists also tried to invoke the name of the Lord *Yeshua*, saying, "I charge you by the *Yeshua* whom Paul preaches." ¹⁴ Seven sons of a Jewish ruling *kohen* named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵ But the evil spirit answered them, "I know *Yeshua* and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

¹⁶ Then the man with the evil spirit sprang at them, subduing and overpowering all of them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known to all who lived in Ephesus, both Jewish and Greek people. Fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord *Yeshua* was being magnified.

¹⁸ Many also of those who had believed came confessing and recounting their practices. ¹⁹ And many of those who practiced magic arts brought their books together in a heap, burning them before everyone. They totaled the value of the books and found it to be about 50,000 pieces of silver. ²⁰ So the word of the Lord was growing in power and prevailing.

Idol-Makers Start a Riot

²¹ Now after these things were accomplished, Paul resolved in the *Ruach* to go to Jerusalem after passing through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." ²² So after sending two who were assisting him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

[†] The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey).

²³ Around that time, there arose no small uproar concerning the Way. ²⁴ For a man named Demetrius—a silversmith, a maker of silver shrines of Artemis—was providing no small amount of business to the craftsmen. ²⁵ He gathered these together, along with those of related occupations, and he said, "Men, you know that our wealth is from this business. ²⁶ You see and hear that not only in Ephesus but also throughout all Asia, Paul has persuaded and perverted a considerable crowd, saying that handmade gods are not gods at all. ^{††27} Not only is there a danger that this trade of ours might come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis might be considered as nothing. She whom all Asia and the world worships might even be thrown down from her majesty."

²⁸ When they heard, they were filled with fury and began shouting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

²⁹ The city was filled with confusion. They rushed into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were travel companions of Paul. ³⁰ Paul was wishing to enter among the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. ³¹ Some of the chiefs of Asia, [‡] being his friends, sent to him and begged him not to surrender himself in the theater.

³² Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion. Most did not know why they had come together. ³³ Some of the crowd solicited Alexander, whom the Jewish people put forward. Alexander motioned with his hand. He wished to offer a defense to the crowd. ³⁴ But recognizing that he was Jewish, for about two hours they all with one voice cried out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

³⁵ After the town clerk quieted the crowd, he said, "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who doesn't know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis and of her image fallen from heaven?"

³⁶ Since these things are undeniable, you must be calm and do nothing reckless. ³⁷ For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor revilers of our goddess. ³⁸ If Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them accuse them.

³⁹ But if you seek anything further, it will be settled in the lawful assembly. ⁴⁰ For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, there being no reason which we are able to give to justify this mob." Upon saying this, he dismissed the assembly.

Escaping Death

20 After the uproar ended, Paul sent for the disciples; and when he had encouraged them and said farewell, he departed to go to Macedonia. ² When he had passed through these parts and given them a great word of encouragement, he came to Greece, ³ where he spent three months. When a plot was formed against him by the Jewish leaders as he was

^{††} cf. Deut. 4:28; Isa. 44:10-20; Jer. 10:3-5. [‡] Lit. Asiarchs

about to sail to Syria, he decided to return via Macedonia. ⁴ Sopater of Berea, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; as well as Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica; Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. ⁵ These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas. ⁶ But we sailed from Philippi after the Days of *Matzah*. In five days we came to them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

⁷ Now on the first day of the week, we gathered to break bread. Paul was talking with them, intending to leave the next day, so he prolonged his speech till midnight. ⁸ There were many lamps in the upper chamber where we were meeting. ⁹ Now a young man named Eutyclus was sitting in a windowsill, sinking into a deep sleep as Paul kept on talking. Overcome by sleep, he fell from the third story and was picked up—dead.

¹⁰ But Paul went down, fell on him, and threw his arms around him. He said, "Don't be upset, for his life is within him." ^{††}

¹¹ After he went back up and broke the bread and ate, he talked with them a long while until daybreak and then left. ¹² So they took the boy away alive, greatly relieved.

Prophetic Warnings

¹³ But we went on ahead to the ship and set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul aboard there—for so he had arranged, intending himself to travel there by land. ¹⁴ When he met us at Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene. ¹⁵ Sailing from there, we arrived the next day opposite Chios; the next day we crossed over to Samos, and the day after that we came to Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus so that he might not spend much time in Asia, because he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, by the day of *Shavuot*.

¹⁷ From Miletus, dispatching someone to Ephesus, he called for the elders of the community. ¹⁸ When they came to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know how I behaved among you all the time from the first day I set foot in Asia, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and tears and trials which fell upon me through the plots of the Jewish leaders. ²⁰ I did not shrink back from proclaiming to you anything that was profitable, teaching you publicly as well as from house to house, ²¹ testifying to both Jewish and Greek people repentance to God and trust in our Lord *Yeshua*."

²² "And now, look, bound by the *Ruach*, I am going to Jerusalem—not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* bears witness to me from city to city, saying that bondage and afflictions await me. ²⁴ However, I don't consider my life of any value, except that I might finish my course and the office I received from the Lord *Yeshua*, to declare the Good News of the grace of God.

²⁵ "Now, look! I know that none of you, among whom I have gone proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again. ²⁶ Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all. ²⁷ For I did not shrink back from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

²⁸ "Take care of yourselves and all the flock of which the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* has made you overseers, to shepherd the community of God—which He obtained with the blood of His own. ²⁹ I know that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Even from among yourselves will arise men speaking perversions, to draw the disciples away after themselves. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that night and day for three years I did not stop warning you with tears.

³² "Now I commit you to God and the word of His grace, which is strong to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who have been made holy. ³³ I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands of mine have provided for my own needs as well as for those with me. ³⁵ In all things I have shown you an object lesson—that by hard work one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord *Yeshua*, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" ^{‡‡}

³⁶ When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ They all began weeping and falling upon Paul's neck and kissing him, ³⁸ grieving most of all over the statement he made that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

Going to Jerusalem despite Warnings

21 After tearing ourselves away from them and setting sail, we set a straight course to Cos, the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. ² Finding a ship crossing to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. ³ When we came in sight of Cyprus, passing it by on the left, we kept sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre—for there the ship was to unload the cargo. ⁴ We looked up the disciples and stayed there seven days. They kept telling Paul through the *Ruach* not to set foot in Jerusalem.

⁵ When our days there were over, we departed and went on our journey. They all, with wives and children, accompanied us until we were outside the city. After kneeling down on the shore and praying, ⁶ we said farewell to one another. Then we boarded the ship, and they returned home.

⁷ When we had finished the trip from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. We greeted the brothers and sisters and stayed with them for one day. ⁸ On the next day, we departed and came to Caesarea. We entered the home of Philip, the proclaimer of Good News, who was one of the seven, and we stayed with him. ⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

[†] The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey). ^{††} cf. 1 Kings 17:21; 2 Kings 4:34.

[‡] cf. Gen. 22:2, 8; Luke 22:20; Heb. 9:12; Rev. 5:9-10. ^{‡‡} cf. Ezek. 22:27. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Matt. 10:8.

¹⁰ While we stayed there for a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ He came to us, took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet, and said, "The *Ruach ha-Kodesh* says this: 'In this way shall the Jewish people in Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

¹² When we heard these things, both we and the local people urged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.

¹³ Then Paul responded, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but to die for the name of the Lord *Yeshua*!"

¹⁴ Since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, saying only, "May the Lord's will be done."

¹⁵ After these days, we packed and started going up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ Some of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, bringing us to Mnason of Cyprus—one of the early disciples by whom we might be hosted.

Advice from Jacob and the Elders

¹⁷ When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers and sisters welcomed us gladly. ¹⁸ On the next day, Paul went in with us to Jacob; all the elders were present. ¹⁹ After greeting them, he reported to them in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his service. ²⁰ And when they heard, they began glorifying God.

They said, "You see, brother, how many myriads there are among the Jewish people who have believed—and they are all zealous for the *Torah*. ²¹ They have been told about you—that you teach all the Jewish people among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or to walk according to the customs. ²² What's to be done then? No doubt they will hear that you have come.

²³ "So do what we tell you. We have four men who have a vow on themselves. ^{†24} Take them, and purify yourself ^{††} along with them and pay their expenses, so that they may shave their heads. That way, all will realize there is nothing to the things they have been told about you, but that you yourself walk in an orderly manner, keeping the *Torah* .

²⁵ "As for Gentiles who have believed, however, we have written by letter what we decided—for them to abstain from what is offered to idols, and from blood, and from what is strangled, and from immorality."

²⁶ The next day Paul took the men, purifying himself along with them. He went into the Temple, announcing when the days of purification would be completed and the sacrifice would be offered for each one of them.

Trouble at the Temple

²⁷ When the seven days were about to be completed, the Jewish leaders from Asia [‡] saw Paul in the Temple

† cf. Num. 6:13-21. †† cf. Num. 19:17-22; Acts 24:18.

and began stirring up the whole crowd. They grabbed him, ²⁸ shouting, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching all men everywhere against our people and the *Torah* and this place. Besides, he has even brought Greeks into the Temple and defiled ^{‡†} this holy place!"

²⁹ For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they assumed that Paul had brought him into the Temple. ³⁰ The whole city was stirred up, and the people rushed together. They grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the Temple, and the gates were shut at once.

³¹ As they were trying to kill him, news came to the commander of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in chaos. ³² Immediately he took soldiers and centurions and rushed down to them. Upon seeing the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the commander came up, arrested Paul, ordered him to be bound with two chains, and began investigating what he had done. ³⁴ Some in the crowd shouted one thing, and some another. As he could not determine the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into headquarters.

³⁵ When he came to the steps, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd.

³⁶ For the multitude of people that followed kept shouting, "Away with him!"

³⁷ As Paul was about to be brought into the headquarters, he said to the commander, "Can I say something to you?"

The commander said, "You know Greek? ³⁸ Then you're not the Egyptian who stirred up a rebellion some time ago—and led four thousand men of the Assassins out into the desert?"

³⁹ Paul said, "I am a Jewish man from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city. I beg you, let me speak to the people."

⁴⁰ When the commander had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the people with his hand. When there was a great hush, he spoke to them in Aramaic, [‡] saying:

Paul's Testimony on the Temple Stairs

22 "Brothers and fathers, listen to my defense which I now present to you." ² When they heard that Paul was addressing them in Aramaic, they became even more quiet. Then he said, ³ "I am a Jewish man, born in Tarsus of Cilicia but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, trained strictly according to the *Torah* of our fathers, being zealous for God just as all of you are today. ⁴ I persecuted this Way to the death, arresting both men and women and throwing them in prisons— ⁵ as the *kohen gadol* and all the council of elders can testify about me. I also received

‡ *The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey); cf. Acts 24:19; 27:2.* †† *Lit. made common or unholy* ‡‡ *Lit. the Hebrew dialect*

letters from them to the brothers, and I went to Damascus to bring back to Jerusalem even those who were there in chains—to be punished.

⁶“But it happened that as I was traveling and drawing near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly flashed all around me. ⁷I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?’

⁸“I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

“He said to me, ‘I am *Yeshua ha-Natzrati*, whom you are persecuting.’

⁹“Now those who were with me saw the light, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ So I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’

“And the Lord said to me, ‘Get up, and go to Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been appointed to do.’

¹¹“But since I could not see because of the brilliance of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus. ¹² Then a certain Ananias—a devout man according to the *Torah*, well spoken of by all the Jewish people living there—

¹³ came to me. Standing before me, he said to me, ‘Brother Saul, look up!’ In that very moment, I looked and saw him!

¹⁴“And he said, ‘The God of our fathers handpicked you to know His will—to see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be a witness for Him to all people of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ Now why are you waiting? Get up and be immersed, and wash away your sins, calling on His Name.’

¹⁷“It happened that when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the Temple, I fell into a trance; ¹⁸ and I saw Him saying to me, ‘Hurry! Get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your witness about Me.’

¹⁹“And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another, I was imprisoning and beating those trusting in You. ²⁰ Even when the blood of Your witness Stephen was spilled, I too was standing by and approving, and guarding the clothing of those who were killing him.’

²¹“And he said to me, ‘Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

²² Up to this statement they listened to him. Then they raised their voices, saying, “Away from the earth with this fellow! For he’s not fit to live!”

The Romans Intervene

²³ As they were crying out and flinging off their cloaks and throwing dust into the air, ²⁴ the commander ordered Paul to be brought into headquarters. He said Paul should be examined by lashing, so that he might find out why they were shouting against him so. ²⁵ But when they stretched him out with straps, Paul said to the centurion standing there, “Is it legal for you

to scourge a man who is a Roman citizen without due process?”

²⁶ Now when the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and reported it, saying, “What are you going to do? For this man is Roman.”

²⁷ The commander came and said to him, “Tell me, are you Roman?”

And he said, “Yes.”

²⁸ The commander answered, “I bought this citizenship for a large sum.”

Paul said, “But I was born so.”

²⁹ Therefore, those who were about to interrogate him instantly drew back from him. And the commander also was afraid when he found out that Paul was a Roman and that he had bound him.

Delivered to the Council

³⁰ But on the next day, desiring to know exactly why Paul had been accused by the Judeans, he released him and commanded the ruling *kohanim* and all the Sanhedrin to meet together. And he brought Paul and set him before them.

23 Paul, looking intently at the Sanhedrin, said, “Brothers, I have lived my life in all good conscience for God up to this day.” ² But the *kohen gadol* Ananias ordered those standing by him to strike him on the mouth.

³ Then Paul said to him, “God is going to strike you on the mouth, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit judging me according to the *Torah*, and yet in violation of the *Torah* you order me to be struck?” ^{††}

⁴ Those standing nearby said, “Do you insult God’s *kohen gadol*?”

⁵ Paul said, “I didn’t know, brothers, that he is the *kohen gadol*. For it has been written, ‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’” [‡]

⁶ But recognizing that one group was Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Sanhedrin, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees! I am on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead!”

⁷ When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. ⁸ For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection or angel or spirit, but the Pharisees affirm them all.

⁹ Then there was a great uproar. Some of the *Torah* scholars of the Pharisees’ party stood up and protested sharply, “We find nothing wrong with this man! What if a spirit or angel has spoken to him?”

¹⁰ As a big dispute was developing, the commander was afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them. So he ordered the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them and to bring him into headquarters.

¹¹ The following night the Lord stood beside Paul and said, “Take courage! For just as you have testified

† cf. 2 Sam. 16:13.

†† cf. Lev. 19:15; Deut. 25:2. ‡ Exod. 22:28.

about Me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome!"

Conspiracy to Kill Paul

¹² When it was day, the Judean leaders formed a conspiracy. They bound themselves by an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than 40 who formed this plot. ¹⁴ They went to the ruling *kohanim* and elders and said, "We have bound ourselves with a solemn oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ So now you and the Sanhedrin serve notice to the commander to bring him down to you—like you are about to investigate his case more thoroughly. But we are ready to kill him before he comes near."

¹⁶ But the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush. He went into the headquarters and told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has a message for him."

¹⁸ So the centurion took him and led him to the commander and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has something to say to you."

¹⁹ The commander took him by the hand, stepped aside, and began asking him privately, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

²⁰ And he said, "The Judean leaders have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the Sanhedrin tomorrow—as if they are about to investigate more thoroughly about him. ²¹ But do not give in to them, for more than 40 of them have bound themselves by an oath not to eat or drink until they have killed him. Even now, they are ready and waiting for your consent."

²² So the commander dismissed the young man, charging him, "Tell no one that you have informed me about these things."

Escorted to Caesarea

²³ Calling two of his centurions, he said, "At the third hour of the night, † prepare two hundred soldiers, along with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, to proceed as far as Caesarea. ²⁴ Also provide mounts for Paul to ride, so that he might be brought safely to Felix the governor."

²⁵ He wrote a letter to this effect:

²⁶ "Claudius Lysias,

To the Most Excellent Governor Felix:

Greetings!

²⁷ "This man was seized by the Judean leaders and was about to be killed by them, when I came on the scene with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he is a Roman citizen. ²⁸ Desiring to know the charge of which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their Sanhedrin. ²⁹ I found that he was ac-

† 9 p.m.

cused concerning issues of their law, but charged with nothing worthy of death or imprisonment. ³⁰ When I was informed that there was a plot against the man, I sent him to you immediately, also ordering his accusers to state before you what they have against him."

³¹ So the soldiers, in keeping with their orders, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² On the next day, they returned to headquarters, leaving the horsemen to go on with him. ³³ When they came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul before him. ³⁴ Upon reading the letter, the governor asked what province he was from. When he learned that Paul was from Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, "I will give you a hearing when your accusers have arrived also." Then he gave orders for Paul to be guarded in Herod's Praetorium.

Defense Before Governor Felix

24 After five days, the *kohen gadol* Ananias came down with some of the elders and an attorney named Tertullus. They brought formal charges against Paul before the governor. ² When Paul was called in, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, "We are enjoying much peace through you, and reforms are introduced for this nation because of your foresight. ³ We acknowledge this, most excellent Felix, in every way and every place with all gratitude.

⁴ "But in order that I may not weary you any longer, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. ⁵ For we have found this man to be a pest, stirring up riots among all the Jewish people throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the *Natzratim*. ⁶ He even tried to defile the Temple, but we seized him. (7) †† By examining him yourself, you will be able to learn from him all these things about which we accuse him."

⁹ The Judean leaders also joined in the attack, affirming that these things were true. ¹⁰ When the governor nodded for him to speak, Paul responded: "Knowing that you have been judge over this nation for many years, I gladly make my own defense. ¹¹ As you can verify, it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹² They did not find me arguing with anyone or inciting a riot—not in the Temple or in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. ¹³ Nor can they prove to you the charges they now bring against me.

¹⁴ "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way (which they call a sect), I worship the God of our fathers, ‡ believing everything written in the *Torah* and the Prophets. ¹⁵ In God I have a hope—which these men also wait for—that there will surely be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous. ††

†† Some mss. add *We wanted to judge him according to our own Torah. But the commander Lysias came along, and with much violence took him out of our hands, ordering his accusers to come before you ‡ cf. Exod. 3:15. †† cf. Dan. 12:2; Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:12-14.*

¹⁶ “Therefore I do my best always to have a clear conscience before both God and men. ¹⁷ Now after several years, I came to bring *tzedakah* to my country for the poor and to present offerings. ¹⁸ As I was doing this, they found me in the Temple, having been purified—without any crowd or uproar. ¹⁹ But there were some Jewish people from Asia, who ought to be here before you to press charges if they have anything against me. ²⁰ Or let these men themselves tell what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the Sanhedrin— ²¹ except for this one cry I shouted out while standing among them: ‘It is about the resurrection of the dead that today I am on trial before you.’”

In Prison for Two Years

²² But Felix, having a rather extensive knowledge of the Way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the commander comes down, I will rule on your case.” ²³ Then he gave the centurion orders for Paul to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from attending to his needs.

²⁴ Now some days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and listened to him speak about faith in Messiah *Yeshua*. ²⁵ But as he was arguing about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became afraid and said, “Go away for now! When I find time, I will summon you.”

²⁶ At the same time too, he was hoping that money would be given to him by Paul; so he sent for him frequently and would talk with him. ²⁷ But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and wishing to do the Judean leaders a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

Appeal to Caesar

25 Three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. ² There the ruling *kohanim* and the leading Judeans brought charges against Paul. They were urging him, ³ asking a favor—to have Paul sent to Jerusalem, planning an ambush to kill him on the road.

⁴ Festus then answered that Paul was being guarded at Caesarea, and that he himself was about to go there shortly. ⁵ “So then,” he said, “let the prominent men among you go down with me; and if there is any wrong in the man, let them accuse him.”

⁶ After spending not more than eight to ten days with them, he went down to Caesarea. The next day, he sat on the judgment seat and ordered Paul to be brought in. ⁷ When he arrived, the Judeans who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing against him many serious charges which they could not prove.

⁸ Paul said in his defense, “I have committed no offense against the *Torah* of the Jewish people, or against the Temple, or against Caesar.”

⁹ But Festus, wanting to do the Jewish leaders a favor, said to Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem to be tried before me?”

¹⁰ But Paul said, “I am standing before Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Judeans, as you very well know. ¹¹ If then I am in the wrong and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not seek to escape death. But if there is nothing to their charges, no one can turn me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!”

¹² Then when Festus had consulted with the council, he responded, “You have appealed to Caesar—to Caesar you shall go!”

Festus Seeks Agrippa’s Counsel

¹³ Now after several days had passed, king Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus. ¹⁴ While they were staying there several days, Festus laid Paul’s case before the king, saying, “There is a man left behind as a prisoner by Felix.

¹⁵ When I was in Jerusalem, the ruling *kohanim* and elders of the Judeans brought charges against him, asking for a judgment against him. ¹⁶ I answered them that it is not Roman practice to turn over anyone before the accused meets his accusers face to face and has an opportunity to make his defense concerning the charges. ¹⁷ So when they came together here, I did not delay, but on the next day sat on the judgment seat and ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸ When the accusers stood up, they were not bringing a charge of what crimes I suspected. ¹⁹ Instead, they had certain issues with him about their own religion and about a certain *Yeshua*, who had died, whom Paul claimed to be alive.

²⁰ “Since I was at a loss as to how to investigate these matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried there in regard to them. ²¹ But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the decision of His Majesty the Emperor, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to Caesar.”

²² Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear the man myself.”

“Tomorrow,” he said, “you shall hear him.”

²³ So on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with great pageantry. They entered the audience hall with the commanders and the most prominent men of the city. Then at the order of Festus, Paul was brought in.

²⁴ Festus said, “King Agrippa and all present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Judean population petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting out that he ought not live any longer. ²⁵ But I found that he had done nothing deserving of death; and when he himself appealed to His Majesty the Emperor, I decided to send him. ²⁶ Yet I have nothing specific to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you—and especially before you, king Agrippa—so that after the investigation has taken place, I might have something to write. ²⁷ For it

seems illogical to me when sending a prisoner, not to report also the charges against him.”

Defense before King Agrippa

26 Agrippa said to Paul, “It is permitted for you to speak for yourself.”

Then Paul stretched out his hand and began his defense. ²“Concerning all I am accused of by the Judean leaders, I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that it is before you that I am about to make my defense today— ³since you are especially knowledgeable about all Jewish customs and issues. Therefore I beg you to listen patiently to me.

⁴“Now all the Jewish people have known my manner of life ever since my youth, starting from the beginning in my own nation and also in Jerusalem. ⁵They have known about me for a long time—if they were willing to testify—that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee.

⁶“Yet now I stand here being judged for the hope in the promise made by God to our fathers. ⁷It is the promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this hope I am accused by Jewish people, O king! ⁸Why is it judged incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

⁹“In fact, I myself thought it was necessary to do many things in opposition to the name of *Yeshua ha-Natzrati*. ¹⁰And that is what I did in Jerusalem. Not only did I lock up many of the *kedoshim* in prisons by the authority I received from the ruling *kohanim*, but I cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. ¹¹I tried to cause them to blaspheme by punishing them often in the synagogues. In furious rage against them, I persecuted them even in foreign cities.

¹²“While journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the ruling *kohanim*, ¹³at midday, O king, I saw on the road a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those traveling with me. ¹⁴When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against goads!’

¹⁵“Then I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

“And the Lord said, ‘I am *Yeshua*—whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶But get up, and stand on your feet. † For I have appeared to you for this purpose—to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things you have seen as well as to the things I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷I will rescue you †† from your own people, and from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you, ¹⁸to open their eyes—so they may turn from darkness to light ‡ and from the power of *satan* to God, that they may receive release from sins as well as a place

among those who are made holy through trusting in Me.’

¹⁹“Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. ²⁰Rather, I kept declaring—first to those in Damascus, and then Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also the Gentiles—that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds consistent with that repentance.

²¹“For this reason some Judeans seized me in the Temple and tried to put me to death. ²²Since I have had God’s help, to this day I have stood here testifying to both small and great. I am saying nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to happen— ²³that the Messiah was to suffer and that, being first to rise from the dead, He would proclaim light both to our people and to the nations. ††”

²⁴As Paul was thus making his defense, Festus says with a loud voice, “You’re crazy, Paul! Your great learning is driving you insane!”

²⁵But Paul declares, “I am not insane, most noble Festus! Rather I am speaking the sober truth. ²⁶For the king knows about these things, and I speak freely to him, since I am convinced that none of these things escape his notice—for this was not done in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do believe!”

²⁸Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time you are trying to persuade me to be Messianic!” ††

²⁹And Paul said, “Whether short or long, I would pray to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today would be such as I am—except for these chains!”

³⁰Then the king stood up, as well as the governor, Bernice, and those sitting with them. ³¹When they had gone away, they began talking among themselves, saying, “This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains.”

³²Then Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free, if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

Sailing for Rome

27 When it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they handed Paul and some other prisoners over to a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan Cohort. ²So we boarded a ship from Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, and we set out to sea—accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica.

³The next day we set down at Sidon. Julius, treating Paul kindly, let him go to his friends to receive care.

⁴Setting out to sea from there, we sailed under the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds were against us.

⁵When we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came down to Myra in Lysia. ⁶There the centurion found a ship from Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board.

† cf. Ezek. 2:1; Dan. 10:11. †† cf. Jer. 1:8, 19. ‡ cf. Isa. 35:5; 42:7, 16.

†† cf. Isa. 42:6; 49:6. †† Greek *Christianos* †† *M'shichim*

⁷ Sailing slowly for a number of days, with difficulty we made it to Cnidus. As the wind did not allow us to go further, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone. ⁸ Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

⁹ Since considerable time had passed and the voyage was already dangerous because the Fast [†] had already gone by, Paul kept warning them, ¹⁰ telling them, “Men, I can see that the voyage is about to end in disaster and great loss—not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives!”

¹¹ But the centurion was persuaded more by the pilot and the captain of the ship than by what was said by Paul. ¹² And because the harbor was unsuitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to set out to sea from there—if somehow they might reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete facing northeast and southeast, and spend the winter there.

Storm and Shipwreck

¹³ When the south wind blew gently, supposing they had obtained their purpose, they raised the anchor and started coasting along the shore by Crete. ¹⁴ But before long, a hurricane-force wind called “the Northeaster” swept down from the island. ¹⁵ When the ship was caught and could not face into the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶ As we ran under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were barely able to get control of the dinghy. ¹⁷ When the crew had hoisted it up, they made use of ropes to undergird the ship. Then fearing they might run aground on the Syrtis, ^{††} they let down the anchor and so were driven along. ¹⁸ But as we were violently battered by the storm, the next day they began throwing cargo overboard. ¹⁹ On the third day, they threw out the ship’s gear with their own hands. ²⁰ With neither sun nor stars appearing for many days, and no small storm pressing on us, all hope of our survival was vanishing.

²¹ As they had long been without food, Paul stood up in their midst and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not sailed from Crete, to avoid this disaster and loss. ²² Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you—but only of the ship. ²³ For this very night, there came to me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve. ²⁴ He said, ‘Do not fear, Paul. You must stand before Caesar; and indeed, God has granted you all who are sailing with you.’ ²⁵ So take heart, men, for I trust God that it will be exactly as I have been told. ²⁶ But we must run aground on some island.”

²⁷ Now when the 14th night had come, as we were drifting across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors began to sense that they were nearing some land. ²⁸ So they took soundings and found the water was 20 fathoms deep. [‡] A bit farther along, they took

another sounding and found it was 15 fathoms deep. ²⁹ Fearing that we might run aground on the rocks, they threw out four anchors from the stern. They were longing for day to come.

³⁰ Now the sailors were trying to escape from the ship and had lowered the dinghy into the sea, pretending they were going to put out anchors from the bow. ³¹ Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men remain on the ship, you cannot be saved!”

³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the dinghy and let it drift away. ³³ As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, “Today is the 14th day that you have kept waiting and going without food, having taken nothing. ³⁴ Therefore, I urge you to take some food—for this is for your survival, since not one of you will lose a hair from his head.”

³⁵ And when he had said these things, he took bread, gave thanks to God before them all, broke it, and began to eat. ³⁶ Then all were encouraged and took some food themselves. ³⁷ (In all we were 276 persons on the ship.)

³⁸ When they had eaten enough, they began to lighten the ship, throwing the wheat into the sea. ³⁹ Then when daylight came, they did not recognize the land; but they noticed a bay with a beach, where they planned to run the ship aground if they could. ⁴⁰ So they cut off the anchors and left them in the sea, while loosening the ropes of the rudders at the same time. Then, hoisting the forward sail to the wind, they made for the beach. ⁴¹ But they struck a sandbar between the seas and ran the ship aground. The bow stuck fast and remained immovable, and the stern began to break up by the pounding of the waves.

⁴² The plan of the soldiers was to kill the prisoners, so that none of them would escape by swimming away. ⁴³ But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those able to swim to throw themselves overboard first and get to land— ⁴⁴ and the rest to get there on boards and pieces of the ship. And in this way all were brought safely to land.

From Malta to Rome

28 Once safely ashore, we learned that the island was called Malta. ² The natives showed us unusual kindness. Because it had started raining and it was cold, they kindled a fire and welcomed us all.

³ But when Paul had gathered a bundle of brushwood and placed it on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. ⁴ When the natives saw the snake hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, “No doubt this man is a murderer! Though he has been saved from the sea, Justice ^{‡†} has not allowed him to live.”

[†] After Yom Kippur
An area known for shallow water and shifting sandbars. [‡] 20 fathoms=120 feet; 15 fathoms=90 feet.

^{‡†} Greek Dike

⁵ However, Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ They were expecting him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead—but after they waited a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and began to say he was a god.

⁷ Now in the vicinity around that place were lands belonging to the most prominent man of the island, named Publius. He welcomed us and hosted us warmly for three days. ⁸ It so happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed sick with a fever and dysentery. Paul visited him and, when he had prayed and laid hands on him, he healed him. ⁹ After this happened, the rest of the sick on the island started coming and getting healed. ¹⁰ They also heaped honors on us; and when we sailed, they put on board all the supplies we needed.

¹¹ After three months, we set sail in a ship from Alexandria that had wintered at the island, with the Twin Brothers † as its figurehead. ¹² Setting down at Syracuse, we stayed there three days. ¹³ From there we got underway †† and reached Rhegium; and a day later a south wind came up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found some brothers and sisters, and we were invited to stay with them for seven days. And in this way we came to Rome.

¹⁵ Now the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. When Paul saw them, he gave thanks to God and took courage. ¹⁶ When we entered Rome, Paul was permitted to remain in his own quarters, with a soldier guarding him.

Paul Keeps Spreading the Good News

¹⁷ It happened that after three days, Paul called together those who were the prominent Jewish leaders. When they had gathered he said to them, “Brothers, although I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. ¹⁸ When they examined me, they wanted to release me because there was no basis for the death penalty. ¹⁹ But when the Judean leaders protested, I was forced

† Greek *Dioscuri*

Lit. took away

††

to appeal to Caesar—not that I had any charge to bring against my own nation. ²⁰ For this reason, therefore, I have requested to see you and to speak with you—since it is for the hope of Israel that I am bearing this chain.”

²¹ They said to him, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you.

²² But we think it appropriate to hear from you about what you think. For indeed, it is known to us that regarding this sect, it is spoken against everywhere.”

²³ They set a day to meet Paul and came to him at his quarters in large numbers. From morning until evening he was explaining everything to them, testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them about *Yeshua* from both the *Torah* of Moses and the Prophets. ²⁴ Some were convinced by what he said, while others refused to believe. ²⁵ So when they disagreed among themselves, they began leaving after Paul had said one last statement: “The *Ruach ha-Kodesh* rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, ²⁶ saying,

“Go to this people and say,

“You will keep on hearing but will never understand; you will keep looking, but will never see.

²⁷ For the heart of this people has become dull, their ears can barely hear, and they have shut their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts.

Then they would turn back, and I would heal them.” ‡

²⁸ “Therefore, let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!” ²⁹ ††

³⁰ Paul remained two whole years in his own rented quarters and continued to welcome all who came to him— ³¹ proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah with all boldness and without hindrance.

‡ *Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:15.* †† *Some mss. insert When he had said these words, the Jewish people left, having a great dispute among themselves*

Romans

Introduction

Romans is considered in many ways to be Paul's greatest letter. In it, Paul outlines his theology in broad, majestic terms while also giving attention to practical matters. We can date Romans with some confidence to the winter of 56-57 C.E., written at the end of Paul's third journey, possibly from Corinth (see 1 Cor. 16:6). Uniquely among New Covenant communities, the Roman community seems to have begun independently of the emissaries, perhaps by Jewish people from Rome who had visited Jerusalem during the of Acts 2 and come to faith there. The Roman historian Suetonius and Acts 18:2 both tell us that there were disturbances in Rome over the proclamation of , and in 49 C.E. the emperor Claudius expelled the Jewish leaders, making little distinction between 's followers and others—thus Priscilla and Aquila came from Rome to Corinth, where they met Paul. By the time Jewish leaders could return about a decade later, two things would have happened: first, the Gentile component of the Messianic communities would have grown considerably; and second, the broader Jewish community would have resented the believers whose "caused" the expulsion. By the time Paul writes, we are dealing with a community with growing tensions: between Gentile and Jewish believers, between Messianic communities and the larger Jewish community, and between believers and the secular society. Paul's audience then is a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile believers, with the latter probably in the majority.

From chapter 15, we learn that Paul will soon be heading to Jerusalem to bring an offering from the Gentile believers. Then it will be on to Spain via Rome in order to continue spreading the Good News there with the support of the community in Rome. Each travel plan underscores an important emphasis in Paul's letter to the Romans. First is the nature of the Good News and its proclamation (1:16-17), which develops into a full discussion of sin, the way to salvation through faith in , the place of the in Messiah's community, and life in the Spirit. Second is the relationship of Jewish and Gentile people living in community and issues regarding those with strong and weak convictions. In matters both theological and practical, the letter provides important instruction for unity within this mixed community. Relating to God and to community—these are two timeless emphases of Paul in all his writings!

A Look Inside Romans

Introducing Paul and His Message

Eager to Visit

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

Yet All Are Guilty

God's Judgment on Unrighteousness

Jewish People Fall Short Too

No One Is Acceptable

How God Accepts Us

Abraham Set Right by Faith

Trusting in the Promise

with God through Messiah

Yet Sin Reigns through Death

Who Is Your Master?

Two Laws at War

Life in the

The Coming Glory

The Role of Israel

Misdirected Zeal

Israel Not Rejected

The Mystery Revealed!

Be Dead to Self

Respecting Authority
 Unity in Community
 Salvation for the Gentiles
 Going to the Ends of the Earth
 Welcome the Apostolic Team
 Closing Blessing

Introducing Paul and His Message

¹ Paul, a slave of Messiah *Yeshua*, called to be an emissary and set apart for the Good News of God, ² which He announced beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures.

³ Concerning His Son, He came into being from the seed of David according to the flesh.

⁴ He was appointed *Ben-Elohim* in power

according to the *Ruach* of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

He is Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord.

⁵ Through Him we have received grace and the office of emissary, to bring about obedience of faith among all the nations on behalf of His name. ⁶ And you also are called to *Yeshua* the Messiah.

⁷ To all those in Rome, loved by God, called to be *kedoshim*:

Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah!

Eager to Visit

⁸ First, I thank my God through Messiah *Yeshua* for all of you, because your faithfulness is made known throughout the whole world. ⁹ For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Good News of His Son. How unceasingly I make mention of you, ¹⁰ always pleading in my prayers, if somehow by God's will now at last I will be granted a good journey to come to you. ¹¹ For I long to see you, so I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you. ¹² That is to say, we would be encouraged together by one another's faithfulness—both yours and mine.

¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, [†] that many times I planned to come to you (though I was prevented until now)—so I might have some fruit among you also, just as I have among the rest of the nations. ¹⁴ I have an obligation to both Greeks and barbarians, to both the wise and the foolish. ¹⁵ So I am eager to proclaim the Good News also to you who are in Rome.

[†] *Lit. brothers*

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the Good News, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who trusts—to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ In it the righteousness of God is revealed, from trust to trust. ^{††} As it is written, "But the righteous shall live by *emunah*." [‡]

Yet All Are Guilty

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. In unrighteousness they suppress the truth, ¹⁹ because what can be known about God is plain to them—for God has shown it to them. ²⁰ His invisible attributes—His eternal power and His divine nature—have been clearly seen ever since the creation of the world, being understood through the things that have been made. ^{‡‡} So people are without excuse—²¹ for even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give Him thanks. Instead, their thinking became futile, and their senseless hearts were made dark. ^{‡‡‡} Claiming to be wise, they became fools. ²³ They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an image in the form of mortal man and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. ^{‡‡‡}

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the evil desires of their hearts to impurity, to dishonor their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They traded the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. ²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to shameful passions. Even their women exchanged natural relations for what is against nature. ²⁷ Likewise the men abandoned natural relations with women and were burning with passion toward one another—men committing shameful acts with other men ^{‡‡‡} and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ And just as they did not see fit to recognize God, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what is not fitting. ²⁹ They became filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents. ³¹ They are foolish,

^{††} *Or from trusting-faith to trusting-faith* [‡] *Greek pistis*

^{‡†} *cf. Ps. 19:1-6; Jer. 5:21-22.* ^{‡‡} *cf. 2 Kings 17:15; Isa. 59:1-15; Jer. 2:5; Ps. 14:1-3.* ^{‡‡‡} *cf. Deut. 4:16-18. ‡‡‡ cf. Lev. 18:22; 20:13.*

faithless, heartless, ruthless.³² Though they know God's righteous decree—that those who practice such things deserve death—they not only do them but also approve of others who practice the same.

God's Judgment on Unrighteousness

2 Therefore you are without excuse, O man—every one of you who is judging. For by whatever you judge another, you condemn yourself. For you who judge practice the same things.¹² We know that God's judgment on those who practice such things is based on truth.³ But you, O man—judging those practicing such things yet doing the same—do you suppose that you will escape the judgment of God?⁴ Or do you belittle the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience—not realizing that God's kindness leads you to repentance?

⁵ But by your hard and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed.¹⁶ He will pay back each person according to his deeds.¹⁷ To those who by perseverance in doing good are seeking glory, honor, and immortality—eternal life.⁸ But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—wrath and fury.⁹ There will be trouble and hardship for every human soul that does evil—to the Jew first and also to the Greek.¹⁰ But there will be glory, honor, and *shalom* to everyone who does good—to the Jew first and also to the Greek.¹¹ For there is no partiality with God.¹¹

¹² For all who have sinned outside of *Torah* will also perish outside of *Torah*, and all who have sinned according to *Torah* will be judged by *Torah*.¹³ For it is not the hearers of *Torah* who are righteous before God; rather, it is the doers of *Torah* who will be justified.¹⁴ For when Gentiles, who do not have the *Torah*, do by nature the things of the *Torah*, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the *Torah*.¹⁵ They show that the work of the *Torah* is written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts switching between accusing or defending them¹⁶ on the day when God judges the secrets of men according to my Good News through Messiah *Yeshua*.

Jewish People Fall Short Too

¹⁷ But if you call yourself Jewish and rely upon the *Torah* and boast in God¹⁸ and know His will and determine what matters because you are instructed from the *Torah*—¹⁹ and you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,²⁰ a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the *Torah* the embodiment of knowledge and the truth—

† cf. 2 Sam. 12:5-7; Matt. 7:1-2. †† cf. Deut. 32:34-35. ‡ cf. Ps. 62:12; Prov. 24:12; Matt. 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10; Col. 3:25; 2 Tim. 4:14; 1 Pet. 1:17; Rev. 2:23. †† cf. Deut. 10:17.

²¹ you then who teach another, do you not teach yourself?

You who preach not to steal, do you steal?

²² You who say not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery?

You who detest idols, do you rob temples?

²³ You who take pride in the *Torah*, through your violation of the *Torah*, do you dishonor God?

²⁴ For as it is written, "the name of God is slandered among the nations because of you."¹¹

²⁵ Circumcision is indeed worthwhile if you keep the *Torah*; but if you break the *Torah*, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.¹¹²⁶ Therefore, if the uncircumcised keeps the righteous decrees of the *Torah*, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?¹¹²⁷ Indeed, the one not circumcised physically who fulfills the *Torah* will judge you⁵ who—even with the written code^{5†} and circumcision—break the *Torah*.

²⁸ For one is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision something visible in the flesh.²⁹ Rather, the Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart—in Spirit, not in letter. His praise is not from men, but from God.^{5††}

No One Is Acceptable

3 Then what is the advantage of being Jewish? Or what is the benefit of circumcision?² Much in every way. First of all, they were entrusted with the sayings of God.³ So what if some did not trust? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?⁴ May it never be! Let God be true even if every man is a liar, as it is written,

"that You may be righteous in Your words and prevail when You are judged."^{5†}

⁵ But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? God is not unrighteous to inflict wrath, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.)⁶ May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?⁷ But if by my lie the truth of God abounds to His glory, why am I still judged as a sinner?⁸ And why not say, "Let us do evil, so that good may come"—just as we are being slandered and as some claim that we say. Their condemnation is deserved!

⁹ What then? Are we better than they? No, not at all.^{5††} For we have already made the case that all—both Jewish and Greek people—are under sin.¹⁰ As it is written,

"There is no one righteous—no, not one.

¹¹ There is no one who understands, no one who seeks after God.

¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless.

†† Isa. 52:5b(LXX). ††† cf. Jer. 9:24-26. ††† cf. Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4. § cf. Matt. 12:41-42; 19:28; Luke 11:31; 22:30. §† Lit. letter §†† cf. Gen. 29:35; 49:8. §‡ Ps. 51:4b(50:6b LXX). §†† Or possibly What then do we hold before ourselves as a defense?

There is no one who does good—no, not even one!
¹³ Their throat is an open grave;
 with their tongues they keep deceiving.
 The poison of vipers is under their lips.
¹⁴ Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.
¹⁵ Their feet are swift to shed blood.
¹⁶ Ruin and misery are in their paths,
¹⁷ and the way of *shalom* they have not known.
¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes.” †
¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the *Torah* says, it says
 to those within the *Torah*, so that every mouth may be
 shut and the whole world may become accountable to
 God. ²⁰ For no human, on the basis of *Torah* obser-
 vance, will be set right in His sight ††—for through the
Torah comes awareness of sin.

How God Accepts Us

²¹ But now God’s righteousness apart from the *Torah*
 has been revealed, to which the *Torah* and the
 Prophets bear witness— ²² namely, the righteousness
 of God through putting trust in Messiah *Yeshua*, ‡ to
 all who keep on trusting. For there is no distinction,
²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
²⁴ They are set right as a gift of His grace, through the
 redemption that is in Messiah *Yeshua*. ‡²⁵ God set
 forth *Yeshua* as an atonement, ‡‡ through faith in His
 blood, to show His righteousness in passing over sins
 already committed. ²⁶ Through God’s forbearance, He
 demonstrates His righteousness at the present
 time—that He Himself is just and also the justifier of
 the one who puts his trust in *Yeshua*. ‡‡

²⁷ Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. By what
 principle? Of works? No, but by the principle of faith.
 ‡‡²⁸ For we consider a person to be set right apart
 from *Torah* observance. ²⁹ Is God the God of the Jewish
 people only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles?
 Yes, of the Gentiles also. ³⁰ Since God is One, He will
 set right the circumcised by faith and the uncircum-
 cised through faith. ³¹ Do we then nullify the *Torah*
 through faithfulness? May it never be! On the contrary,
 we uphold the *Torah*.

Abraham Set Right by Faith

4 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefa-
 ther according to the flesh, has found? ² For if
 Abraham was set right by works, he has something to
 boast about—but not before God. ³ For what does the
 Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was
 credited to him as righteousness.” §⁴ Now to the one
 who works, the pay is not credited as a gift, but as
 what is due. ⁵ But to the one who does not work, but
 trusts in Him who justifies the ungodly, his trust is

† *Isa. 59:7-8; Ps. 5:10; 9:28; 13:2-3; 35:2; 139:4; Eccl. 7:20.* †† *cf. Ps. 143:2.* ‡ *Or the faithfulness of Messiah Yeshua*
 ‡† *cf. Isa. 53:10-12.* ‡‡ *Lit. a mercy seat, the place of atonement kaporet* ‡‡‡ *Or the one who lives on the basis of Yeshua’s faithfulness* ‡‡‡ *cf. Eph. 2:8-9.*
 § *Gen. 15:6; cf. Gal. 3:6; Jacob 2:23.*

credited as righteousness—⁶ just as David also speaks
 of the blessing on the man to whom God credits right-
 eousness apart from works:

⁷ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven
 and whose sins are covered.

⁸ Blessed is the man whose sin *ADONAI* will never
 count against him.” §†

⁹ Is this blessing then only on the circumcised, or al-
 so on the uncircumcised? For we say, “trust was credit-
 ed to Abraham as righteousness.” §††

¹⁰ In what state then was it credited? While circum-
 cised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but
 while uncircumcised! ¹¹ And he received the sign of cir-
 cumcision as a seal of the righteousness of the trust
 he had while he was uncircumcised, so he might be
 the father of all who are trusting while uncircum-
 cised—that righteousness might be credited to them
 as well. ¹² Also he is the father of the circumcised, to
 those not only circumcised but also walking in the
 footsteps of the trust of our father Abraham before his
 circumcision. §‡

Trusting in the Promise

¹³ For the promise to Abraham or to his seed—to be-
 come heir of the world—was not through law, but
 through the righteousness based on trust. ¹⁴ For if
 those who are of the *Torah* are heirs, trust has become
 empty and the promise is made ineffective. ¹⁵ For the
Torah brings about wrath; but where there is no law,
 neither is there a violation.

¹⁶ For this reason it depends on trust, so that the
 promise according to grace might be guaranteed to all
 the offspring—not only to those of the *Torah* but also
 to those of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us
 all ¹⁷ (as it is written, “I have made you a father of
 many nations” §††). He is our father in the sight of God
 in whom he trusted, who gives life to the dead and
 calls into existence that which does not exist. ¹⁸ In
 hope beyond hope, he trusted that he would become
 the father of many nations according to what was spo-
 ken—“So shall your descendants be.” §†¹⁹ And without
 becoming weak in faith, he considered his own
 body—as good as dead, since he was already a hun-
 dred years old—and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.
²⁰ Yet he did not waver in unbelief concerning the
 promise of God. Rather, he was strengthened in faith,
 giving glory to God. ²¹ He was fully convinced that
 what God has promised, He also is able to do. §‡²² That
 is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” §††

²³ Now not only for his sake was it written that it was
 credited to him, ²⁴ but for our sake as well. It is credit-
 ed to us as those who trust in Him who raised *Yeshua*
 our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was handed over for our
 transgressions and raised up for the sake of setting us
 right. §§†

§† *Ps. 31:1-2(LXX); cf. Ps. 32:1-2.* §†† *Gen. 15:6.* §‡ *cf. Gen. 17:1ff.* §‡† *Gen. 17:5.* §† *Gen. 15:5.* §‡ *cf. Gen. 18:14.* §§†
cf. Gen. 15:6; 17:17, 21-27; 18:14; 21:2. §§‡ *cf. Isa. 53:4, 11.*

Shalom with God through Messiah

5 Therefore, having been made righteous by trusting, we have *shalom* with God through our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹² Through Him we also have gained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast in the hope of God's glory. ³ And not only that, but we also boast in suffering—knowing that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* who was given to us.

⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Messiah died for the ungodly. ⁷ For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man—though perhaps for a good man someone might even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. ⁹ How much more then, having now been set right by His blood, shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if, while we were yet enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only that, but we also boast in God through our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Yet Sin Reigns through Death

¹² So then, just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, in the same way death spread to all men because all sinned. ¹³ For up until the *Torah*, sin was in the world; but sin does not count as sin when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in a manner similar to the violation of Adam, who is a pattern of the One to come.

¹⁵ But the gracious gift is not like the transgression. For if many died because of the transgression of one man, how much more did the grace of God overflow to many through the gift of one Man— *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹⁶ Moreover, the gift is not like what happened through the one who sinned. For on the one hand, the judgment from one violation resulted in condemnation; but on the other hand, the gracious gift following many transgressions resulted in justification. ^{††17} For if by the one man's transgression, death reigned through the one, [‡] how much more shall those who receive the overflow of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, Messiah *Yeshua*.

¹⁸ So then, through the transgression of one, condemnation came to all men; likewise, through the righteousness of one came righteousness of life to all men. ¹⁹ For just as through the disobedience of one

man, many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of one Man, many will be set right forever. ^{‡†}

²⁰ Now the *Torah* came in so that transgression might increase. But where sin increased, grace overflowed even more— ²¹ so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness, to eternal life through Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord.

Who Is Your Master?

6 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound? ² May it never be! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Or do you not know that all of us who were immersed into Messiah *Yeshua* were immersed into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried together with Him through immersion into death—in order that just as Messiah was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have become joined together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also will be joined together in His resurrection— ⁶ knowing our old man was crucified with Him so that the sinful body might be done away with, so we no longer serve sin. ⁷ For he who has died is set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we have died with Messiah, we believe that we shall also live with Him. ⁹ We know that Messiah, having been raised from the dead, no longer dies; death no longer is master over Him. ¹⁰ For the death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ So also continually count yourselves both dead to sin and alive to God in Messiah *Yeshua*.

¹² Therefore do not let sin rule in your mortal body so that you obey its desires. ¹³ And do not keep yielding your body parts to sin as tools of wickedness; but yield yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your body parts as tools of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! ¹⁶ Do you not know that to whatever you yield yourselves as slaves for obedience, you are slaves to what you obey—whether to sin resulting in death, or to obedience resulting in righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching under which you were placed; ¹⁸ and after you were set free from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.

¹⁹ I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you yielded your body parts as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness, so now yield your body parts as slaves to righteousness, resulting in holiness. ²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness. ²¹ So then, what outcome did

† cf. Isa. 54:17. †† Lit. judgment from one to condemnation ... gift from many trespasses to acquittal ‡ cf. Gen. 2:17; 3:6, 19.

‡† Lit. made righteous

you have that you are now ashamed of? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now, having been set free from sin and having become enslaved to God, you have your fruit resulting in holiness. And the outcome is eternal life. ²³ For sin's payment [†] is death, but God's gracious gift is eternal life in Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord.

Two Laws at War

7 Or do you not know, brothers and sisters (for I speak to those who know law), that the law is master over a person as long as he lives? ² For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives; but if the husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. ³ So then, if she is joined to another man while her husband is living, she will be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law—so she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man.

⁴ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you also were made dead to the *Torah* through the body of Messiah, so that you might be joined to another—the One who was raised from the dead—in order that we might bear fruit for God. ⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions that came through the *Torah* were working in our body parts to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we have been released from the law, having died to what confined us, so that we serve in the new way of the *Ruach* and not in the old way of the letter.

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the *Torah* sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the *Torah*. For I would not have known about coveting if the *Torah* had not said, "You shall not covet." ^{††8} But sin, taking an opportunity, worked in me through the commandment all kinds of coveting. For apart from the *Torah*, sin is dead.

⁹ Once I was alive apart from the *Torah*; but when the commandment came, sin came to life ¹⁰ and I died. The commandment meant for life was found to cause death. ^{††11} Sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ^{††12} So then, the *Torah* is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

¹³ Therefore did that which is good become death to me? May it never be! Rather it was sin working death in me—through that which is good—so that sin might be shown to be sin, and that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. ¹⁴ For we know that the *Torah* is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold to sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand what I am doing—for what I do not want, this I practice; but what I hate, this I do. ¹⁶ But if I do what I do not want to do, then I agree with the *Torah*—that it is good.

¹⁷ So now it is no longer I doing it, but sin dwelling in me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me—that is, in my flesh. For to will is present in me, but to do the good is not. ¹⁹ For the good that I want, I

do not do; but the evil that I do not want, this I practice. ²⁰ But if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I doing it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹ So I find the principle—that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. ²² For I delight in the *Torah* of God with respect to the inner man, ²³ but I see a different law in my body parts, battling against the law of my mind and bringing me into bondage under the law of sin which is in my body parts. ²⁴ Miserable man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God—it is through Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord! ^{‡‡} So then, with my mind I myself serve the *Torah* of God; but with my flesh, I serve the law of sin.

Life in the *Ruach*

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah *Yeshua*. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah *Yeshua* has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what was impossible for the *Torah*—since it was weakened on account of the flesh—God has done. Sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering, He condemned sin in the flesh—⁴ so that the requirement of the *Torah* might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the *Ruach*.

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the *Ruach* set their minds on the things of the *Ruach*. ⁶ For the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the *Ruach* is life and *shalom*. ⁷ For the mindset of the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not submit itself to the law of God—for it cannot. ⁸ So those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ However, you are not in the flesh but in the *Ruach*—if indeed the *Ruach Elohim* dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the *Ruach* of Messiah, he does not belong to Him. ¹⁰ But if Messiah is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. ¹¹ And if the *Ruach* of the One who raised *Yeshua* from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised Messiah *Yeshua* from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His *Ruach* who dwells in you.

¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we do not owe anything to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the *Ruach* you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the *Ruach Elohim*, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall again into fear; rather, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The *Ruach* Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. ^{‡‡17} And if children, also heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Messi-

[†] Or the wages of sin ^{††} Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21. [‡] cf. Lev. 18:5; Deut. 30:19. ^{††} cf. Gen. 3:13.

^{‡‡} Lit. Grace be to God through Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord ^{‡‡†} cf. Hos. 1:10.

ah—if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

The Coming Glory

¹⁸ For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility [†]—not willingly but because of the One who subjected it ^{††}—in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from bondage to decay into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans together and suffers birth pains until now—²³ and not only creation, but even ourselves. We ourselves, who have the firstfruits [‡] of the *Ruach*, groan inwardly as we eagerly wait for adoption—the redemption of our body.

²⁴ For in hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, then we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. ²⁶ In the same way, the *Ruach* helps in our weakness. For we do not know how to pray as we should, but the *Ruach* Himself intercedes for us with groans too deep for words. ²⁷ And He who searches the hearts ^{††} knows the mind of the *Ruach*, because He intercedes for the *kedoshim* according to the will of God.

²⁸ Now we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those whom He predestined, He also called; and those whom He called, He also justified; and those whom He justified, He also glorified.

³¹ What then shall we say in view of these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ^{‡‡32} He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?

³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ^{‡‡‡34} Who is the one who condemns? It is Messiah, ^{‡‡‡} who died, and moreover was raised, [§] and is now at the right hand of God and who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Messiah? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

³⁶ As it is written,

“For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.” ^{§†}

³⁷ But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor prin-

cipalities, nor things present nor things to come, 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 Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord.

The Role of Israel

9 I tell the truth in Messiah—I do not lie, my conscience assuring me in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*—² that my sorrow is great and the anguish in my heart unending. ³ For I would pray that I myself were cursed, banished from Messiah for the sake of my people—my own flesh and blood, ^{§††4} who are Israelites. To them belong the adoption, ^{§‡} and the glory, ^{§††} and the covenants, and the giving of the *Torah*, ^{§†} and the Temple service, ^{§‡} and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs—and from them, according to the flesh, the Messiah, who is over all, God, blessed forever. Amen.

⁶ But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all those who are descended from Israel are Israel, ⁷ nor are they all children because they are Abraham's seed; rather, “Your seed shall be called through Isaac.” ^{§§†8} That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God; rather, the children of the promise are counted as seed. ⁹ For the word of promise is this: “At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.” ^{§§†10} And not only this, but also Rebecca having twins, from one act with our father Isaac. ¹¹ Yet before the sons were even born and had not done anything good or bad—so that God's purpose and choice might stand not because of works but because of Him who calls—¹² it was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.” ^{§§§13} As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” ¹⁸

¹⁴ What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! ¹⁵ For to Moses He says, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” ¹⁹

¹⁶ So then it does not depend on the one who wills or the one who strives, but on God who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I raised you up—to demonstrate My power in you, so My name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” ²⁰¹⁸ So then He has mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills.

¹⁹ You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?” ²⁰ But who in the world are you, O man, who talks back to God? Will what is formed say to the one who formed it, “Why did you make me like this?” ²¹²¹ Does the potter have no right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honor and another for common use? ²² Now

[†] cf. Ps. 39:5-6; Eccl. 1:2. ^{††} cf. Gen. 3:17; 5:29. [‡] cf. Exod. 34:22; Lev. 23:10, 20; Num. 18:12. ^{††} cf. Ps. 139:1-5. ^{‡‡} cf. Ps. 118:6. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Isa. 50:8-9. ^{‡‡‡‡} Some mss. read Messiah *Yeshua* [§] Some mss. add from the dead ^{§†} Ps. 44:23(22)(43:23 LXX); cf. Zech. 11:4, 7.

^{§††} Lit. my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh ^{§‡} cf. Exod. 4:22; Hosea 11:1. ^{§†††} cf. Exod. 40:34; 1 Kings 8:11; Ezek. 1:28. ^{§†} cf. Deut. 4:13-14. ^{§‡} Hebrew *avodah* ^{§§†} Gen. 21:12(LXX). ^{§§‡} Gen. 18:10, 14. ^{§§§} Gen. 25:23. ¹⁸ Mal. 1:2-3. ¹⁹ Exod. 33:19. ²⁰ Exod. 9:16. ²¹ Isa. 29:16(LXX); 45:9.

what if God, willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath designed for destruction? ²³ And what if He did so to make known the riches of His glory on vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory?

²⁴ Even us He called—not only from the Jewish people, but also from the Gentiles— ²⁵ as He says also in Hosea,

“I will call those who were not My people,
‘My people,’
and her who was not loved,
‘Beloved.’

²⁶ And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them,

‘You are not My people,’
there they shall be called sons of the living God.” [†]

²⁷ Isaiah cries out concerning Israel,
“Though the number of *Bnei-Yisrael* be as the sand of the sea,

only the remnant shall be saved.

²⁸ For *ADONAI* will carry out His word upon the earth, bringing it to an end and finishing quickly.” ^{††}

²⁹ And just as Isaiah foretold,
“Unless *ADONAI -Tzva’ot* had left us seed,
we would have become like Sodom and resembled Gomorrah.” [‡]

³⁰ What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness—that is, a righteousness of faith. ³¹ But Israel, who pursued a *Torah* of righteousness, did not reach the *Torah*.

³² Why? Because they pursued it not by faith, but as if it were from works. They stumbled over the stone of stumbling, ³³ just as it is written,

“Behold, I lay in Zion
a stone of stumbling
and a rock of offense,
and whoever believes in Him
shall not be put to shame.” ^{‡†}

Misdirected Zeal

10 Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for Israel is for their salvation.

² For I testify about them that they have zeal for God—but not based on knowledge. ³ For being ignorant of God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Messiah is the goal [‡] of the *Torah* as a means to righteousness for everyone who keeps trusting.

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on *Torah*, “The man who does these things shall live by them.” ^{‡††6} But the righteousness based on faith speaks in this way:

“Do not say in your heart, ^{‡‡}
‘Who will go up into heaven?’ [§]

(that is, to bring Messiah down),
⁷ or, ‘Who will go down into the abyss?’ ^{§†}
(that is, to bring Messiah up from the dead).”

⁸ But what does it say?

“The word is near you,
in your mouth and in your heart,” ^{§††}
—that is, the word of faith that we are proclaiming:

⁹ “For if you confess with your mouth
that *Yeshua* is Lord,
and believe in your heart
that God raised Him from the dead,
you will be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart it is believed for righteousness, and with the mouth it is confessed for salvation.”

¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever trusts in Him will not be put to shame.” ^{§††12} For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all—richly generous to all who call on Him. ¹³ For “Everyone who calls upon the name of *ADONAI* shall be saved.” ^{§††}

¹⁴ How then shall they call on the One in whom they have not trusted? And how shall they trust in the One they have not heard of? And how shall they hear without someone proclaiming? ¹⁵ And how shall they proclaim unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news of good things!” ^{§††16} But not all heeded the Good News. For Isaiah says, “*ADONAI*, who has believed our report?” ^{§††17} So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah.

¹⁸ But I say, have they never heard? Indeed they have, for

“Their voice has gone out into all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.” ^{§§†}

¹⁹ But I say, did Israel not understand? First Moses says,

“I will provoke you to jealousy
by those who are not a nation,
with a nation empty of understanding
I will vex you.” ^{§§†}

²⁰ And Isaiah is so bold as to say,

“I was found by those who did not seek Me;
I became visible to those who did not ask for Me.” ^{§§§}

²¹ But about Israel He says,
“All day long I stretched forth My hands
to a disobedient and contrary people.” ¹⁸

Israel Not Rejected

11 I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? ¹⁹ May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

² God has not rejected His people whom He knew beforehand. ²⁰ Or do you not know what the Scripture

§ Deut. 30:12. §† Deut. 30:13; cf. Ps. 71:20. §†† Deut. 30:14.
§‡ Isa. 28:16. §†† Joel 2:32(LXX); cf. Joel 3:5. §† Isa. 52:7; Nah. 1:15. §‡ Isa. 53:1. §§† Ps. 19:4; Ps. 18:5(LXX). §§‡ Deut. 32:21.
§§§ Isa. 65:1. 18 Isa. 65:2. 19 cf. Jer. 31:37; 33:24-26. 20 cf. 1 Sam. 12:22; Ps. 94:14.

† Hos. 2:23; 1:10(2:1 LXX). †† cf. Isa. 10:22-23. ‡ Isa. 1:9.
‡† Isa. 28:16. ‡‡ Or end-goal ‡†† Lev. 18:5. ‡‡‡ Deut. 9:4.

says about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? ³ “ADONAI, they have killed your prophets, they have destroyed your altars; I alone am left, and they are seeking my life.” ¹⁴ But what is the divine response to him? “I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” ¹⁵ So in the same way also at this present time there has come to be a remnant [‡] according to God’s gracious choice. ⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer by works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

⁷ What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained; but the elect obtained it, and the rest were hardened— ⁸ just as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor,
eyes not to see and ears not to hear,
until this very day.” ^{‡†}

⁹ And David says,

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
a stumbling block and a retribution for them.

¹⁰ Let their eyes be darkened so they do not see,
and bend their back continually.” ^{‡†}

¹¹ I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? ^{‡††} May it never be! But by their false step salvation has come to the Gentiles, to provoke Israel to jealousy. ^{‡†††} Now if their transgression leads to riches for the world, and their loss riches for the Gentiles, then how much more their fullness! ¹³ But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Insofar as I am an emissary to the Gentiles, I spotlight my ministry ¹⁴ if somehow I might provoke to jealousy my own flesh and blood [§] and save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection leads to the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

¹⁶ If the firstfruit is holy, so is the whole batch of dough; ^{§†} and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off and you—being a wild olive—were grafted in among them and became a partaker of the root of the olive tree with its richness, ^{§†††} do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, it is not you who support the root but the root supports you. ¹⁹ You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰ True enough. They were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but fear— ²¹ for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. ²² Notice then the kindness and severity of God:

severity toward those who fell;
but God’s kindness toward you,
if you continue in His kindness;
otherwise you too will be cut off!

²³ And they also,

if they do not continue in their unbelief,
will be grafted in;

for God is able to graft them in again.

²⁴ For if you were cut out of that which by nature is a wild olive tree, and grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

The Mystery Revealed!

²⁵ For I do not want you, brothers and sisters, to be ignorant of this mystery—lest you be wise in your own eyes ^{§†}—that a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; ^{§†††} ²⁶ and in this way ^{§†} all Israel will be saved, as it is written,
“The Deliverer shall come out of Zion.

He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

²⁷ And this is My covenant with them, ^{§†}
when I take away their sins.” ^{§§†}

²⁸ Concerning the Good News, they are hostile for your sake; but concerning chosenness, they are loved on account of the fathers ^{§§†}— ²⁹ for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ^{§§§} ³⁰ For just as you once were disobedient to God but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ in like manner these also have now been disobedient with the result that, because of the mercy shown to you, they also may receive mercy. ³² For God has shut up all in disobedience, so that He might show mercy to all.

³³ O the depth of the riches,

both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments
and how incomprehensible His ways!

³⁴ For “who has known the mind of ADONAI,
or who has been His counselor?” ¹⁸

³⁵ Or “who has first given to Him,
that it shall be repaid to him?” ¹⁹

³⁶ For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen.

Be Dead to Self

12 I urge you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy, acceptable to God—which is your spiritual service. ² Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For through the grace given me, I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think—but to use sound judgment, as God has assigned to each person a measure of faith.

⁴ For just as we have many parts in one body—and all the parts do not have the same function— ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Messiah and everyone

[§] cf. Prov. 3:7; Rom. 12:16. ^{§†} cf. Dan. 8:13-14; Luke 21:24. ^{§†} Or and so [§] Isa. 59:20-21(LXX). ^{§§†} Isa. 27:9; cf. Jer. 31:31-34. ^{§§‡} cf. Deut. 7:8; 10:15. ^{§§§} cf. 2 Cor. 7:10. ¹⁸ Isa. 40:13. ¹⁹ Job 41:3(11); cf. Job 41:3(LXX)

† 1 Kings 19:4a, 10, 14. †† 1 Kings 19:18. ‡ cf. 2 Kings 19:4; Ezra 9:8; Isa. 10:20-22; 11:11, 16; 37:31-32; Jer. 23:3; 31:7; Ezek. 6:8; Mic. 2:12; 5:7-8; 7:18; Zeph. 2:7; Zech. 8:11-12. †† Deut. 29:4; Isa. 29:10. †† Ps. 69:22-23. ††† cf. Hos. 14:1-2, 6-10(13:16-14:1, 5-9). ††† cf. Deut. 32:21. Lit. jealous emulation § Lit. my flesh; my fellow countrymen §† cf. Num. 15:21; Neh. 10:37; Ezek. 44:30. §†† cf. Jer. 11:16.

parts of one another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace that was given to us—if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; or the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ or the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who gives, in generosity; the one who leads, with diligence; the one who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

⁹ Let love be without hypocrisy—detesting what is evil, holding fast to the good. ¹⁰ Be tenderly devoted to one another in brotherly love; outdo one another in giving honor. ¹¹ Do not be lagging in zeal; be fervent in spirit. Keep serving the Lord, ¹² rejoicing in hope, enduring in distress, persisting in prayer, ¹³ contributing to the needs of the *kedoshim*, extending hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you—bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. [†]

¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be proud, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own eyes. ^{††17} Repay no one evil for evil; [‡] give thought to what is good in the eyes of all people. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live in *shalom* with all people. ¹⁹ Never take your own revenge, loved ones, but give room for God's wrath—for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay," ^{††} says *ADONAI*. ²⁰ Rather, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For by doing so you will heap coals of fire upon his head." ^{†††21} Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Respecting Authority

13 Let every person submit himself to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist are put in place by God. ^{††2} So whoever opposes the authority has resisted God's direction, and those who have resisted will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For leaders cause no fear for good behavior, but for bad. Now if you do not want to fear the authority, do what is good and you will get his approval— ⁴ for he is God's servant to you for your good. But if you do evil, be afraid—for he does not carry the sword for no reason; for he is God's servant, an avenger who inflicts punishment on the evildoer. ⁵ Therefore it is necessary to be in submission—not only because of punishment but also because of conscience. ⁶ For this reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, attending diligently to this very thing. ⁷ Pay to everyone what is due them—tribute to whom tribute is due; tax to whom tax is due; respect to whom respect is due; honor to whom honor is due.

⁸ Owe no one anything except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the *Torah*. ⁹ For the commandments—"You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet," ^{†††} and any other commandment—are

summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ^{§10} Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fullness of the *Torah*.

¹¹ Besides this, you know the time—that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first came to trust. ¹² The night is almost gone and the day is near, so let us put off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly as in the day—not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Messiah *Yeshua*, and stop making provision for the flesh—for its cravings.

Unity in Community

14 Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of disputes about opinions. ² One person has faith to eat anything, but the weak eats only vegetables. ³ Don't let the one who eats disparage the one who does not eat, and don't let the one who does not eat judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you to judge another's servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. Yes, he shall stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵ One person esteems one day over another while another judges every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ The one who observes that day does so to the Lord. The one who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and the one who abstains, abstains to the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives for himself, and none dies for himself. ⁸ For if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ For this reason Messiah died and lived again, so that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ But you, why do you judge your brother? ^{§†} Or you too, why do you look down on your brother? For we all will stand before the judgment seat of God. ^{§††11} For it is written,

"As I live, says *ADONAI*, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ^{§†}

¹² So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

¹³ Therefore let us not judge one another from now on, but rather decide this—not to put a stumbling block or a trap in the way of a brother. ¹⁴ I know, and am persuaded in the Lord *Yeshua*, that nothing is unholy in itself; but it is unholy for the one who considers it unholy. ^{§††15} For if your brother is grieved on account of food, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy by your food the one for whom Messiah died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what is good for you be spoken of as evil— ¹⁷ for the kingdom of God is not

[†] cf. Job 30:25. ^{††} cf. Prov. 3:7. [‡] cf. Prov. 20:22; 24:29. ^{†††} Deut. 32:35. ^{†††} Prov. 25:21-22(LXX). ^{†††} cf. Dan. 2:21; 4:17.

^{†††} Exod. 20:13-15, 17; Deut. 5:17-19, 21. [§] Lev. 19:18. ^{§†} Lit. brother ^{§††} Other mss. read of Messiah ^{§†} Isa. 49:18; 45:23, cf. Gen. 29:35. ^{§††} cf. Lev. 10:10.

about eating and drinking, but righteousness and *shalom* and joy in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.¹⁸ For the one who serves Messiah in this manner is pleasing to God and approved by men.

¹⁹ So then let us pursue what makes for *shalom* and for the building up of one another.¹²⁰ Stop tearing down the work of God for the sake of food. Indeed all things are clean, but wrong for the man who by eating causes stumbling.²¹ It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything by which your brother stumbles.²² The faith you have, keep it to yourself before God. How fortunate is the one who does not condemn himself for what he approves.²³ But the one who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because it is not of faith. And whatever is not of faith is sin.

15 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the powerless and not just please ourselves.² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, for building him up.³ For even Messiah did not please Himself, but as it is written, “The insults of those who insulted You have fallen on Me.”^{††4} For whatever was written before was written for our instruction, so that through patience and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.⁴⁵ Now may the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be like-minded with one another in the manner of Messiah *Yeshua*,⁶ so that together with one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah.

Salvation for Gentiles Too

⁷ Therefore accept one another just as Messiah also accepted you, to the glory of God.⁸ For I declare that Messiah has become a servant to the circumcised for the sake of God’s truth, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs⁹ and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy. As it is written,

“For this reason I will give You praise among the Gentiles,

and I will sing to Your name.”[‡]

¹⁰ And again it says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people.”^{‡‡}

¹¹ And again,

“Praise *ADONAI* all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise Him.”^{‡‡‡}

¹² And again, Isaiah says,

“There shall be a shoot of Jesse; and the One who arises to rule the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles hope.”^{‡‡‡}

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and *shalom* in trusting, so you may overflow with hope in the power of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.

¹⁴ Now I myself am convinced about you, my brothers and sisters, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and also able to counsel one

another.¹⁵ But I have written rather boldly to you on some points as a reminder—because of the grace given to me by God¹⁶ to be a servant of Messiah *Yeshua* to the Gentiles, in priestly service to the Good News of God—so that the offering up of the Gentiles might be pleasing,[§] made holy by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.

¹⁷ So in Messiah *Yeshua*, I have reason to boast before God.¹⁸ For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Messiah accomplished through me, to bring about the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed,¹⁹ in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit of God. So from Jerusalem and around even to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the Good News of Messiah.²⁰ In this way I make it my aim to proclaim the Good News not where Messiah was already named, lest I build on another person’s foundation,²¹ but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told shall see, and those who have not heard shall understand.”^{§†}

Going to the Ends of the Earth

²² For this reason I was often hindered from coming to you.²³ But now with no place in these regions, and since I have had a desire for many years to come to you,²⁴ I hope to see you while traveling through when I go to Spain—and to be helped on my journey there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a bit.

²⁵ But now I am going to Jerusalem, bringing aid to the *kedoshim*.²⁶ For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem.²⁷ Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are under obligation to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual blessings, they also ought to serve them in material blessings.²⁸ So when I have finished delivering the collection safely to them, I will head for Spain by way of you.²⁹ Now I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Messiah.

³⁰ Now I urge you, brethren, through our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah and through the love of the *Ruach*, to press on together with me—with prayers to God on my behalf.³¹ Pray that I might be rescued from the unbelieving Judeans, and that my service for Jerusalem might be acceptable to the *kedoshim*.

³² Then, God willing, I may come to you in joy, and together with you find rest.

³³ Now may the God of *shalom* be with you all. Amen.

Welcome the Apostolic Team

16 Now I recommend to you our sister Phoebe—who is a servant-leader of Messiah’s community at Cenchrea—² so you may receive her in the Lord, in a way worthy of *kedoshim*, and help her in whatever matter she may need from you. For she herself has become a patroness of many, including me as well.

† cf. Ps. 34:14. †† Ps. 69:9(68:10 LXX). ‡ cf. Ps. 119:9, 11, 105; 2 Tim. 3:16-17. †† 2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 18:49(17:50 LXX). ‡‡ Deut. 32:43(LXX). ‡‡‡ Ps. 117:1(116:1 LXX). ‡‡‡ Isa. 11:10.

§ cf. Mal. 3:4; Isa. 66:20. §† Isa. 52:15(LXX).

³ Greet Prisca † and Aquila, my fellow workers in Messiah *Yeshua*, ⁴ who risked their own necks for my life. Not only I give them thanks, but also all of Messiah's communities among the Gentiles. ⁵ Greet also the community that meets in their house. Greet Epaenetus whom I dearly love, who is the first fruit in Asia †† for Messiah.

⁶ Greet Miriam, who has worked hard for you.

⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kin and fellow prisoners who are well known ‡ among the emissaries. They were in Messiah before me.

⁸ Greet Ampliatus, whom I dearly love in the Lord.

⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Messiah, and Stachys whom I dearly love.

¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Messiah. Greet those from the household of Aristobulus.

¹¹ Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those from the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

¹² Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis whom I dearly love, who has worked hard in the Lord.

¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother—who was also a mother to me.

¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters with them.

¹⁵ Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, also Olympas and all the *kedoshim* with them.

¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All of Messiah's communities greet you. ¹⁷ Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep your eye on those who are caus-

ing divisions and stumbling blocks, contrary to the teaching that you learned. Turn away from them.

¹⁸ For such people do not serve our Lord the Messiah, but only their own belly. By their smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

¹⁹ Your obedience has become known to all, so I rejoice over you—but I want you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. ²⁰ Now the God of *shalom* will soon crush *satan* under your feet. May the grace of our Lord *Yeshua* be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kin.

²² I, Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

²³ Gaius, host to me and the whole community, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, greets you, and so does brother Quartus. (²⁴) ††

Closing Blessing

²⁵ Now to the One who is able to strengthen you according to my Good News and the proclamation of *Yeshua* the Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages

²⁶ but now is revealed and through the Writings of the Prophets has been made known to all the nations, according to the commandment of the eternal God to bring about obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God, through *Yeshua* the Messiah, to Him be the glory forever. Amen.

† Also Priscilla

†† The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey). ‡ Lit. bearing a mark

†† Some mss. add The grace of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah be with you all. Amen

1 Corinthians

Introduction

Corinth, considered the number three city in the Roman empire after Rome and Alexandria, also sported a major Jewish community. It was listed by Philo as one of the cities of Jewish Diaspora, and it is evident that Paul was conscious of this presence, even if Gentiles were a majority of the community at Corinth (Acts 10:32). The Corinthian community began when Paul visited fellow Jewish believers Priscilla and Aquila. Eventually, Paul's witness led to a local synagogue leader, Crispus, along with his household, coming to faith. As a result, many in the Corinthian community were immersed (Acts 18:1-8, 1 Cor. 1:4). Though the community was majority Gentile, it was likely knowledgeable about Jewish customs and concerns and trying to figure out how Jews and Gentiles could live together in unity and good order. Many Corinthians had come to faith out of a pagan background that still exercised far too much influence on their ethics and social behavior. 1 Corinthians is an intensely personal and practical letter, written about 55 C.E. from Ephesus and addressed to the wider believing community in Corinth.

The letter often seems to jump from one subject to another, as Paul responds to a "laundry list" of issues in the life of Messiah's community:

- Divisions and factionalism (1:10-13). In the culture of that day, sophisticated speakers were put on pedestals. Rather than submitting to one another and to Paul in humility, the Corinthians ran after their favorite pop-stars. Spiritual unity was a hard commodity to come by.
- Ethical issues. The Corinthians were deeply divided over matters such as extramarital sex, incest, lawsuits against fellow believers, and eating food sacrificed to idols. They were not mature enough to effectively resolve them, or to discern at what points their culture was shaping their faith rather than vice-versa.
- Conduct at public meetings of believers. Paul addresses the roles of men and women, the issue of head coverings, the Lord's supper, and spiritual gifts. Notably, the Corinthians valued spiritual gifts and status over love and unity.
- Doctrinal issues. In particular, the resurrection was badly misunderstood. The Corinthians mistakenly thought of themselves as having "arrived" spiritually, thus sanctioning widespread immorality.

Above all, Paul shows us how the Good News challenges us to be shaped by , not by our culture—whether that culture is 1st century Greek paganism, or 21st century Jewish American lifestyle.

A Look inside 1 Corinthians

Greetings

Thanksgiving

Concern about Disunity

Whose Wisdom Is Foolish?

Wisdom that Rests on God's Power

Building Together on God's Foundation

Learning to Imitate Messiah's Emissary

Removing the "" from Your House

Settle Disputes Within the Community

Morality in the Temple of God

Counsel About Marriage

Remain As You Were Called

Concerning Idol Sacrifices

Servant Leadership Wins Over All

Warnings from History

Feast with the Lord—Not with Idols

Headship and Coverings

Unity at the Lord's Table

Spiritual Gifts for the Body
 The Superior Way of Love
 Orderly Governing of the Gifts
 The Victory of the Resurrection
 Collection for Jerusalem and Final Greetings

Greetings

1 Paul, called as an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,
²To God's community in Corinth—having been made holy in Messiah *Yeshua*, called as *kedoshim*—with all who everywhere call on the name of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, both theirs and ours:
³Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father, and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah!

Thanksgiving

⁴I always thank my God for you because of God's grace that was given to you in Messiah *Yeshua*. ⁵For in Him you were made rich in every way—in all speaking and all knowledge—⁶just as the evidence of Messiah was confirmed among you. ⁷So you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you eagerly wait for the revealing of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ⁸He will also strengthen you until the end—blameless in the Day of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ⁹God is faithful, [†] through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, *Yeshua* the Messiah our Lord.

Concern about Disunity

¹⁰Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, through the name of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose. ¹¹For it has been reported to me concerning you, my brothers and sisters, by those who are from Chloe's household, that there are rivalries among you. ¹²I say this because you are each saying, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Kefa," or "I follow Messiah." ¹³Has Messiah been divided? Paul wasn't crucified for you, was he? Or were you immersed into the name of Paul? ¹⁴I thank God that I immersed none of you, except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵so that no one should say that I had immersed you into my own name. ¹⁶(I also immersed the household of Stephanas; besides them, I don't recall if I immersed anyone else.) ¹⁷For Messiah sent me not to immerse, but to proclaim the Good News—not with cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Messiah would not be made of no effect.

Whose Wisdom Is Foolish?

¹⁸For 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. ¹⁹For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing the understanding of the intelligent." ^{††}

²⁰Where is the wise one? Where is the *Torah* scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Hasn't God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ^{‡21}For seeing that—in God's wisdom—the world through its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased—through the foolishness of the message proclaimed—to save those who believe. ²²For Jewish people ask for signs and Greek people seek after wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Messiah crucified—a stumbling block to Jewish people and foolishness to Gentile people, ²⁴but to those who are called (both Jewish and Greek people), Messiah, the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶For you see your calling, brothers and sisters, that not many are wise according to human standards, ^{‡‡} not many are powerful, and not many are born well. ²⁷Yet God chose the foolish things of the world so He might put to shame the wise; and God chose the weak things of the world so He might put to shame the strong; ²⁸and God chose the lowly and despised things of the world, the things that are as nothing, so He might bring to nothing the things that are—²⁹so that no human might boast before God. ³⁰But because of Him you are in Messiah *Yeshua*, who became to us wisdom from God and righteousness and holiness and redemption—³¹so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in *ADONAI*." ^{‡‡‡}

Wisdom that Rests on God's Power

2 When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come with excellence of speech or wisdom, proclaiming to you the mystery ^{‡‡‡} of God. ²For I decided not to know about anything among you except *Yeshua* the Messiah—and Him crucified. ³I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the

† cf. Deut. 7:9.

†† Isa. 29:14. ‡ cf. Job 12:17; Is. 19:11-12. ‡‡ Lit. the flesh
 ‡‡‡ Jer. 9:23(24). ‡‡‡ Some mss. read testimony

Spirit and of power—⁵ so that your faith would not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

⁶ We do speak wisdom, however, among those who are mature—but not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ Rather, we speak God's wisdom in a mystery—a wisdom that has been hidden, which God destined for our glory before the ages. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it—for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But as it is written,

“Things no eye has seen
and no ear has heard,
that have not entered the heart of mankind—
these things God has prepared
for those who love Him.”[†]

¹⁰ But God revealed these things to us through the *Ruach*.^{††} For the *Ruach* searches all things—even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who among men knows the things of a man, except the man's spirit within him? In the same way, no one knows the things of God except the *Ruach Elohim*.^{††} Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God—so we might come to know the things freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also speak—not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the *Ruach*, explaining the spiritual to the spiritual.

¹⁴ Now a natural man does not accept the things of the *Ruach Elohim*, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But the one who is spiritual discerns all things, and he himself is discerned by no one. For

“who has known the mind of *ADONAI*,
that he will instruct Him?”[‡]

But we have the mind of Messiah.

Building Together on God's Foundation

3 And I, brothers and sisters, could not speak to you as Spirit-filled but as worldly^{‡†}—as infants in Messiah. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready. Indeed, even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, aren't you worldly and walking in a human way? ⁴ For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere humans^{‡‡}?

⁵ What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you came to trust—and to each as the Lord gave. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who makes things grow. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters work as one, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. ⁹ For we are God's co-workers; you are God's field, God's building.

† *Isa. 64:3(4)*. †† *Both the Hebrew Ruach* *spirit*
Spirit *pneuma* ‡ *Isa. 40:13*. †† *Lit.*
fleshly ‡‡ *Some mss. read fleshly*

¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and another builds on it. But let each consider carefully how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no one can lay any other foundation than what is already laid^{‡‡†}—which is *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear. For the Day will show it, because it is to be revealed by fire; and the fire itself will test each one's work—what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss—he himself will be saved, but as through fire.

¹⁶ Don't you know that you are God's temple and that the *Ruach Elohim* dwells among you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If anyone thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a fool so he may become wise.^{‡‡††} For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the sight of God. For it is written, “He catches the clever in their craftiness.”^{§20} And again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are useless.”^{§†21} So let no one boast about men. For all things are yours—²² whether Paul or Apollos or Kefa, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come. All are yours,²³ and you are Messiah's, and Messiah is God's.

Learning to Imitate Messiah's Emissary

4 So let each one think of us in this way—as Messiah's helpers and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² In this case, moreover, what is required of stewards is to be found trustworthy. ³ But to me it matters very little to be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore do not judge anything before the time—wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light the things hidden in darkness and also make clear the motives of the hearts. Then the praise for each one will come from God.

⁶ Now I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers and sisters, so you might learn from us not to go beyond what is written. Then none of you will be puffed up in favor of one against the other. ⁷ For who makes you different? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

⁸ Already you are full! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! Indeed, I wish you were kings, so we also might be kings with you! ⁹ For it seems to me that God has put us, the emissaries, on display last of all—like men sentenced to death. For

‡‡† *cf. Isa. 28:16*. ‡‡‡ *cf. Isa. 5:21; Jer. 8:8-9*. § *Job 5:13*.
§† *cf. Ps. 94:11(Ps. 93:11 LXX)*.

we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to people. ¹⁰ We are fools for Messiah's sake, but you are wise in Messiah! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, but we are dishonored! ¹¹ To this very hour we are both hungry and thirsty, dressed in rags and mistreated and homeless. ¹² We toil, working with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless. When we are persecuted, we endure. ¹³ When we are slandered, we speak kindly. We have become the scum of the earth, the dregs of all things—even to this moment.

¹⁴ I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to warn you as my dearly loved children. ¹⁵ For though you may have ten thousand guardians in Messiah, yet you do not have many fathers. For in Messiah *Yeshua*, I became your father through the Good News. ¹⁶ I urge you therefore—be imitators of me. ¹⁷ For this reason I have sent you Timothy, my dearly loved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways in Messiah, just as I teach everywhere in every community.

¹⁸ Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord is willing; and I will find out not the talk of those who are puffed up, but their power. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God does not consist of talk but of power. ²¹ What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

Removing the *Hametz* from Your House

5 It is actually reported that among you there is sexual immorality, and such immorality as is not even among the pagans—that someone has his father's wife. ² And you are puffed up! Shouldn't you have mourned instead, so that the one who did this deed might be removed from among you? ³ For even though I am absent in body, I am present in spirit—I have already passed judgment on the one who has done this thing, as though I were present. ⁴ When you are gathered together in the name of our Lord *Yeshua*, I am with you in spirit. With the power of our Lord *Yeshua*, ⁵ you are to turn such a fellow over to *satan* for the destruction of his fleshly nature, [†] so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord *Yeshua*.

⁶ Your boasting is no good. Don't you know that a little *hametz* leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷ Get rid of the old *hametz*, ^{††} so you may be a new batch, just as you are unleavened—for Messiah, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Therefore let us celebrate the feast not with old *hametz*, [‡] the *hametz* of malice and wickedness, but with unleavened bread—the *matzah* of sincerity and truth.

⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to mix together ^{‡‡} with sexually immoral people— ¹⁰ not at all meaning the sexually immoral people of this world or the greedy or swindlers or idolaters, for then you would

have to exit the world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you not to mix together with anyone who is being called a brother if he is sexually immoral or greedy or an idolater or a slanderer or a drunkard or a swindler—not even to eat with such a fellow. ¹² For what business do I have judging outsiders? Don't you judge those who are inside? ¹³ But those who are outside, God judges. Put away the wicked fellow from among yourselves. ^{‡‡}

Settle Disputes within the Community

6 Does any one of you, when he has a matter against his neighbor, dare to go to court before the unrighteous and not before the *kedoshim*? ² Don't you know that the *kedoshim* will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to judge trivial matters? ³ Don't you know that we will judge angels? How much more the matters of this life! ⁴ So if you have courts for matters of this life, why do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the community? ⁵ I say this to put you to shame! Isn't there even one wise man among you who will be able to settle disputes between his brethren? ⁶ Instead, a brother goes to court against a brother—and before unbelievers at that!

⁷ Therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you have lawsuits among yourselves. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? ⁸ But you yourselves do wrong and cheat—and against your brothers and sisters at that!

Morality in the Temple of God

⁹ Or don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, those who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ thieves, the greedy, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ That is what some of you were—but you were washed, you were made holy, you were set right in the name of the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah and by the *Ruach* of our God.

¹² "Everything is permitted for me"—but not everything is helpful. "Everything is permitted for me"—but I will not be controlled by anything. ¹³ "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food"—but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. ¹⁴ Now God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. ¹⁵ Don't you know that your bodies are members of Messiah? Shall I then take the members of Messiah and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! ¹⁶ Or don't you know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For it is said, "The two shall become one flesh." ^{‡‡‡17} But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

[†] cf. Prov. 23:14. ^{††} cf. Exod. 12:19. [‡] cf. Exod. 13:7; Deut. 16:3. ^{‡‡} cf. 2 Thes. 3:14.

^{‡‡} cf. Deut. 13:6(5); 17:7, 12; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 24; 24:7. ^{‡‡‡} Gen. 2:24.

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body—but the one committing sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body. †

Counsel about Marriage

7 Now concerning the things about which you wrote to me, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. ² But because of much immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. ³ Let the husband fulfill his obligation to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. ⁴ The wife does not have the rights to her own body, but the husband. Likewise, also, the husband does not have the rights to his own body, but the wife. ⁵ Do not deprive one another—except by mutual consent for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. †† Then come together again, so that *satan* doesn't tempt you because of your lack of self-control. ⁶ But this I say as a concession, not as a command. ⁷ Yet I wish that all men were like me. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this way, and another that.

⁸ But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them to remain as I am. ⁹ But if they do not have self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with desire.

¹⁰ But to the married I command—not I, but the Lord ‡—a wife is not to be separated from her husband ¹¹ (but if she gets separated, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband is not to divorce his wife.

¹² But to the rest I say—I, not the Lord—if any brother has a wife who is not a believer, and she agrees to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³ And if any woman has a husband who is not a believer, and he agrees to live with her, she must not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is made holy through the wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through her husband. †† Otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbeliever separates, let him be separated. The brother or the sister is not bound in such cases, but God has called you to *shalom*. ¹⁶ For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

Remain as You Were Called

¹⁷ Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, let him walk in this way. I give this rule in all of Messiah's communities. ¹⁸ Was anyone called

† Some mss. add and in your spirit, which are God's †† cf. Exod. 19:15; some mss. include fasting and prayer ‡ cf. Matt. 5:32; 19:9. †† Lit. the brother

when he already had been circumcised? Let him not make himself uncircumcised. Has anyone been called while uncircumcised? Let him not allow himself to be circumcised. ¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing ††—but keeping God's commandments matters. ²⁰ Let each one remain in the calling in which he was called. ²¹ Were you called as a slave? Don't let that bother you—but if indeed you can become free, make the most of the opportunity. ²² For the one who was called in the Lord as a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise, the one who was called while free is Messiah's slave. ²³ You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. ²⁴ Brothers and sisters, let each one—in whatever way he was called—remain that way with God.

²⁵ Now concerning virgins I have no command from the Lord, but I give an opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. ²⁶ I think then, because of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is. ²⁷ Are you bound to a wife? Don't seek a divorce. Are you free from a wife? Don't seek a wife. ²⁸ But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such people will have trouble in this fleshly life, and I am trying to spare you. ²⁹ But this I say, brothers and sisters—the time is short. From now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; ³⁰ and those who weep, as though not weeping; and those who rejoice, as though not rejoicing; and those who buy, as though not possessing; ³¹ and those who use the world, as though not using it to the fullest. For the present form of this world is passing away.

³² But I want you to be free from cares. An unmarried man cares about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord; ³³ but the married man cares about the things of the world—how he may please his wife—³⁴ and he is divided. The unmarried woman, as well as the virgin, cares about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But the married woman cares about the things of the world—how she may please her husband. ³⁵ Now I say this for your own benefit—not to put a restraint on you, but to promote proper and constant service to the Lord without distraction.

³⁶ But if any man thinks that he is behaving inappropriately toward his virgin, if the time is ripe and it is meant to be, let him do what he decides. He does not sin. Let them marry. ³⁷ But he who stands firm in his heart—who has no pressure, but has power over his own will and has so determined in his own heart to keep her a virgin—he will do well. ³⁸ So then both he who marries the virgin does well, and he who doesn't marry her does better.

³⁹ A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies, she is free to be married to anyone she wishes—only in the Lord. ††⁴⁰ But in my

†† cf. Gal. 5:6; 6:15. ††† cf. 2 Cor. 6:14.

judgment she is happier if she stays as she is—and I also think that I have the *Ruach Elohim*.

Concerning Idol Sacrifices

8 Now concerning idol sacrifices, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² If anyone thinks he knows anything, he doesn't yet know as he ought to know. ³ But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

⁴ Therefore, concerning the eating of idol sacrifices, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no God but one. ⁵ For even if there are so-called "gods," whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"),

⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, [†] from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, *Yeshua* the Messiah, through whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

⁷ But that knowledge is not in everyone—some, so accustomed to idols up until now, eat food as an idol sacrifice; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ But food will not bring us before God. We are no worse off if we do not eat and no better off if we do eat. ⁹ But watch out that this freedom of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ^{†10} For suppose someone sees you—who have this knowledge—dining in an idol's temple. If his conscience is weak, won't he be emboldened to eat idol sacrifices? ¹¹ For the one who is weak is destroyed by your knowledge—the brother for whom Messiah died. ¹² In this way, when you sin against the brothers and sisters and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Messiah. ¹³ For this reason, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I do not cause my brother to stumble.

Servant Leadership Wins over All

9 Am I not free? Am I not an emissary? Have I not seen *Yeshua* our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ² If to others I am not an emissary, at least I am to you—for you are the seal of my office of emissary in the Lord.

³ My defense to those who examine me is this. ⁴ Don't we have the right to food and drink? ⁵ Don't we have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other emissaries and the Lord's brothers and *Kefa*? ⁶ Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to not work? ⁷ What soldier ever serves at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink its milk?

⁸ I don't say these things merely as a man, do I? Doesn't *Torah* also say these things? ⁹ For it is written in the *Torah* of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox

[†] cf. Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4; some mss. say there is no other God but one ^{††} cf. Deut. 6:4; Isa. 46:9; Jer. 10:6, 7; 1 Cor. 8:4, Mal. 2:10. [‡] cf. Exod. 23:33.

while it is threshing." ^{††} Is it the oxen that concern God, ¹⁰ or is He speaking entirely for our sake? Yes, it was written for our sake, because the one plowing ought to plow in hope and the one threshing in hope of a share in the crop. ¹¹ If we sowed spiritual things into you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? ¹² If others have a share in this claim over you, shouldn't we even more?

Nevertheless we did not use this right, but we put up with all things so that we cause no hindrance to the Good News of Messiah. ¹³ Don't you know that those who perform the holy services eat from the Temple, and those who wait on the altar receive a share at the altar? ^{††14} So also the Lord ordered those who proclaim the Good News to get their living from the Good News.

¹⁵ But I have used none of these things, and I am not writing these things so it will happen this way in my case—for I would rather die than let anyone deprive me of my reason to boast. ¹⁶ For if I proclaim the Good News, I have no reason to boast—for pressure is put on me and woe to me if I don't proclaim the Good News! ¹⁷ For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward. But if not of my own will, I have been entrusted with a commission. ¹⁸ What then is my reward? That when I preach, I may present the Good News free of charge, not making use of my right ^{†††} in the Good News.

¹⁹ For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win over more of them. ²⁰ To the Jewish people I identified ^{††} as a Jew, so that I might win over the Jewish people. To those under *Torah* I became like one under *Torah* (though not myself being under *Torah*), so that I might win over those under *Torah*; ²¹ to those outside *Torah*, like one outside *Torah* (though not being outside God's *Torah* but in Messiah's *Torah*), so that I might win over those outside *Torah*. ²² To the weak I became weak, so that I might win over the weak. I have become all things to all men, so that by all means possible I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the Good News, so that I might be a fellow partaker of it.

²⁴ Don't you know that in a stadium the runners all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win! ²⁵ Every competitor exercises self-control in all respects. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we do it to receive an imperishable one. ²⁶ So I run in this way—not aimlessly. So I box in this way—not beating the air. ²⁷ Rather, I punish my body and bring it into submission, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

Warnings from History

10 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea. ^{§2} They all were

^{††} Deut. 25:4. ^{†††} cf. Lev. 6:16, 26; 7:6, 31-32; Num. 5:9-10; 18:8-20, 31; Deut. 18:1. ^{††††} cf. 1 Cor. 9:12b, 14. ^{†††††} Or became [§] cf. Exod. 13:21; 14:22, 29; Ps. 105:39; Neh. 9:11.

immersed into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.
³ And all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink—for they were drinking from a spiritual rock that followed them, and the Rock was Messiah. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, for they were struck down in the desert.
 ††

⁶ Now these things happened as examples for us, so we wouldn't crave evil things, just as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." ^{††8} And let's not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day 23,000 fell. ^{††9} And let's not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were destroyed by serpents. ^{††10} And let's not grumble, as some of them did—and were destroyed by the destroying angel. ^{††11} Now these things happened to them as an example, and it was written down as a warning to us—on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² Therefore, let the one who thinks that he stands watch out that he doesn't fall. ¹³ No temptation has taken hold of you except what is common to mankind. But God is faithful—He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can handle. But with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape, so you will be able to endure it.

Feast with the Lord—Not with Idols

¹⁴ Therefore, my dearly loved ones, flee from idolatry. ¹⁵ I speak as to sensible people—judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless— isn't it a sharing of Messiah's blood? The bread which we break— isn't it a sharing of Messiah's body? ¹⁷ Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body—for we all partake of the one bread. ¹⁸ Consider physical Israel. Those who eat the sacrifices— aren't they partners in the altar? [§]

¹⁹ What am I saying then—that an idol sacrifice is anything, or that an idol is anything? ²⁰ No, I'm saying that what the pagans sacrifice is to demons and not to God, and I don't want you to become partners with demons. ^{§†21} You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. ²² Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? ^{§††} We are not stronger than He, are we?

²³ "Everything is permitted"—but not everything is helpful. "Everything is permitted"—but not everything builds up. ²⁴ Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. ²⁵ Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, without raising questions of conscience. ²⁶ For "the earth is the Lord's, and its fullness." ^{§†27} If an unbeliever invites you over and you want to go, eat

† cf. Exod. 17:6; Num. 20:7-13. †† cf. Num. 14:29-35. ‡ cf. Num. 11:4, 34; Ps. 106:14. †† Exod. 32:6. †† cf. Num. 25:1-9. ††† cf. Num. 21:5-6. ††† cf. Num. 16:41-50. § cf. Lev. 7:6, Deut. 12:17-19. §† cf. Deut. 32:17. §†† cf. Deut. 32:21. §‡ Ps. 24:1.

whatever is set before you, without raising questions of conscience. ²⁸ But if anyone says to you, "This is from an idol sacrifice," do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— ²⁹ not your own conscience, I mean, but the other person's. For why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? ³⁰ If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I give thanks for?

³¹ Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³² Give no offense either to Jewish or Greek people or to God's community— ³³ just as I also try to please everyone in everything, not seeking my own benefit but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved.

11 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Messiah.

Headship and Coverings

² Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firm the traditions just as I passed them on to you. ³ But I want you to know that the head of every man is Messiah, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Messiah is God. ⁴ Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered dishonors his head. ⁵ But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonors her head. For it is one and the same as having been shaved. ⁶ For if a woman does not cover her head, let her cut off her hair. But if it is shameful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, let her cover her head.

⁷ For surely a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God. ^{§†} But the woman is the glory of man. ⁸ For man is not from woman, but woman from man. ⁹ Neither was man created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. ^{§†10} For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. ¹¹ In any case—in the Lord—woman is not independent of man and man is not independent of woman. ¹² For just as the woman came from the man, so also the man comes through the woman—but all things are from God.

¹³ Judge for yourselves—is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴ Doesn't the natural order of things ^{§†} teach you—if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace for him; ¹⁵ but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory, for her hair was given to her as a covering. ¹⁶ But if anyone intends to be contentious, we have no such custom—nor do God's communities.

Unity at the Lord's Table

¹⁷ But in giving you this instruction I do not praise you, for when you meet together it does more harm than good. ¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together

§†† cf. Gen. 1:26-27. §† cf. Gen. 2:21-23. §‡ Lit. nature itself

as Messiah's community, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it—¹⁹ for there must be factions among you, so that those among you who are tried and true may be evident.²⁰ Therefore, when you meet together in the same place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper—²¹ for each one takes his own supper beforehand, and one goes hungry while another gets drunk.²² What! It is certainly not that you do not have houses, is it? Don't you have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise God's community and try to humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? I don't praise you for this!

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you—that the Lord *Yeshua*, on the night He was betrayed, took *matzah*; ^{†24} and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ^{††} "This is My body, which is for you. Do this in memory of Me."²⁵ In the same way, He also took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant [‡] in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in memory of Me."²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the Lord's cup in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.²⁸ But a man must examine himself, and then let him eat of the bread and drink from the cup.²⁹ For the one who eats and drinks without recognizing the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.³⁰ For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and quite a few have died.^{‡‡31} For if we were judging ourselves thoroughly, we wouldn't be coming under judgment.³² But when we are judged, we are being disciplined by the Lord so that we might not be condemned along with the world.

³³ So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.³⁴ If anyone is hungry let him eat at home, so that when you meet it doesn't lead to judgment. And the rest I will put in order when I come.

Spiritual Gifts for the Body

12 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be ignorant.² You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed by idols that cannot speak, and you got led astray.^{‡‡3} Therefore, I make known to you that no one speaking by the *Ruach Elohim* says, "*Yeshua* be cursed," and no one can say, "*Yeshua* is Lord," except by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*.

⁴ Now there are various kinds of gifts, but the same *Ruach*.⁵ There are various kinds of service, but the same Lord.⁶ There are various kinds of working, but the same God who works all things in all people.⁷ But

† Lit. bread
begin "Take, eat; this is My body..."

‡‡ cf. Ps. 115:4-5; Jer. 10:5; Hab. 2:18-19.

†† Some mss.
‡ Hebrew Brit

†† Lit. have fallen asleep

to each person is given the manifestation of the *Ruach* for the benefit of all.⁸ For to one is given through the *Ruach* a word of wisdom, to another a word of knowledge according to the same *Ruach*,⁹ to another faith by the same *Ruach*, to another gifts of healings by the one *Ruach*,¹⁰ to another workings of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.¹¹ But one and the same *Ruach* activates all these things, distributing to each person individually as He wills.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of the body—though many—are one body, so also is Messiah.¹³ For in one *Ruach* we were all immersed into one body—whether Jewish or Greek, slave or free—and all were made to drink of one *Ruach*.

¹⁴ For the body is not one part, but many.¹⁵ If the foot says, "Since I'm not a hand, I'm not part of the body," is it therefore not part of the body?¹⁶ And if the ear says, "Since I'm not an eye, I'm not part of the body," is it for this reason any less part of the body?

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?¹⁸ But now God has placed the parts—each one of them—in the body just as He desired.¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be?²⁰ But now there are many parts, yet one body.

²¹ The eye cannot tell the hand, "I don't need you!" or in turn the head to the feet, "I don't need you!"²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be less important are indispensable.²³ Those parts of the body that we think to be less honorable, we clothe with greater honor; and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty;²⁴ but our presentable parts have no such need. Rather God assembled the body, giving more honor to those who are lacking,²⁵ so that there may be no division in the body, but so that the parts may have the same care for one another.²⁶ If one part suffers, all the parts suffer together. If one part is honored, all the parts rejoice together.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Messiah, and members individually.²⁸ God has put into His community first emissaries, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then healings, helps, leadership, and various kinds of tongues.²⁹ All are not emissaries, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All do not work miracles, do they?³⁰ All do not have gifts of healing, do they? All do not speak in tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?³¹ But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And still I show you a far better way:

The Superior Way of Love

13 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, I have become a noisy gong

or a clanging cymbal.

² If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but have not love,

I am nothing.

³ If I give away all that I own and if I hand over my body so I might boast [†] but have not love,

I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind,

it does not envy,

it does not brag,

it is not puffed up,

⁵ it does not behave inappropriately,

it does not seek its own way,

it is not provoked,

it keeps no account of wrong,

⁶ it does not rejoice over injustice

but rejoices in the truth;

⁷ it bears all things,

it believes all things,

it hopes all things,

it endures all things.

⁸ Love never fails—

but where there are prophecies,

they will pass away;

where there are tongues,

they will cease;

where there is knowledge,

it will pass away.

⁹ For we know in part

and we prophesy in part;

¹⁰ but when that which is perfect has come,

then that which is partial will pass away.

¹¹ When I was a child,

I spoke like a child,

I thought like a child,

I reasoned like a child.

When I became a man,

I put away childish things.

¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly,

but then face to face.

Now I know in part,

but then I will know fully,

even as I have been fully known.

¹³ But now these three remain—

faith, hope, and love.

And the greatest of these is love.

Orderly Governing of the Gifts

14 Pursue love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. ² For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to people but to God—for no one understands, but in the *Ruach* he speaks mysteries. ³ But one who prophesies speaks to

people for building up, urging on, and uplifting. ⁴ One who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but one who prophesies builds up the community. ⁵ Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy. ^{††} One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues—unless he interprets, so that the community may be built up.

⁶ But now, brothers and sisters, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you—unless I speak to you by way of revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? ⁷ It is the same for lifeless things that make a sound—like a flute or a harp. If they make no distinction in the tones, how will what is played be recognized? ⁸ For if the trumpet [‡] makes an unclear sound, who will prepare himself for battle? ⁹ So also with you with your tongue—unless you utter speech that is intelligible, how will what is spoken be understood? For you will be talking to the wind! ¹⁰ It may be that there are many kinds of languages in the world—and none without meaning. ¹¹ If then I do not understand the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner ^{‡‡} to the speaker, and the speaker will be a foreigner to me. ¹² Likewise with you—since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, keep trying to excel for the building up of the community.

¹³ Therefore, let one who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. ¹⁴ For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. ¹⁵ What is it then? I will pray in my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing praises with my spirit, and I will also sing praises with my mind. ¹⁶ Otherwise if you give thanks and praise in the spirit, how will one filling the place of the ungifted say the “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since he has no idea what you’re saying? ¹⁷ For you certainly give thanks well, but the other person is not built up. ¹⁸ I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. ¹⁹ However, in Messiah’s community I would rather speak five words with my mind, so I may also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

²⁰ Brothers and sisters, stop being children in your thinking—rather, be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature. ²¹ In the Prophets ^{‡‡} it is written, “By those with strange tongues and by the lips of strangers I will speak to this people. And not even then will they listen to me,” says *ADONAI*.

²² Therefore, tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers—but prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. ²³ So if Messiah’s whole community comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and uninstructed or unbelieving people come in, won’t they say that you are crazy? ²⁴ But if all

^{††} cf. Num. 11:29. [‡] Greek *salpigx chatzotzrot kesef*
chatzotzrah
^{‡‡} Lit. barbarian ^{‡‡} Lit. Law

[†] Other mss. add *be burned*

are prophesying and some unbelieving or ungifted person comes in, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all. ²⁵ The secrets of his heart become known, and so he will fall down on his face and worship God, declaring, "God really is among you!" [†]

²⁶ What is it then, brothers and sisters? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. ²⁷ If someone speaks in a tongue, let it be by two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret. ²⁸ But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the community but speak to himself and to God. ²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others evaluate. ³⁰ But if something is revealed to another sitting nearby, let the first one become silent. ³¹ For you can all prophesy one by one, so all may learn and be encouraged. ³² The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, ³³ for God is not a God of confusion, but *shalom*.

As in all the communities of the *kedoshim*, ³⁴ let women keep silent in the communities, for it is not permitted for them to speak out. Rather let them be in order, as the *Torah* also says. ^{††35} If they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home—for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak out in the community. ³⁶ Did the word of God originate with you? Or did it reach you alone?

³⁷ If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that what I write to you is the Lord's command. ³⁸ But if someone does not recognize it, he is not recognized. ³⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ But let everything be done decently and in order.

The Victory of the Resurrection

15 Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the Good News which I proclaimed to you. You also received it, and you took your stand on it, ² and by it you are being saved if you hold firm to the word I proclaimed to you—unless you believed without proper consideration. ³ For I also passed on to you first of all what I also received—

that Messiah died for our sins
according to the Scriptures, [‡]

⁴ that He was buried,

that He was raised on the third day
according to the Scriptures,

⁵ and that He appeared to Kefa,
then to the Twelve.

⁶ Then He appeared to over five hundred
brothers and sisters at one time—
most of them are still alive,
though some have died. ^{‡†}

⁷ Then He appeared to Jacob,

then to all the emissaries,

⁸ and last of all, as to one untimely born,
He also appeared to me.

⁹ For I am the least of the emissaries, unworthy to be called an emissary because I persecuted God's community. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am. His grace toward me was not in vain. No, I worked harder than them all—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. ¹¹ Whether then it is I or they, so we proclaim, and so you believed.

¹² Now if Messiah is proclaimed—that He has been raised from the dead—how can some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Messiah has been raised! ¹⁴ And if Messiah has not been raised, then our proclaiming is meaningless and your faith also is meaningless. ¹⁵ Moreover, we are found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified about God that He raised up Messiah—whom He did not raise up, if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Messiah has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Messiah has not been raised, your faith is futile—you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Messiah have perished. ¹⁹ If we have hoped in Messiah in this life alone, we are to be pitied more than all people.

²⁰ But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also has come through a Man. ^{‡‡22} For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah will all be made alive.

²³ But each in its own order: Messiah the firstfruits; then, at His coming, those who belong to Messiah; ²⁴ then the end, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all rule and all authority and power. ^{‡‡25} For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. ^{‡‡26} The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For God has "put all things in subjection underneath His feet." [§] But when the psalmist says that "all" has been put in subjection, it is clear that this does not include God Himself, who put all things under Messiah. ²⁸ Now when all things become subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also become subject to the One who put all things under Him, so that God may be all in all.

²⁹ Otherwise, what will they do who are immersed for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, then why are they immersed for them? ³⁰ And why are we in danger every hour? ³¹ I die every day—yes, as surely as the boast in you, brothers and sisters, which I have in Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord. ³² If, for human reasons, I fought with "wild animals" at Ephesus, what good is that to me? If the dead are not raised, "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!" ^{§†33} Do not be deceived! "Bad company corrupts good morals."

[†] cf. Isa. 45:14; Dan. 2:47; Zech. 8:23. ^{††} cf. Gen. 3:16. [‡] cf. Isa. 53:8-10; Ps. 16:10-11; 22:15-16; Hos. 6:2; Dan. 9:24. ^{‡†} Lit. most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep

^{‡‡} cf. Rom. 5:12, 21. ^{‡‡†} cf. Dan. 2:44; 7:14, 27. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Ps. 110:1. [§] Ps. 8:6b (LXX); cf. 8:7b(6b); cf. Heb. 2:6-10. ^{§†} cf. Isa. 22:13; 56:12.

³⁴ Come to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning! For some have no knowledge of God—I say this to your shame.

³⁵ But someone will say, “How are the dead raised?” † and, “With what kind of body do they come?” ³⁶ Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ As for what you sow—you are not sowing the body that will be, but a bare seed, maybe of wheat or something else. ³⁸ But God gives it a body just as He planned, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. ³⁹ All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of humans, another flesh of animals, another of birds, and another of fish. ⁴⁰ There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing while the earthly is another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead:
Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption!

⁴³ Sown in dishonor, raised in glory!
Sown in weakness, raised in power!

⁴⁴ Sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body!
If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” †† The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man is of the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven.

⁴⁸ Like the one made of dust,
so also are those made of dust ‡;
and like the heavenly,
so also are those who are heavenly.

⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the image of the one made from dust,
so also shall we bear †† the image of the One from heaven.

⁵⁰ Now I say this, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and what decays cannot inherit what does not decay. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery:

We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be changed—
⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,
at the last *shofar*. †

For the *shofar* will sound,
and the dead will be raised incorruptible,
and we will be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility,
and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ But when this corruptible will have put on incorruptibility
and this mortal will have put on immortality,
then shall come to pass the saying that is written:
“Death is swallowed up in victory.” ††

† cf. Ezek. 37:3. †† cf. Gen. 2:7. ‡ cf. Gen. 3:19. †† Many mss. say let us bear †† Greek. *salpigx*

shofar ††† Isa. 25:8.

⁵⁵ “Where, O Death, is your victory?
Where, O Death, is your sting?” †††

⁵⁶ Now the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the *Torah*. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who keeps giving us the victory through our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah! ⁵⁸ Therefore, my dearly loved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord—because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Collection for Jerusalem and Final Greetings

16 Now concerning the collection for the *kedoshim*, as I directed Messiah’s communities in Galatia, you do likewise. ² On the first day of the week, let each of you set something aside, saving up whatever is gained, so no collections take place when I come. ³ Then whenever I arrive, I will send whomever you approve with letters of introduction to carry your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴ If it is advisable for me to go also, they will go with me.

⁵ But I will come to you after I have passed through Macedonia—for I am passing through Macedonia. ⁶ Perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey—wherever I go. ⁷ For I do not wish to see you now just in passing—for I hope to stay on with you for a while, if the Lord permits. ⁸ But I will stay on at Ephesus until *Shavuot*, ⁹ for a great door has opened wide for me, though many are in opposition.

¹⁰ Now if Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear among you—for he is doing the Lord’s work, just as I am. ¹¹ No one, then, should treat him with disrespect. But set him on his way in *shalom*, so that he might come to me; for I am expecting him, along with the brothers.

¹² Now about our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brothers and sisters, and he was quite unwilling to come now—but he will come when he has an opportunity.

¹³ Be on the alert! Stand firm in the faith! Be men of courage! Be strong! ^{§14} Let all that you do be done in love.

¹⁵ Now I urge you, brothers and sisters (you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves in service to the *kedoshim*), ¹⁶ also to submit to people such as these, and to everyone working together and laboring. ¹⁷ I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, for they made up for your absence. ¹⁸ For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men.

¹⁹ Messiah’s communities in Asia ^{§†} greet you. Aquila and Prisca ^{§††} greet you warmly in the Lord, with the

††† cf. Hos. 13:14 (LXX); some mss. say O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? § cf. Ps. 30:24 (LXX); 31:25(24). §† The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey). §†† Also Priscilla

community that meets in their house. ²⁰ All the brothers and sisters greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

²¹ This greeting is in my own hand—Paul's. ²² If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be cursed. *Marana , tha!* Our Lord, come! †

²³ The grace of the Lord *Yeshua* be with you. ²⁴ My love be with you all in Messiah *Yeshua* .

† Some mss. say *Maran atha! Our Lord has come! Our Lord is coming!*

2 Corinthians

Introduction

2 Corinthians, like 1 Corinthians, is intensely personal. It was written from Macedonia a year or so after the first letter (so around 56-57 C.E.), addressed once again to the troubled believers of Corinth. This time around, the problems are not so much the Corinthians' own behavior and their own questions, but the presence of trouble-makers who put themselves forward as authorities in place of the Paul. In chapters 1–7 it seems that a single person was causing trouble in the community; in chapters 10–13 it is a whole group of “false emissaries.” The false emissaries were proclaiming a message that was not the Good News. On top of that, they claimed that a “real emissary” would have charisma, a “take-charge” attitude. He would be a man who saw visions and performed miracles. The application is not hard to see for believers today. Not only do we have to understand the content of the Good News in order to proclaim it (in contrast to the teaching of the false emissaries), but we also need to be the kind of people God wants to use to proclaim that message—not eloquent, good-looking, flashy superstars, but devoted people who have real problems and real weaknesses.

For this reason, Paul speaks of believers as having a treasure in fragile jars of clay, to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us (4:7). In fact, Paul says that “if I must boast, I will boast of my weakness” (11:30), because God’s power is shown through human weakness. After all, it was the same with Himself: “For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives through the power of God” (13:4). The Jewish people should be no strangers to this idea. Every year at Passover, we celebrate how God’s power was used to deliver His weak, downtrodden people. We see that became weak even to the point of death, but through that weakness God showed His power in the resurrection. Today that power enables His people to live transformed lives and even transform the world around them.

A Look Inside 2 Corinthians

- Greetings
- Encouragement Through Hardships
- Paul’s Change of Plans
- Forgive the Repentant Sinner
- Revealing Messiah’s Fragrance
- A New Covenant on Hearts of Flesh
- Treasures in Jars of Clay
- Earthly Tents, Eternal Dwellings
- Ambassadors for Messiah
- Preserving Sanctity in God’s Living Temple
- Godly Sorrow and Joy
- Eagerness to Give
- An Offering by Special Delivery
- Sowing and Reaping Generosity
- Tearing Down Strongholds
- True and False Apostles
- Paul Boasts in the Lord
- Boasting in Visions and Weakness
- Final Warnings
- Final Greetings

Greetings

1 Paul, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* through the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To God's community at Corinth, with all the *kedoshim* who are throughout Achaia:

² Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah.

Encouragement through Hardships

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, the Father of compassion and God of all encouragement. ⁴ He encourages us in every trouble, so that we may be able to encourage those who are in any trouble, through the very encouragement with which we ourselves are encouraged by God. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Messiah overflow into us, so also through Messiah our encouragement overflows. ⁶ If we are suffering hardship, it is for your encouragement and salvation. Or if we are encouraged, it is for your encouragement, which produces in you the patient endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer. ⁷ Our hope for you is firm, since we know that as you are partners in our sufferings, so also in our encouragement.

⁸ For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of our trouble that happened in Asia. [†] We were under great pressure—so far beyond our strength that we despaired even of living. ⁹ In fact, we had within ourselves the death sentence—so that we might not rely on ourselves, but on God who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He who rescued us from so great a danger of death will continue to rescue us—we have set our hope on Him that He will rescue us again. ¹¹ You also are helping by your prayer for us, so that from many people thanks may be given on our behalf for the gracious gift given us through the help of many.

¹² For our reason for boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world, and most especially toward you, with simplicity and godly sincerity—not by human wisdom but by the grace of God. ¹³ For we write nothing to you other than what you can read and understand—and I hope you will understand in full ¹⁴ just as you understood us in part, so that we are your reason for boasting just as you also are ours in the Day of our Lord *Yeshua*.

Paul's Change of Plans

¹⁵ Because of this confidence, I was planning to come to you first, so that you might have a second benefit—¹⁶ to pass by you on my way to Macedonia and again from Macedonia to come back to you, and to be helped by you on my journey to Judea. ¹⁷ So when I was planning to do this, I didn't do so lightly, did I? Or the things I plan, do I plan according to the flesh—so

[†] The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey).

it might be with me "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? ¹⁸ But as God is faithful, our message to you is not both "Yes" and "No." ^{††19} For *Ben-Elohim* — *Yeshua* the Messiah, who was proclaimed among you by us, by myself and Silvanus [‡] and Timothy—was not "Yes" and "No." Rather, in Him it has always been "Yes." ²⁰ For in Him all the promises of God are "Yes." Therefore also through Him is the "Amen" by us, to the glory of God. ^{‡‡21} Now it is God who establishes us with you in Messiah. He anointed us, ²² set His seal on us, and gave us the *Ruach* in our hearts as a pledge.

²³ But I call God as my witness ^{‡‡‡}—to spare you, I didn't come to Corinth again. ²⁴ Not that we lord it over you in matters of faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy—for in the faith you are standing firm.

Forgive the Repentant Sinner

2 So I made up my mind that I would not come to you again causing sorrow. ² For if I cause you sorrow, then who is there cheering me on but the one I have made sorrowful? ³ And I wrote this very thing to you, so that when I came I wouldn't have sorrow from those who ought to make me rejoice—having confidence in you all that my joy is yours. ⁴ For out of much distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears—not to make you sorrowful, but to let you know the love that I have especially for you.

⁵ But if anyone has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but to some extent—not to exaggerate—to all of you. ⁶ For such a person, this punishment by the majority is enough. ⁷ So instead you should forgive him and encourage him. Otherwise such a person might be swallowed up by excessive sorrow. ⁸ Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. ⁹ For to this end I also wrote, that I might know your character, whether you are obedient in all things. ¹⁰ Now anyone you forgive, I also forgive. For indeed, what I have forgiven (if I have forgiven anything), I did it for you in the presence of Messiah, ¹¹ so that we might not be outwitted by *satan* —for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

Revealing Messiah's Fragrance

¹² Now when I arrived in Troas for the Good News of Messiah, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, ¹³ I had no rest in my spirit, because I didn't find Titus my brother. So I said farewell to them, and I set out for Macedonia. ¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Messiah always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us reveals everywhere the aroma ^{‡‡‡} of the knowledge of Himself. ¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Messiah to God, among those who are being saved and those who are perishing—¹⁶ to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. Who is competent for these things? ¹⁷ For we are not like

^{††} cf. Num. 23:19. [‡] Or Silas ^{‡‡} cf. Ps. 72:19. ^{‡‡‡} Lit. as witness against my soul ^{†††} cf. Song 1:3; Ezek. 20:41.

many, peddling the word of God. Rather, in Messiah we speak in the sight of God with sincerity, as persons sent from God.

A New Covenant on Hearts of Flesh

3 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you? ²You are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. ³It is clear that you are a letter from Messiah delivered by us—written not with ink but with the *Ruach* of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. [†]

⁴Such is the confidence we have through Messiah toward God—⁵ not that we are competent in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our competence is from God. ⁶He also made us competent as servants of a new covenant ^{††}—not of the letter, but of the *Ruach*. For the letter kills, but the *Ruach* gives life.

⁷Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that *Bnei-Yisrael* could not look intently upon Moses's face because of its glory [‡]—although it was passing away—⁸ how will the ministry of the *Ruach* not be even more glorious? ⁹For if there is glory in the ministry of condemnation, ^{‡‡} the ministry of righteousness overflows even more in glory. ¹⁰For even what was glorious is not glorious in comparison to the glory that surpasses it. ¹¹For if what is passing away is glorious, much more what remains is glorious.

¹²Therefore, having such a hope, we act with great boldness. ¹³We are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face in order for *Bnei-Yisrael* not to look intently upon the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴But their minds were hardened. For up to this very day the same veil remains unlifted at the reading of the ancient covenant, since in Messiah it is passing away. ¹⁵But to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart. ¹⁶But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ^{‡‡‡} Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the *Ruach ADONAI* is, there is freedom. ^{‡‡‡‡} But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory—just as from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Treasures in Jars of Clay

4 For this reason, since we have this ministry, just as we received mercy, we do not lose heart. ²Instead, we renounced the hidden shameful ways—not walking in deception or distorting the word of God, but commending ourselves before God to everyone's conscience by the open proclamation of the truth.

[†] cf. Exod. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15-16; Prov. 3:3; 7:3; Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26. ^{††} cf. Jer. 31:31. [‡] Lit. the glory of his face

^{‡‡} cf. Deut. 27:26. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Exod. 34:34. ^{‡‡‡‡} cf. Isa. 61:1.

³ And even if our Good News is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case, the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, so they might not see the light of the Good News of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Messiah *Yeshua* as Lord—and ourselves as your slaves for *Yeshua*'s sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," ^{‡‡‡} is the One who has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Messiah. [§]

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, ^{§†} so that the surpassing greatness of the power may be from God and not from ourselves. ⁸ We are hard pressed in every way, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of *Yeshua*, so that the life of *Yeshua* may also be revealed in our mortal body. ¹¹ For we who live are always being handed over to death for *Yeshua*'s sake, so that the life of *Yeshua* may be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. ¹³ But we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, and therefore I spoke." ^{§††} So we also believe, and therefore we also speak, ¹⁴ knowing that the One who raised the Lord *Yeshua* will raise us also with *Yeshua*, and will bring us with you into His presence. ¹⁵ For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace that is spreading through more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow—to the glory of God.

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. ^{§†‡} For our trouble, light and momentary, is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen. For what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

Earthly Tents, Eternal Dwellings

5 For we know that if the tent, our earthly home, is torn down, we have a building from God—a home not made with human hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling—³ if indeed, after we have put it on, we will not be found naked. ⁴ For we groan while we are in this tent—burdened because we don't want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now the One who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the *Ruach* as a pledge. ⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and at home with

^{‡‡‡} Gen. 1:3. [§] Some mss. say in the face of Messiah *Yeshua* ^{§†} cf. Job 33:6; Lam. 4:2. ^{§††} Ps. 116:10(LXX). ^{§‡} cf. Isa. 40:29, 31.

the Lord. ⁹ So whether at home or absent, we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may receive what is due for the things he did while in the body—whether good or bad.

Ambassadors for Messiah

¹¹ Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, [†] we are trying to persuade people, but what we are is known to God—and I hope it is known to your consciences as well. ¹² For we are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity for boasting about us, so that you may have something to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. ^{††13} For if we are out of our minds, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For the love of Messiah compels us, since we have concluded that One died for all; as a result all died. ¹⁵ And He died for all so that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for the One who died for them and was raised.

¹⁶ So from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Messiah according to the flesh, yet now we no longer know Him this way. ¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ^{†18} Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Messiah and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. ¹⁹ That is, in Messiah God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them; and He has entrusted the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ We are therefore ambassadors for Messiah, as though God were making His appeal through us. We beg you on behalf of Messiah, be reconciled to God. ²¹ He made the One who knew no sin to become a sin offering on our behalf, [‡] so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 Since we are co-laboring, we also urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ² For He says, "At a favorable time I listened to you, in a day of salvation I helped you." ^{‡‡} Behold, now is the favorable time. Behold, now is the day of salvation. ³ We give no cause for offense in anything, so that our ministry may not be blamed. ⁴ But as God's servants, we are commending ourselves in every way—in great endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, ⁵ in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in troubles, in sleeplessness, in hunger; ⁶ in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, in genuine love, ⁷ in truthful speech, in the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸ through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report. We are regarded as deceivers and yet true; ⁹ as unknown and

[†] cf. Prov. 1:7, 29; 2:9; 8:13; 10:27; 14:26-27; 19:23; Isa. 11:2-3; etc. ^{††} cf. 1 Sam. 16:7(LXX). [‡] cf. Isa. 43:18-19; 65:17. ^{††} cf. Lev. 16:15; Isa. 53:4-6, 10. ^{‡‡} Isa. 49:8; cf. Isa. 55:6.

yet well-known; as dying, yet behold, we live; as disciplined yet not put to death; ^{‡‡10} as grieving yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing yet possessing everything.

¹¹ We have spoken openly to you, O Corinthians; our heart is open wide! ¹² You are not restricted by us, yet you are restricted in your own feelings. ¹³ Now in return—I speak as to my children—open wide to us also.

Preserving Sanctity in God's Living Temple

¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. ^{‡‡} For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony does Messiah have with Belial ^{§?} Or what part does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement does God's Temple have with idols? ^{§†} For we are the temple of the living God—just as God said,

"I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ^{§††}

¹⁷ Therefore, come out from among them, and be separate, says ADONAI.

Touch no unclean thing. ^{§‡}

Then I will take you in. ^{§††}

¹⁸ I will be a father to you,

and you shall be My sons and daughters, says ADONAI -Tzva'ot." ^{§†}

7 Therefore, since we have these promises, loved ones, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of body and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Godly Sorrow and Joy

² Make room for us in your hearts. We wronged no one, ruined no one, took advantage of no one. ³ I do not say this to condemn you, for I have said before that you are in our hearts—to die together and to live together with you. ⁴ Great is my boldness of speech toward you. Great is my boasting on your behalf. I have been filled with encouragement. I overflow with joy in all our troubles.

⁵ For even when we came into Macedonia, our body had no rest. But we were hard pressed on every side—conflicts outside, fears within. ⁶ But God, who encourages the downcast, encouraged us with the arrival of Titus; ⁷ and not only by his coming, but also by the encouragement with which he was encouraged by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, and your deep concern for me—so that I rejoiced still more.

^{‡‡†} cf. Ps. 118:18. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Deut. 22:9-11. [§] A spelling variant here of Greek *belial* *bliya'al*

bli -'ol

^{§†} cf. Ezek.

8:3, 10. ^{§††} cf. Exod. 29:45; Lev. 26:11-12; Jer. 32:38; Ezek. 37:27.

^{§‡} cf. Isa. 52:11. ^{§††} cf. Ezek. 20:34, 41. ^{§†} Greek *Kurios Pantokrator* LORD

⁸ For even if I grieved you with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that my letter grieved you, but just for a while. ⁹ Now I rejoice, not that you were grieved, but that you were grieved to the point of repentance. For you were grieved according to God's will, so that you might in no way suffer loss from us. ¹⁰ For the grief that God wills brings a repentance that leads to salvation, leaving no regret. But the world's grief brings death. ¹¹ For see what this very thing—this grieving that God wills—has brought you! What diligence, what defense, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what rendering of justice! In everything you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. ¹² So although I wrote to you, I wrote not for the sake of the wrongdoer or for the sake of the one who was wronged, but to make known to you your diligence for us in the sight of God. ¹³ For this reason we have been encouraged.

Besides our own encouragement, we rejoiced even more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you. ¹⁴ For if I have boasted some to him about you, I was not put to shame. But as we spoke all things truthfully to you, so also our boasting to Titus has proved to be the truth. ¹⁵ His feelings toward you overflow when he remembers everyone's obedience—how you received him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ I rejoice that in everything I have confidence in you.

Eagerness to Give

8 Now we make known to you, brothers and sisters, the grace God has given to Messiah's communities in Macedonia—² that in much testing by affliction, the abundance of their joy and their extreme poverty overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For I testify that according to their ability, and even beyond their ability, they gave of their own free will—⁴ begging us with much urging for the favor of sharing in the relief of the *kedoshim*. ⁵ Moreover, it was not just as we had hoped, but they gave of themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. ⁶ So we urged Titus that, just as he had made a start before, so he should also complete this gracious service for you. ⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith and speech and knowledge and all diligence, and in your love for us—also excel in this grace. ⁸ I am saying this not as a command, but I am trying to prove by the diligence of others the genuineness of your love as well. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah—that even though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that through His poverty you might become rich. ¹⁰ Now I give my opinion in this matter, that it is a credit to you that a year ago you were the first to start—not only to do but even to be willing. ¹¹ But now finish doing it, so that just as there was eagerness to be willing, so also to finish it, out of what you have. ¹² For if the eagerness is present, the gift is acceptable according to what a per-

son has, not according to what he doesn't have. ¹³ For it is not relief for others and hardship for you, but as a matter of equality. ¹⁴ Your abundance at this present time meets their need, so that their abundance may also meet your need—so that there may be equality. ¹⁵ As it is written, "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little." †

An Offering by Special Delivery

¹⁶ But thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same devotion for you. ¹⁷ For indeed he not only accepted our appeal, but went to you with eagerness and on his own initiative. ¹⁸ We are sending along with him the brother whose fame in connection with the Good News has spread throughout all of Messiah's communities. ¹⁹ Not only that, but he has also been appointed by the communities as our travel companion with this gracious gift, which is administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself and to show our eagerness to help. ²⁰ We are taking this precaution, so that no one will blame us in regard to the way we administer this generous gift. ²¹ We have regard for what is honorable—not only before the Lord, but also before people. ²² Also with them we are sending our brother whom we have tested many times and found to be diligent in many things, but now even more diligent because of his great confidence in you. ²³ As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brothers, they are the emissaries of the communities, a glory to Messiah. ²⁴ Therefore, before Messiah's communities show them the proof of your love and of our boasting about you.

9 Now about this service to the *kedoshim*, it is indeed unnecessary for me to write to you—² for I know your eagerness. I boast about it to the Macedonians, that Achaia has been preparing for a year already; and your zeal has stirred up most of them. ³ But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not be in vain in this case, so that you may be prepared, just as I kept saying. ⁴ Otherwise, if any Macedonians were to come and find you unprepared, we—not to mention you—would be put to shame in this undertaking. ⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on to you and arrange ahead of time your generous gift that had been promised beforehand, so that it would be ready as a gift and not as an extortion.

Sowing and Reaping Generosity

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. †† Let each one give as he has decided in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion—for God loves a cheerful giver. ††† And God is able

† Exod. 16:18. †† cf. Prov. 11:24-25; 22:9. ††† cf. Exod. 25:2; 1 Chron. 29:17.

to make all grace overflow to you, so that by always having enough of everything, you may overflow in every good work. ⁹ As it is written,

“He scattered widely, He gave to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.” [†]

¹⁰ Now the One who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ^{††11} You will be enriched in everything for all generosity, which through us brings about thanksgiving to God. ¹² For this service of giving is not only supplying the needs of the *kedoshim*, but is also overflowing with many thanksgivings to God. ¹³ Because of the evidence of this service, they praise God for the obedience of your affirmation of the Good News of Messiah and for the generosity of your contribution to them and to everyone. ¹⁴ And in their prayer for you, they long for you because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Tearing down Strongholds

10 Now I, Paul, appeal myself to you by the meekness and gentleness of Messiah—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when far away. ² I beg of you that when I am present I won't need to be bold with the courage I consider showing against some who judge us as walking in the flesh. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful through God for the tearing down of strongholds. [‡] We are tearing down false arguments ⁵ and every high-minded thing that exalts itself ^{††} against the knowledge of God. We are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah— ⁶ ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.

⁷ Look at what is before your eyes. ^{‡‡} If anyone is confident in himself that he belongs to Messiah, let him reconsider that just as he belongs to Messiah, so also do we. ⁸ For even if I boast a little more about our authority—which the Lord gave for building you up and not for tearing you down—I will not be put to shame. ⁹ Not that I would try to terrify you by my letters— ¹⁰ for they say, “His letters are weighty and strong, but his presence in person is weak and his speech of no account.” ¹¹ Let such a person consider this, that what we are in word through letters when we are absent, we also are in action when we are present.

¹² For we do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves. But when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they have no understanding. ¹³ But we will not boast beyond limits, but within the limits of the area that God has assigned to us—to reach even as far as you. ¹⁴ We are

[†] Ps. 112:9. ^{††} cf. Isa. 55:10; Hos. 10:12. [‡] cf. Isa. 25:11; Jer. 51:53. ^{†††} cf. Isa. 2:11–12, 17. ^{‡‡} Some mss. say *Do you look at things according to outward appearance?*

not extending ourselves too far, as if we did not reach you—for we did come even as far as to you with the Good News of Messiah. ¹⁵ Neither are we boasting beyond limits based on the labors of others, but we have hope while your faith is growing for our area among you to be greatly enlarged— ¹⁶ so that we may proclaim the Good News even to regions beyond you, not boasting about what has been accomplished in another's area. ¹⁷ But “let him who boasts boast in the Lord.” ^{‡‡‡18} For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

True and False Apostles

11 I wish that you would put up with a little foolishness from me, but indeed you are putting up with me. ² For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. For I betrothed you to one husband, to present you to Messiah as a pure virgin. ^{‡‡‡3} But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds might be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion and purity to the Messiah. ⁴ For if someone comes and proclaims another *Yeshua* whom we did not proclaim, or if you receive a different spirit that you did not receive, or a different “good news” that you did not accept, you put up with that well enough!

⁵ For I consider myself in no way inferior to the “super special” emissaries. ⁶ Even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not so in knowledge. No, in every way we have made this clear to you in all things. ⁷ Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I proclaimed to you God's Good News free of charge? ⁸ I robbed other communities by taking wages from them for service to you. ⁹ When I was present with you and I was in need, I did not burden anyone; for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. In everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and I will continue to do so. ¹⁰ As the truth of Messiah is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹ Why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

¹² But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off the opportunity from those who want an opportunity in what they boast about to also be regarded just as we are. ¹³ For such men are false emissaries, deceitful workers masquerading as Messiah's emissaries. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even *satan* masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵ It is no great thing therefore if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be according to their deeds.

Paul Boasts in the Lord

¹⁶ I say again, let no one consider me to be a fool. But if you do, accept me as a fool, so that I also may boast a little. ¹⁷ What I am saying, I am saying not ac-

^{‡‡†} Jer. 9:23(24). ^{‡‡‡} cf. Hos. 2:21–22 (19–20).

ording to the Lord, but as in foolishness, in this self-confident boasting. ¹⁸ Since many boast according to the flesh, I too will boast. ¹⁹ For you, being so wise, put up with fools gladly. ²⁰ For you put up with it if someone enslaves you, if someone devours you, if someone takes advantage of you, if someone puts on airs, if someone slaps you on the face. ²¹ To my shame I must say that we have been weak.

Yet whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I speak in foolishness—I dare, too. ²² Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the descendants of Abraham? So am I. ²³ Are they servants of Messiah? I am more so—I speak like I'm out of my mind—in labors much more, in prisons much more, in beatings more brutal, near death often. ²⁴ Five times from the Jewish leaders I received 40 lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I spent in the open sea. ²⁶ In my many journeys I have been in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the desert, dangers in the sea, dangers among false brothers, ²⁷ in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. ²⁸ Besides these other things, there is daily pressure on me of concern for all of Messiah's communities. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not burn with indignation? ³⁰ If I must boast, I will boast of my weakness. ³¹ The God and Father of the Lord *Yeshua*, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. ³² In Damascus the governor under king Aretas was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, ³³ and I was lowered in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands. †

Boasting in Visions and Weakness

12 I must go on boasting—though it does no good, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. ² I know a man in Messiah (whether in the body I don't know, or whether out of the body I don't know—God knows)—14 years ago, he was caught up to the third heaven. ³ I know such a man (whether in the body or outside of the body I don't know—God knows)—⁴ he was caught up into Paradise and heard words too sacred to tell, which a human is not permitted to utter. ⁵ On behalf of such a man I will boast—but about myself I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses. ⁶ For if I should want to boast, I would not be foolish—for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, so that no one may think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me—⁷ even in the extraordinary quality of the revelations. So that I would not exalt myself, a thorn in the flesh was given to me—a messenger of *satan* to torment me, †† so I

† cf. Deut. 25:3. †† cf. Acts 9:23-25. ‡ cf. Ezek. 8:3. †† cf. Num. 33:55; Job 2:6.

would not exalt myself. ⁸ I pleaded with the Lord three times about this, that it might leave me. ⁹ But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Messiah may dwell in me. ¹⁰ For Messiah's sake, then, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in distresses, in persecutions, in calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

¹¹ I have become a fool—you drove me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I am in no way inferior to the super-special emissaries—though I am nothing. ¹² Truly the signs of an emissary were worked out among you, with patient endurance, by signs and wonders and mighty miracles. ¹³ For in what respect were you treated worse than the rest of Messiah's communities—except that I myself did not burden you? Pardon me this injustice!

¹⁴ Look, I am ready to come to you this third time, and I will not burden you—for I seek not your possessions, but you! For the children are not obliged to save up for the parents, but the parents for the children. ¹⁵ I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? ¹⁶ But be that as it may, I did not burden you myself. Nevertheless, crafty fellow that I am, I caught you with trickery! ¹⁷ I haven't taken advantage of you through any of those I sent to you, have I? ¹⁸ I did urge Titus to visit you, and I sent the brother with him. Titus didn't take any advantage of you, did he? Didn't we walk in the same spirit, in the same footsteps?

¹⁹ All along you've been thinking that we are defending ourselves to you. †† It is before God that we've been speaking in Messiah—and all for building you up, loved ones. ²⁰ For I am afraid that perhaps when I come, I may find you not as I wish, or I may be found by you not as you wish—that there may be strife, envy, outbursts of anger, self-seeking disputes, *lashon ha-ra*, gossip, arrogance, unruly commotions. ²¹ I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I will mourn for many of those who have sinned before and not repented of the impurity and sexual immorality and indecency which they committed.

Final Warnings

13 This is the third time I am coming to you. "By the testimony ††† of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." ††† I spoke a warning, when I was with you the second time. Though now I am away, I am again speaking a warning to those who have sinned before, as well as to all the rest, that if I come again, I will not spare anyone—³ since you are demanding proof that Messiah is speaking through me. He is not weak toward you, but powerful among

†† Some mss. say *Do you think all along that we are defending ourselves to you?* ††† Lit. mouth ††† Deut. 19:15; cf. Matt. 18:16; 1 Tim. 5:19.

you. ⁴ For He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives through the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we shall live with Him by God's power toward you.

⁵ Test yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Examine yourselves! Or don't you know yourselves—that Messiah *Yeshua* is in you? Unless of course you failed the test. ⁶ But I hope that you will realize that we haven't failed the test. ⁷ Now we pray to God that you do no wrong—not so that we may appear to have passed the test, but in order that you may do what is right even if we may seem to have failed. ⁸ For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth. ⁹ For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. We also pray for this—your perfecting. ¹⁰ For this reason I write these things while I am absent, so that when I am present I need not pro-

ceed harshly, according to the authority which the Lord gave me—for building up and not for tearing down.

Final Greetings

¹¹ Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Aim for restoration, encourage one another, be of the same mind, live in *shalom*—and the God of love and *shalom* will be with you.

¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss.

All the *kedoshim* greet you. †

¹³ The grace of the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah and the love of God and the fellowship of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* be with you all. Amen.

† Some versions have three verses: 12 Greet... All... The grace...

Galatians

Introduction

Together with Romans, Paul's letter to the Galatians speaks directly to the pressing issue of Jewish-Gentile relations in the body of Messiah. Written early in Paul's career, sometime in the late 40s, Paul here speaks sharply against those, maybe some variety of -believing Jews, who were teaching Torah observance for Gentiles as a way of justification. In no uncertain terms, he declares that justification comes by faith, not by observance (compare Acts 15). Along the way he draws on illustrations from the Hebrew Bible—Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar—to make his point.

Justification by faith in is a reality for Jews and Gentiles alike. The well-known verse in Galatians 3:28 does not seek to abolish all distinctions between Jews and Gentiles (any more than it abolishes all distinctions between men and women!), but rather tells us that all people have equal access to God and that all come to Him in the same way. As a result, there is a unity in the body of Messiah that transcends the Jewish-Gentile distinction. Moreover, our justification by faith is no license for unethical living, but rather through the we bear the fruit of a righteous and ethical life (chapters 5–6). Paul's opponents were attempting to alienate the Galatians from Paul. In 1 Corinthians 1:11-15, the division came from following various -believing leaders. Here in Galatians the division may come either from outside the body of Messiah or from certain Jewish believers, but the result was a compromise of the Good News for the non-Jewish Galatians.

In Galatians, Paul points us beyond divisions to the unity that we all share in Messiah—a unity of equal opportunity to come into relationship with God (3:28—the same access); a unity of the same way of salvation (2:16—through faith in God's Messiah); and a practical unity that manifests itself in behavior (5:14—love and self-sacrifice).

A Look Inside Galatians

- Greetings from Paul
- No Other Gospel
- How Paul Was Sent Out
- Accepted in Jerusalem
- Confronting Hypocrisy
- By Deeds or by Faith?
- Slaves or Sons?
- Living as Heirs
- on Abraham's Two Sons
- Freedom Based on Favor
- Walking by the
- Bearing Burdens
- Living under God's Favor

Greetings from Paul

1 Paul, an emissary (sent not from men or by man, but by *Yeshua* the Messiah and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), **2** and all the brothers with me.

To Messiah's communities of Galatia:

3 Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father and our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah— **4** who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age, ac-

ording to the will of our God and Father— **5** to Him be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

No Other Gospel

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly turning away from the One who called you by the grace of Messiah, to a different "good news"— **7** not that there is another, but only some who are confusing you and want to distort the Good News of Messiah. **8** But even if we (or an angel from heaven) should announce any "good

news” to you other than what we have proclaimed to you, let that person be cursed! ⁹ As we have said before, so I now repeat: if anyone proclaims to you “good news” other than what you received, let that person be under a curse! ¹⁰ Am I now trying to win people’s approval, or God’s? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Messiah.

How Paul Was Sent Out

¹¹ Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the Good News proclaimed by me is not man-made. ¹² I did not receive it from any human, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of *Yeshua* the Messiah.

¹³ For you have heard of my earlier behavior in Judaism—how I persecuted God’s community beyond measure and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴ I was even advancing within Judaism beyond many my own age among my people, being a more extreme observer of my fathers’ traditions. ¹⁵ But when God—who set me apart from birth and called me through His grace [†]—was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal His Son to me so I would proclaim Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with any human. ¹⁷ I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were emissaries before me, either. Instead, I went away to Arabia and returned again to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to visit with Peter, and I stayed with him 15 days. ¹⁹ But I saw no other emissaries except Jacob, the Lord’s brother. ²⁰ (In what I’m writing you, before God, I do not lie.)

²¹ Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² But I was personally unknown to Messiah’s communities of Judea; ²³ they only kept hearing, “The one who once persecuted us now proclaims the Good News he once tried to destroy!” ²⁴ So they were praising God because of me.

Accepted in Jerusalem

2 Then after 14 years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus with me. ² Because of a revelation, I went up and presented to them the Good News that I proclaim among the Gentiles. But I did so privately to those who seemed to be influential, to make sure I would not run—or had not run—in vain. ^{††} Yet not even Titus who was with me, a Greek, was forced to be circumcised. ⁴ Now this issue came up because of false brothers secretly brought in (who slipped in to spy out our freedom in Messiah, in order to bring us into bondage). ⁵ But we did not give in to them even for a moment, so that the truth of the Good News might be preserved for you.

⁶ But from those who seemed to be influential (whatever they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those influential ones added nothing

to my message. ⁷ On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the Good News for the uncircumcised just as Peter was for the circumcised. ⁸ (For the same God who was at work in Peter as an emissary to the Jews, also was at work in me as an emissary to the Gentiles.) ⁹ Realizing the favor that had been given to me, Jacob and Peter [‡] and John—who are the recognized pillars—shook hands in partnership with Barnabas and me, ^{††} so that we would go to the Gentiles and they to the Jews. ¹⁰ They asked only that we remember the poor—something I also was eager to do.

Confronting Hypocrisy

¹¹ But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong— ¹² for before certain people came from Jacob, he regularly ate with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and separate himself, fearing those from the circumcision. ¹³ And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ But when I saw that they were not walking in line with the truth of the Good News, I said to Peter in front of everyone, “If you—being a Jew—live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

¹⁵ We are Jews by birth and not sinners from among the Gentiles. ¹⁶ Yet we know that a person is set right not by deeds based on *Torah*, but rather through putting trust in Messiah *Yeshua*. ^{‡‡} So even we have put our trust in Messiah *Yeshua*, in order that we might be set right based on trust in Messiah and not by deeds based on *Torah*—because no human will be justified ^{‡‡‡} by deeds based on *Torah*. ¹⁷ But if, while seeking to be justified in Messiah, we ourselves also were found to be sinners, is Messiah then an agent of sin? May it never be! ¹⁸ For if I rebuild the very things I tore down, I prove myself to be a law-breaker. ¹⁹ For through law I died to law, so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Messiah; ²⁰ and it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me. And the life I now live in the body, I live by trusting in *Ben-Elohim* ^{‡‡‡}—who loved me and gave Himself up for me. ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God—for if righteousness comes through *Torah*, then Messiah died for no reason!

By Deeds or by Faith?

3 O foolish Galatians, who cast a spell on you? Before your eyes *Yeshua* the Messiah was clearly portrayed as crucified. ² I want to find out just one thing from you: did you receive the *Ruach* by deeds based on *Torah*, or by hearing based on trust? ³ Are you so foolish? After beginning with the *Ruach*, will

[‡] Lit. *Cephas Kefa* ^{††} Lit. *gave right hands of fellowship koinonia* ^{‡‡} Or the faithfulness of Messiah *Yeshua* ^{‡‡‡} cf. Ps. 14:3; 53:3; 143:2; Eccl. 7:20. ^{‡‡‡} Or the faithfulness of *Ben-Elohim*

[†] cf. Isa. 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5. ^{††} cf. Isa. 49:4.

you now reach the goal in the flesh? ⁴ Did you endure so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing? ⁵ So then, the One who gives you the *Ruach* and works miracles among you—does He do it because of your deeds based on *Torah* or your hearing based on trust and faithfulness?

⁶ Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” ^{†7} know then that those who have faith are children of Abraham. ⁸ The Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the Good News to Abraham in advance, saying, “All the nations shall be blessed through you.” ^{††9} So then, the faithful are blessed along with Abraham, the faithful one.

¹⁰ For all who rely on the deeds of *Torah* are under a curse—for the Scriptures say, “Cursed is everyone who does not keep doing everything written in the scroll of the *Torah*.” ^{††11} It is clear that no one is set right before God by *Torah*, for “the righteous shall live by *emunah*.” ^{††12} However, *Torah* is not based on trust and faithfulness; on the contrary, “the one who does these things shall live by them.” ^{††13} Messiah liberated us from *Torah*’s curse, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” ^{†††})— ¹⁴ in order that through Messiah *Yeshua* the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so we might receive the promise of the *Ruach* through trusting faith.

Slaves or Sons?

¹⁵ Brothers and sisters, I speak in human terms: even with a man’s covenant, once it has been confirmed, no one cancels it or adds to it. ¹⁶ Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. It doesn’t say, “and to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “and to your seed,” who is the Messiah. ¹⁷ What I am saying is this: *Torah*, which came 430 years later, does not cancel the covenant previously confirmed by God, so as to make the promise ineffective. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise. But God has graciously given it to Abraham by means of a promise.

¹⁹ Then why the *Torah*? It was added because of wrongdoings until the Seed would come—to whom the promise had been made. It was arranged through angels by the hand of an intermediary. ²⁰ Now an intermediary is not for one party alone—but God is one. ²¹ Then is the *Torah* against the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given that could impart life, certainly righteousness would have been based on law. ²² But the Scripture has locked up the whole world under sin, so that the promise based on trust in Messiah *Yeshua* ^{†††} might be given to those who trust.

²³ Now before faith came, we were being guarded under *Torah*—bound together until the coming faith

† Gen. 15:6; cf. Rom. 4:3; Jacob 2:23. †† cf. Gen. 12:3; 18:18. ‡ cf. Deut. 27:26(27:26 LXX). †† Hab. 2:4. †† Lev. 18:5. ††† Deut. 21:23. ††† Or the faithfulness of Messiah *Yeshua*

would be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the *Torah* became our guardian to lead us to Messiah, so that we might be made right based on trusting. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. ²⁶ For you are all sons of God through trusting in Messiah *Yeshua*. ²⁷ For all of you who were immersed in Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. 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 Messiah *Yeshua*. ²⁹ And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham’s seed—heirs according to the promise.

Living as Heirs

4 Now I am saying, so long as the heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, even though he is the owner of everything. ² Instead, he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father. ³ So also, when we were underage, we were subservient to the basic principles of the world. ⁴ But when the fullness of time came, God sent out His Son, born of a woman and born under law— ⁵ to free those under law, so we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ Now because you are sons, God sent the *Ruach* of His Son into our hearts, who cries out, “*Abba!* Father!” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a son—and if a son, also an heir through God. ⁸ But at that time, when you did not know God, you served those who by nature are not gods at all. ⁹ But now you have come to know God—or rather you have come to be known by God. So how can you turn back again to those weak and worthless principles? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹ I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain!

¹² I plead with you, brothers and sisters, become like me, for I became like you. You have done me no wrong— ¹³ you know it was because of a physical ailment that I proclaimed the Good News to you the first time; ¹⁴ and though my physical condition was a trial to you, you did not hate or reject me. No, you welcomed me as a messenger of God—or even as Messiah *Yeshua*. ¹⁵ So where is your sense of joy? For I testify that you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me, if possible. ¹⁶ So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷ Others zealously court you—not in a good way, but they wish to shut you out so that you will court them. ¹⁸ To be courted is good, but let it always be in a good way—and not just when I am there with you. ¹⁹ My dear children! Again I suffer labor pains until Messiah is formed in you. ²⁰ I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, for I don’t know what to make of you.

Midrash on Abraham’s Two Sons

²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under *Torah*, don’t you understand st the *Torah*? ²² For it is written that

§ Some mss. read heir of God through Messiah

Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and one by the free woman. ¹²³ But one—the son by the slave woman—was born naturally; ^{††} while the other—the son by the free woman—was through the promise. ²⁴ Now these things are being treated allegorically, for these are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, giving birth to slavery—this is Hagar. ²⁵ But this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery along with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free—she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren woman

who bears no children.

Break forth and shout,

you who suffer no labor pains.

For more are the children of the desolate

than of the one who has a husband.” [‡]

²⁸ Now you, brothers and sisters—like Isaac, you are children of promise. ²⁹ But just as at that time the one born according to the flesh persecuted the one born according to the *Ruach*, so it is now. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say? “Drive out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son” ^{‡†} of the free woman. ³¹ So then, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free woman.

Freedom Based on Favor

5 For freedom, Messiah set us free—so stand firm, and do not be burdened by a yoke of slavery again. ² Listen—I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Messiah will be of no benefit to you. ³ Again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised, that he is obligated to keep the whole *Torah*. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by *Torah* ^{‡†} have been cut off from Messiah; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵ For through the *Ruach*, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ For in Messiah *Yeshua*, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any meaning—but only trust and faithfulness expressing itself through love.

⁷ You were running a great race! Who blocked you from following the truth? ⁸ This detour doesn't come from the One who calls you. ⁹ A little *hametz* works its way through the whole batch of dough! ¹⁰ I am confident in the Lord that you will not think otherwise. But the one who is confusing you will pay the penalty, whoever he is. ¹¹ As for me, brothers and sisters, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case, the stumbling block of the cross has been eliminated. ¹² I only wish those who are agitating you would castrate themselves! ^{‡‡†}

§† Or hear, listen to the law †
cf. Gen. 16:15; 21:2. †† Lit. according to the flesh ‡ Isa. 54:1.
‡† Gen. 21:10 (LXX). ‡‡ Or made right by Torah ‡‡† cf. Phil. 3:2.

Walking by the *Ruach*

¹³ Brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom—only do not let your freedom become an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole *Torah* can be summed up in a single saying: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ^{‡‡†15} But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not destroyed by one another.

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the *Ruach*, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the *Ruach*, but the *Ruach* sets its desire against the flesh—for these are in opposition to one another, so that you cannot do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the *Ruach*, you are not under law.

¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are clear: sexual immorality, impurity, indecency, ²⁰ idolatry, witchcraft, hostility, strife, jealousy, rage, selfish ambition, dissension, factions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, just as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit God's kingdom. ²² But the fruit of the *Ruach* is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control—against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Now those who belong to Messiah [§] have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the *Ruach*, let us also walk by the *Ruach*. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited—provoking one another, envying one another.

Bearing Burdens

6 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught doing something wrong, you who are directed by the *Ruach*, restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness—looking closely at yourself so you are not tempted also. ² Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you fulfill the *Torah* of Messiah. ³ For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is fooling himself. ⁴ Rather let each one examine his own work. Then he will have pride in himself alone and not in comparison to anyone else. ⁵ For each one will carry his own load.

⁶ Now let the one who is taught the word share all good things with his teacher. ⁷ Do not be deceived—God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, that he also shall reap. ⁸ For the one who sows in the flesh will reap corruption from the flesh. ^{§†} But the one who sows in the *Ruach* will reap from the *Ruach* eternal life. ⁹ So let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we don't give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, whenever we have an opportunity, let us do good toward all ^{§††}—especially those who belong to the household of faith.

‡‡‡ Lev. 19:18. § Some mss. add *Yeshua* §† cf. Job 4:8.
§†† cf. Prov. 3:27.

Living under God's Favor

¹¹ Notice the large letters—I am writing to you with my own hand. ¹² Those wanting to look good outwardly [†] are trying to force you to be circumcised—only so they will not be persecuted for the cross of Messiah. ¹³ For not even the circumcised keep *Torah* themselves. Yet they want to have you circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ But may I never boast—except in the cross of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. Through Him the world has been crucified to

[†] *Lit. in flesh*

me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means ^{††} anything—but only a new creation. ¹⁶ Now as many as live by this rule [‡]— *shalom* and mercy on them and on the Israel of God.

¹⁷ From now on let no one make trouble for me, for I bear on my body the scars ^{‡‡} of *Yeshua* .

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah be with your spirit, brothers and sisters. Amen.

^{††} *Most mss. read is ‡ Or standard, straight rod*
^{††} *kanon ‡‡ Lit. marks, branding marks stigma stigma-*
^{††} *ta*

Ephesians

Introduction

Ephesians is a wide-ranging and encouraging letter, which is remarkable since Paul wrote it from prison, as said at 3:1, 4:1, and 6:20. This may well be when he was imprisoned in Rome in the early 60s. But Paul apparently looked on his jail time as “for the Lord” (4:1) and “for the sake of you Gentiles” (3:1). Unlike many of Paul’s other letters, Ephesians is not addressed to a specific situation in the Ephesian community. There is no heresy he speaks against, no ethical lapse to correct, no tension between Jewish and Gentile believers who made up the majority. That is not to say that the Ephesians had no problems! But this letter is a positive exposition of teaching and encouragement, applicable to all of Messiah’s communities regardless of their particular situations.

It is almost impossible to give a summary of the rich teachings of Ephesians. One focus is the —the community of those who put their trust in . There is more in Ephesians about the than in any other of Paul’s letters. The existence of this body is a direct result of God’s gracious actions in choosing us as His people. His grace is especially seen in , the great reconciler between Jews and Gentiles and the One who will in fact bring redemption to the entire universe. It is Messiah who is the head of this body and the cornerstone of God’s Temple.

Along with the emphasis on what God has done, come exhortations to grow in the knowledge of God and in His love, which includes living according to His will and striving for unity among believers. ’s followers must live in imitation of Him—particularly in household relationships (husbands/wives; parents/children; masters/slaves) that mirror the various ways we as believers relate to God. Of special interest to Messianic believers are Paul’s remarks in 2:11-22. Here Paul tells his Gentile readers that they have joined the commonwealth of Israel as fellow citizens through the reconciling work of . Likewise, in 3:6 he tells us that the Gentiles who have come to faith inherit the promises with Israel as “joint heirs,” belong to the same people as “fellow members,” and benefit equally as “co-sharers of the promise.” In contrast with supersessionism, which teaches that the church Israel, Paul says that the Gentiles have Israel, receiving blessings and promises from which they were once excluded. Messiah’s community is not a replacement for Israel, but rather the Body that unites Jews and Gentiles together in Messiah . No wonder Paul breaks into a deep and lengthy prayer for the Ephesians at the end of the third chapter!

A Look Inside Ephesians

Greetings

God’s Glorious Grace

God’s Glorious Power Working in Us

Destined for Wrath, Saved by Grace

Jew and Gentile, One in Messiah

The Mystery of the Gentiles Revealed

Prayer for Power and Understanding

Unity of the Body and of God

Put off the Old, Put on the New

Walk in the Light

Orderly Relationships: Marriage

Orderly Relationships: Parents

Orderly Relationships: Workplace

Put on the Armor of God

Greetings

1 Paul, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* by God's will,

To the *kedoshim* in Ephesus †—those trusting in Messiah *Yeshua* :

² Grace and *shalom* to you, from God our Father and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah!

God's Glorious Grace

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Messiah. ⁴ He chose us in the Messiah before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before Him in love. ⁵ He predestined us for adoption as sons through Messiah *Yeshua* , in keeping with the good pleasure of His will— ⁶ to the glorious praise of His grace, with which He favored us through the One He loves!

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood—the removal of trespasses—in keeping with the richness of His grace ⁸ that He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight, ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, in keeping with His good pleasure that He planned in Messiah. ¹⁰ The plan of the fullness of times is to bring all things together in the Messiah—both things in heaven and things on earth, all in Him. ¹¹ In Him we also were chosen, †† predestined according to His plan. He keeps working out all things according to the purpose of His will— ¹² so that we, who were first to put our hope in Messiah, might be for His glorious praise.

¹³ After you heard the message of truth—the Good News of your salvation—and when you put your trust in Him, you were sealed with the promised *Ruach ha-Kodesh* . ¹⁴ He is the guarantee of our inheritance, until the redemption of His possession—to His glorious praise!

God's Glorious Power Working in Us

¹⁵ Therefore, ever since I heard of your trust in the Lord *Yeshua* and of your love for all the *kedoshim* , ¹⁶ I never stop giving thanks for you as I mention you in my prayers— ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, our glorious Father, may give you spiritual wisdom and revelation in knowing Him. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what is the richness of His glorious inheritance in the *kedoshim* , ¹⁹ and what is His exceedingly great power toward us who keep trusting Him—in keeping with the working of His mighty strength.

²⁰ This power He exercised in Messiah when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heaven. †‡† He is far above any ruler, authority,

† Some mss. omit in Ephesus †† cf. Deut. 9:29; 32:8-9. ‡ cf. Ps. 110:1.

power, leader, and every name that is named—not only in the *olam ha-zeh* but also in the *olam ha-ba* .

²² God placed all things under Messiah's feet †† and appointed Him as head over all things for His community— ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Destined for Wrath, Saved by Grace

2 You were dead in your trespasses and sins. ² At that time, you walked in the way of this world, in conformity to the ruler of the domain of the air—the ruler of the spirit who is now operating in the sons of disobedience. ³ We too all lived among them in the cravings of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind. By nature we were children of wrath, just like the others. ⁴ But God was rich in mercy, † because of His great love with which He loved us. ⁵ Even when we were dead in our trespasses, He made us alive together with Messiah. (By grace you have been saved!) ⁶ And He raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Messiah *Yeshua* — ⁷ to show in the *olam ha-ba* the measureless richness of His grace in kindness toward us in Messiah *Yeshua* .

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not from yourselves—it is the gift of God. ⁹ It is not based on deeds, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship—created in Messiah *Yeshua* for good deeds, which God prepared beforehand so we might walk in them.

Jew and Gentile, One in Messiah

¹¹ Therefore, keep in mind that once you—Gentiles in the flesh—were called “uncircumcision” by those called “circumcision” (which is performed on flesh by hand).

¹² At that time you were separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Messiah *Yeshua* , you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah. ¹⁴ For He is our *shalom* , the One who made the two into one and broke down the middle wall of separation. Within His flesh He made powerless the hostility— ¹⁵ the law code of *mitzvot* contained in regulations. He did this in order to create within Himself one new man from the two groups, making *shalom* , ¹⁶ and to reconcile both to God in one body through the cross—by which He put the hostility to death. ¹⁷ And He came and proclaimed *shalom* to you who were far away and *shalom* to those who were near ††— ¹⁸ for through Him we both have access to the Father by the same *Ruach* . ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household. ²⁰ You have been built on the foundation made up of the emissaries and prophets, with Messiah *Yeshua* Himself being the cor-

†† cf. Ps. 8:6. †† cf. Exod. 34:6; Ps. 145:8. ††† cf. Isa. 57:19.

nerstone. ¹²¹ In Him the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple for the Lord. ²² In Him, you also are being built together into God's dwelling place ^{††} in the *Ruach*.

The Mystery of the Gentiles Revealed

3 For this reason I, Paul, am a prisoner of Messiah *Yeshua* for the sake of you Gentiles. ² Surely you have heard about the plan of God's grace given to me for you— ³ that the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote before briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Messiah— ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations, as it has now been revealed by the *Ruach* to His holy emissaries and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are joint heirs and fellow members of the same body and co-sharers of the promise in Messiah *Yeshua* through the Good News. ⁷ I became a servant of this Good News by the gift of God's favor given to me through the exercise of His power.

⁸ This favor was given to me, the very least of His *kedoshim*, to proclaim to the Gentiles the endless riches of the Messiah ⁹ and to bring to light the plan of the mystery—which for ages was hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ The purpose is that through Messiah's community the multi-faceted wisdom of God might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, ¹¹ which is in keeping with the eternal purpose that He carried out in Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord. ¹² In Him we have boldness and access with confidence through trusting in Him. ^{†13} So I ask you not to be discouraged by my troubles on your behalf—they are your glory.

Prayer for Power and Understanding

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father [†]— ¹⁵ from Him every family in heaven and on earth receives its name. ¹⁶ I pray that from His glorious riches He would grant you to be strengthened in your inner being with power through His *Ruach*, ¹⁷ so that Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to grasp with all the *kedoshim* what is the width and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Messiah which surpasses knowledge, so you may be filled up with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do far beyond all that we ask or imagine, by means of His power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be the glory in the community of believers and in Messiah *Yeshua* throughout all generations ^{††} forever and ever! Amen.

† cf. Ps. 118:22-23; Isa. 28:16. †† cf. 1 Kings 8:13, 39, 43. ‡ Or through His faithfulness †† Some mss. add of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah †† cf. Ps. 145:4; 13.

Unity of the Body and of God

4 Therefore I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you were called— ² with complete humility and gentleness, with patience, putting up with one another in love, ³ making every effort to keep the unity of the *Ruach* in the bond of *shalom*.

⁴ There is one body and one *Ruach*, just as you also were called in one hope of your calling;

⁵ one Lord, one faith, one immersion;

⁶ one God and Father of all, ^{††} who is over all and through all and in all.

⁷ But to each one of us grace was given in keeping with the measure of Messiah's gift. ⁸ Therefore it says, "When He went up on high, He led captive a troop of captives and gave gifts to his people." ^{††}

⁹ Now what does "He went up" mean, except that He first went down to the lower regions of the earth?

^{†10} The One who came down is the same One who went up far above all the heavens, in order to fill all things.

¹¹ He Himself gave some to be emissaries, some as prophets, some as proclaimers of the Good News, and some as shepherds and teachers— ¹² to equip the *kedoshim* for the work of service, for building up the body of Messiah. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of *Ben-Elohim*—to mature adulthood, to the measure of the stature of Messiah's fullness. ¹⁴ As a result, we are no longer to be like children, tossed around by the waves and blown all over by every wind of teaching, by the trickery of men with cunning in deceitful scheming.

¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all ways into Messiah, who is the Head. ¹⁶ From Him the whole body is fitted and held together by every supporting ligament. The proper working of each individual part produces the body's growth, for building itself up in love.

Put off the Old, Put on the New

¹⁷ So I tell you this, indeed I insist on it in the Lord—walk no longer as the pagans do, stumbling around in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance in them due to the hardness of their heart. ¹⁹ Since they are past feeling, they have turned themselves over to indecency for the practice of every kind of immorality, with greed for more.

²⁰ However, you did not learn Messiah in this way—²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in *Yeshua*. ²² With respect to your

††† cf. Deut. 6:4. ††† cf. Ps. 68:19(18)(68:18 LXX). § cf. Isa. 44:23.

former lifestyle, you are to lay aside the old self corrupted by its deceitful desires,²³ be renewed in the spirit of your mind,²⁴ and put on the new self—created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ So lay aside lying and “each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,”[†] for we are members of one another.²⁶ “Be angry, yet do not sin.”^{††} Do not let the sun go down on your anger,^{‡27} nor give the devil a foothold.²⁸ The one who steals must steal no longer—instead he must work, doing something useful with his own hands, so he may have something to share with the one who has need.²⁹ Let no harmful word come out of your mouth, but only what is beneficial for building others up according to the need, so that it gives grace to those who hear it.³⁰ Do not grieve the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* of God,^{‡†} by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.³¹ Get rid of all bitterness and rage and anger and quarreling and slander, along with all malice.³² Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other just as God in Messiah also forgave you.

Walk in the Light

5 Therefore be imitators of God, as dearly loved children;² and walk in love, just as Messiah also loved us^{‡†} and gave Himself up for us as an offering and sacrifice to God for a fragrant aroma.³ But sexual immorality and any impurity or greed—don’t even let these be mentioned among you, as is proper for *kedoshim*.⁴ Obscene, coarse, and stupid talk are also out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.⁵ Know for certain that no immoral, indecent, or greedy person—who is really an idol worshipper at heart—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Messiah and God.

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s judgment comes on the children of disobedience.⁷ Therefore do not be partners with them.⁸ For once you were darkness, but now in union with the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light⁹ (for the fruit of light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth),¹⁰ trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.¹¹ Take no part in the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them—¹² for it is disgraceful even to mention the things that are done by them in secret.¹³ Yet everything exposed by the light is being made visible,¹⁴ for everything made visible is light. This is why it says,

“Wake up, O sleeper!

Rise from the dead,

and Messiah will shine on you.”^{‡‡}

¹⁵ So pay close attention to how you walk—not as unwise people but as wise.¹⁶ Make the most of your time because the days are evil.¹⁷ For this reason do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.¹⁸ And

† Zech. 8:16. †† Ps. 4:5(4)(4:5 LXX). ‡ cf. Ps. 37:8; Matt. 5:22.
‡† cf. Isa. 63:10. ‡‡ Some mss. read you ‡‡† cf. Isa. 26:19;
52:1; 60:1.

do not get drunk on wine, for that is recklessness.^{‡‡} Instead, be filled with the *Ruach*,¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your heart to the Lord—²⁰ always giving thanks for everything to God the Father, in the name of the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah.

Orderly Relationships: Marriage

²¹ Also submit yourselves to one another out of reverence for Messiah—²² wives to your own husbands as to the Lord.²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as Messiah also is head of His community—Himself the Savior of the body.²⁴ But as Messiah’s community is submitted to Messiah, so also the wives to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives just as Messiah also loved His community and gave Himself up for her²⁶ to make her holy, having cleansed her by immersion[§] in the word.²⁷ Messiah did this so that He might present to Himself His glorious community—not having stain or wrinkle or any such thing, but in order that she might be holy and blameless.²⁸ In the same way, husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it—just as Messiah also does His community,³⁰ because we are members of His body.³¹ “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”^{§†32} This mystery is great—but I am talking about Messiah and His community.³³ In any case, let each of you love his own wife as himself, and let the wife respect her husband.

Orderly Relationships: Parents

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.^{§†2} “Honor your father and mother” (which is the first commandment with a promise),³ “so that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.”^{§†4} Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.^{§††}

Orderly Relationships: Workplace

⁵ Slaves, obey your human masters, with respect and reverence, with sincerity of heart, as you would the Messiah—⁶ not just under your master’s eye as people-pleasers, but as slaves of Messiah doing God’s will from the soul.⁷ Serve with a positive attitude, as to the Lord and not to men—⁸ knowing that whatever good each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.⁹ And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Stop using threats, knowing that the Master—of them and of you, too—is in heaven,^{§†} and there is no favoritism with Him.

‡‡‡ cf. Prov. 20:1; 23:31ff. § Lit. the washing of the water;
mikveh §† Gen. 2:24. §†† cf. Prov. 1:8; 6:20; 23:22. §‡ Deut.

Put on the Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you are able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the worldly forces of this darkness, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist when the times are evil, and after you have done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm then! Buckle the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵ Strap up your feet in readiness with the Good News of *shalom*. ¹⁶ Above all, take up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the

^{5:16}; cf. *Exod. 20:12*. §†† cf. *Deut. 6:7; 11:19; Ps. 78:4; Prov. 22:6*.
§† cf. *Job 31:13-15*. † *Isa. 11:5*. †† *Isa. 52:7; Ps. 9:17*.

evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation † and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ††¹⁸ Pray in the *Ruach* on every occasion, with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, keep alert with perseverance and supplication for all the *kedoshim*. ¹⁹ And pray for me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the Good News, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may speak boldly, the way I should.

²¹ Now Tychicus, my dearly loved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will give you all the news about me so you may know how I'm doing. ²² I have sent him to you for this very reason, so you may know how we are and he may encourage your hearts.

²³ *Shalom* to the brothers and sisters, and trusting love from God the Father and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ²⁴ Grace be with all those who love our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah with undying love.

‡ *Ps 28:7; 76:3; 91:4-5*. †† *Isa. 59:17*. †† *Isa. 49:2*.

Philippians

Introduction

Philippians is one of Paul's "prison letters," written during one of his confinements in jail—in Rome, Caesarea, or Ephesus—in the late 50s or early 60s. Unlike some other communities, the Philippians seem to have gotten on quite well in their faith. Nevertheless, they are still exhorted to be on guard against false teachers whose lifestyle does not match their message (3:18-19). Even if we are growing in our faith, we need to be alert to influences that will try to disengage us from God. Many consider Philippians 4:4 to be the key verse of the letter: "Rejoice in the Lord always—again I will say, rejoice!" Paul rejoices that the Messiah is proclaimed even if from wrong motives (1:18). He rejoices even though he is in prison, and he encourages the Philippians to do the same (2:17-18). He exhorts them to rejoice in the Lord Himself (3:1 and 4:4). He prays with joy (1:4). There is joy in faith (1:25) and specifically in (1:26). The unity of believers increases his joy (2:2), and the Philippians are Paul's special joy (4:1) as he sees God's work in them.

Finally, Philippians 2:5-11 contains one of the most magnificent pieces of poetry in the New Covenant scriptures—possibly a hymn that had made the rounds among the first believers, which Paul now puts into this letter. was God by nature, yet became a humble and lowly servant, dying in obedience to the Father in order to bring us salvation. Now He has been exalted to the highest place and with the highest name, and someday all humanity will bow to Him.

With as our example and our Savior, we can rejoice even in the midst of suffering. Moreover, we find the motivation to live as God wants us to live—a life which in a mysterious way (2:12-13) is both God's work and yet our responsibility to cultivate (for example, through obedience, prayer, and Scripture reading). There is ample cause to rejoice as we see in Philippians the reality of who is and what He has done for us!

A Look inside Philippians

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Final Greetings and Blessings

Greetings

¹ Paul and Timothy, slaves of Messiah *Yeshua*,
To all the *kedoshim* in Messiah *Yeshua* who are
in Philippi with the overseers and servant-leaders:

² Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father and
the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah.

Thanksgiving and Prayers of Joy

³I thank my God at every memory of you, ⁴ always
praying with joy in every prayer of mine for you all,

⁵ because of your sharing in the Good News from the
first day until now. ⁶I am sure of this very thing—that
He who began a good work in you will carry it on to
completion until the Day of Messiah *Yeshua*. ⁷It is
right for me to feel this way about you all, because I
have you in my heart—for you all are partakers of
grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the
defense and confirmation of the Good News. ⁸For God
is my witness, how I long for all of you with the affec-
tion of Messiah *Yeshua*.

⁹ Now this I pray, that your love might overflow still
more and more in knowledge and depth of discern-

ment,¹⁰ in order to approve what is excellent—so that in the Day of Messiah you may be sincere and blameless,¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through *Yeshua* the Messiah, to the glory and praise of God.

Even in Chains, Proclaiming Messiah

¹² Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually resulted in the advancement of the Good News. ¹³ And so my imprisonment in the cause of Messiah has become well known throughout the whole Praetorian Guard and to everyone else. ¹⁴ Because of my imprisonment, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord to dare more than ever to speak the message fearlessly. ¹⁵ Some are proclaiming the Messiah out of envy and strife, but others out of good will. ¹⁶ The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the Good News. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Messiah not sincerely, but out of selfishness—expecting to stir up trouble for me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ But what does it matter? Only that in every way, whether in dishonesty or in truth, Messiah is being proclaimed—and in this I rejoice!

To Live Is Messiah

Yes, and I will keep rejoicing,¹⁹ for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance, through your intercession and the help of the *Ruach* of Messiah *Yeshua*.²⁰ My eager expectation and hope is that in no way will I be put to shame, but that with complete boldness Messiah will even now, as always, be exalted in my body—whether through life or through death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Messiah and to die is gain. ²² But if to live on in the body means fruit from my work, what shall I choose? I do not know. ²³ I am torn between the two—having a desire to leave and be with Messiah, which is far better; ²⁴ yet for your sake, to remain in the body is more necessary. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for the sake of your progress and joy in the faith—²⁶ so that your confidence in Messiah *Yeshua* might overflow because of me through my coming to you again.

²⁷ Only live your lives in a manner worthy of the Good News of the Messiah. Then, whether I come and see you or I am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit—striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the Good News²⁸ and not being frightened in any way by your opponents. For them this is a sign of destruction, but for you salvation—and that from God. ²⁹ For to you was granted for Messiah's sake not only to trust in Him, but also to suffer for His sake—³⁰ experiencing the same struggle you saw in me and now you are hearing in me.

Messiah's Example of Humility

² Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Messiah, if there is any comfort of love, if there is any fellowship of the *Ruach*, if there is any mercy and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being of the same mind, having the same love, united in spirit, with one purpose. ³ Do nothing out of selfishness or conceit, but with humility consider others as more important than yourselves,⁴ looking out not only for your own interests but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves, which also was in Messiah *Yeshua*,

⁶ Who, though existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal to God a thing to be grasped.

⁷ But He emptied Himself—taking on the form of a slave, becoming the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man.

⁸ He humbled Himself—becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

⁹ For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of *Yeshua* every knee should bow,

† in heaven and on the earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue profess that *Yeshua* the Messiah is Lord—to the glory of God the Father.

Work Out Your Salvation

¹² Therefore, my loved ones, just as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now even more in my absence—work out your salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ For the One working in you is God—both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing,¹⁵ so that you might be blameless and innocent, children of God in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation. †† Among them you shine as lights in the world,¹⁶ holding fast to the word of life, so that I may boast in the day of Messiah that I did not run or labor in vain.

¹⁷ But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and the service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. ¹⁸ The same way, you also—rejoice and share your joy with me!

Sending and Receiving Encouragement

¹⁹ But I hope in the Lord *Yeshua* to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too might be encouraged when I know the news about you. ²⁰ I have no one else like him who will genuinely care about you—²¹ for all seek after their own interests, not those of Messiah *Yeshua*. ²² But you know Timothy's proven character, that he

† cf. Isa. 45:23. †† cf. Deut. 32:5.

served with me in spreading the Good News like a son with his father. ²³ Therefore, I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴ And I trust in the Lord that soon I too will come myself.

²⁵ But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus—my brother and co-worker and fellow soldier, as well as your messenger and aide to my need. ²⁶ For he was longing for you all and troubled because you heard that he was sick. ²⁷ He certainly was sick, close to death. But God had mercy on him—and not only on him but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore, I have sent him with special urgency, so that when you see him again you might rejoice and I might be less worried about you. ²⁹ So welcome him in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard, ³⁰ because he came close to death for the work of Messiah, risking his life to make up for what was lacking in your service to me.

Where Do You Put Your Confidence?

3 Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! To keep writing the same things to you is not troublesome for me—but for you it is a safeguard.

² Beware of the dogs, [†] beware of the evil workers, beware of the mutilation. ^{††3} For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship by the *Ruach Elohim* and glory in Messiah *Yeshua* and have not depended on the flesh—⁴ though I myself might have confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he might depend on the flesh, I far more—⁵ circumcised the eighth day; of the nation of Israel; from the tribe of Benjamin; a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the *Torah*, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting Messiah's community; as for *Torah* righteousness, found blameless.

⁷ But whatever things were gain to me, these I have considered as loss for the sake of the Messiah. ⁸ More than that, I consider all things to be loss in comparison to the surpassing value of the knowledge of Messiah *Yeshua* my Lord. Because of Him I have suffered the loss of all things; and I consider them garbage [‡] in order that I might gain Messiah ⁹ and be found in Him not having my righteousness derived from *Torah*, but one that is through trusting in Messiah—the righteousness from God based on trust. ^{††10} My aim is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the sharing of His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death—¹¹ if somehow I might arrive at the resurrection from among the dead.

Pursuing the Goal

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or been perfected, but I press on if only I might take hold of that for which Messiah *Yeshua* took hold of me. ^{††13} Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself as having tak-

[†] cf. Ps. 22:16, 20. ^{††} cf. Gal. 5:12. [‡] Lit. excrement ^{††} Or one that is through Messiah's faithfulness—the righteousness from God based on faithfulness ^{†††} Lit. I was taken hold of by Messiah *Yeshua*

en hold of this. But this one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the reward of the upward calling of God in Messiah *Yeshua*. ^{††15} Therefore, let all who are mature have this attitude; and if you have a different attitude in anything, this also God will reveal to you. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, let us live up to the same standard we have attained.

¹⁷ Brothers and sisters, join in following my example and notice those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. (¹⁸ For many walk who are enemies of the cross of Messiah—I have often told you about them, and now I am even weeping as I tell you. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction—their god is their belly and their glory is in their shame. They set their minds on earthly things.)

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, and from there we eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah.

²¹ He will transform this humble body of ours into the likeness of His glorious body, through the power that enables Him even to put all things in subjection to Himself.

4 Therefore, my brothers and sisters whom I love and long for, my joy and crown—stand firm in the Lord in this way, my loved ones.

Rejoice in the Lord Always

² I urge Euodia and Syntyche to be in harmony in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, true companion, ^{†††} to help these women—they labored side by side with me in spreading the Good News, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always—again I will say, rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to all people. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything—but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the *shalom* of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah *Yeshua*. [§]

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any virtue and if there is anything worthy of praise—dwell on these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—put these things into practice, and the God of *shalom* will be with you.

The Secret of Contentment

¹⁰ I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me (though you were concerned before but lacked opportunity to show it).

^{†††} cf. 1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:2. ^{††††} Possibly a proper name. [§] cf. Isa. 26:3.

¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need—for whatever circumstance I am in, I have learned to be content. ¹² I know what it is to live with humble means, and I know what it is to live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of contentment—both to be filled and to go hungry, to have abundance and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Messiah † who strengthens me.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, you have done well to share in my trouble. ¹⁵ Now you Philippians also know that in the beginning of the Good News, when I left Macedonia, not a single community partnered with me in giving and receiving—except you alone. ¹⁶ For even in Thessalonica you sent something for my need more than once. ¹⁷ Not that I am looking for a gift, but for fruit that overflows to your credit. ¹⁸ But I have received everything and have more than enough. I am amply

† *Lit. Him*

supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you sent—a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. ††¹⁹ My God will fulfill every need of yours according to the riches of His glory in Messiah *Yeshua*. ²⁰ To our God and Father be the glory forever and ever!

Amen.

Final Greetings and Blessings

²¹ Greet all the *kedoshim* in Messiah *Yeshua*. The brethren who are with me greet you. ²² All the *kedoshim* greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.

²³ The grace of the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah be with your spirit.

†† *cf. Exod. 29:18.*

Colossians

Introduction

Written in the late 50s or early 60s from prison, Paul's letter to the Colossians was intended to help Messiah's community in Colossae fight the false teaching that had entered their midst. The false teaching seems to have been a combination of Greek and Jewish ideas, perhaps not unlike today when some in the Jewish community attempt to overlay New Age ideas onto Jewish ways of thinking. An assortment of spiritual "options" was characteristic of the ancient world, where various spiritualities downplay who really is. Therefore, Paul upholds Him as the fully supreme One who reconciled Jews and Gentiles through His atoning death. There is no need for anyone or anything to bring us to God—no special leader, ritual, technique, or spirituality. Paul speaks of principalities, powers, and basic principles of the world that to some degree held sway over the Colossians (2:15, 20). Modern secular people may think that our genes or our upbringing charts the course for our lives. But is victorious over all things that try to stand between us and God.

Finally, Paul emphasizes the unity of Messiah's body—how has reconciled Jews and Gentiles. Yet he also recognizes diversity in the unity, as he speaks to wives, to husbands, to children, to parents, to slaves, to masters. Nevertheless, is Head of the body, His community. Let us do all we can to preserve our unity with all believers. And let us exalt , our Head, both individually and in our communities. Supreme over all, victorious over all, reconciler of all—this is our Messiah!

A Look Inside Colossians

Greetings

Thanksgiving and Prayer

Is Supreme

The Mystery Revealed

Living Out the Mystery

The Danger of False Wisdom

Put off the Old, Put on the New

Orderly, Mutual Relationships

Devote Yourselves to Prayer

Further Instructions and Greetings

Greetings

1 Paul, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* by God's will, and Timothy our brother,
²To the *kedoshim* , the faithful brothers and sisters in Messiah, who are at Colossae:
 Grace and *shalom* to you from God our Father! †

Thanksgiving and Prayer

³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, whenever we pray for you. ⁴For we heard of your trust in Messiah *Yeshua* and the love you have for all the *kedoshim* ⁵ because of the hope stored up for you in heaven. You heard before about this hope in the true message of the Good News ⁶ that has come to you. In all the world this Good News is

bearing fruit and growing, †† just as it has in you since you first heard it and came to truly know God's grace. ⁷You learned it from Epaphras—our dearly loved fellow slave, who is a faithful servant of Messiah on our behalf. ⁸He also made clear to us your love in the *Ruach* .

⁹For this reason also, ever since we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We keep asking God that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding— ¹⁰to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work, and growing in the knowledge of God. ¹¹We pray that you may be strengthened with all the power that comes from His glorious might, for you to have all kinds of patience and steadfastness. With joy ¹²we give thanks

† Some mss. add and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah

†† cf. Gen. 1:28; 9:1, 7; 17:2; 22:17; 28:3; 35:11.

to the Father, who qualified you to share in the inheritance of the *kedoshim* in the light. ¹³ He rescued us from the domain of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son whom He loves. ¹⁴ In Him we have redemption—the release of sins.

Ben-Elohim Is Supreme

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
¹⁶ For by Him all things were created—in heaven and on earth, the seen and the unseen, whether thrones or angelic powers or rulers or authorities.

All was created through Him and for Him.

¹⁷ He exists before everything, and in Him all holds together.

¹⁸ He is the head of the body, His community. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead—so that He might come to have first place in all things.

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him †

²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross—whether things on earth or things in heaven!

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and hostile in your attitude by wicked deeds. ²² But now He has reconciled you in Messiah's physical body through death, in order to present you holy, spotless and blameless in His eyes— ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, established and firm, not budging from the hope of the Good News that you have heard. This Good News has been proclaimed throughout all Creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have become its servant.

The Mystery Revealed

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and in my physical body—for the sake of His body, Messiah's community—I fill up what is lacking in the afflictions of Messiah. ²⁵ I became its servant according to God's commission, given to me for you, in order to declare His message in full— ²⁶ the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations, but now has been revealed to His *kedoshim*. ²⁷ God chose to make known to them this glorious mystery regarding the Gentiles—which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory! ²⁸ We proclaim Him, warning and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete †† in Messiah. ²⁹ To this end I labor, striving with all His strength which is powerfully at work in me.

2 I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those in Laodicea, as well as for those who have still not seen me face to face. ² My purpose is that their hearts, joined together in love, may be encouraged. May they have all the riches of

the full assurance of understanding, leading to a true knowledge of the mystery of God—that is, Messiah.

³ In Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. ⁴ I am telling you this so that no one will deceive you with persuasive-sounding arguments.

⁵ For even though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit—rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your trust in Messiah.

Living out the Mystery

⁶ Therefore, as you received Messiah *Yeshua* as Lord, so continue to walk in Him— ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in your faith just as you were taught, overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸ See that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men and the basic principles of the world rather than Messiah. ⁹ For all the fullness of Deity lives bodily in Him, ¹⁰ and in Him you have been filled to fullness. He is the head over every ruler and authority.

¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision done not by hand, in the stripping away of the body of the flesh through the circumcision of Messiah.

¹² You were buried along with Him in immersion, through which you also were raised with Him by trusting in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with Him when He pardoned us all our transgressions. ¹⁴ He wiped out the handwritten record of debts with the decrees against us, which were hostile to us. He took it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ After disarming the principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross. ††

The Danger of False Wisdom

¹⁶ Therefore, do not let anyone pass judgment on you in matters of food or drink, or in respect to a festival or new moon or *Shabbat*. ††¹⁷ These are a foreshadowing of things to come, but the reality is Messiah. ††¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you by insisting on false humility and worship of angels—going into detail about what he has seen, puffed up without cause by his fleshly mind. ¹⁹ He is not holding fast to the Head. It is from Him that the whole body, nourished and held together by its joints and tendons, grows with a godly increase. ²⁰ If you died with Messiah to the basic principles of the world, why—as though living in the world—do you subject yourselves to their rules?

²¹ "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!" ²² These all lead to decay with use, based as they are on man-made commands and teachings. ††²³ Indeed, these are matters that have an appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and humility and self-denial of the

† cf. Isa. 6:3; Ezek. 43:5; 44:4. †† cf. 1 Kings 8:61; 11:4.

‡ cf. Prov. 3:19; Isa. 11:2; 45:3. †† Lit. in it in Him †† cf. Lev. 23:2-4; 2 Chron. 23:31, 31:3; Neh. 10:33; Ps. 81:3; Isa. 66:23; Ezek. 46:1. ††† Lit. the body is of Messiah ††† cf. Isa. 29:13.

body—yet none are of any value for stopping indulgence of the flesh.

Put off the Old, Put on the New

3 Therefore, if you have been raised up with Messiah, keep seeking the things above—where Messiah is, sitting at the right hand of God. ¹² Focus your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ^{††3} For you have died, and your life is hidden with Messiah in God. ⁴ When Messiah, who is your [‡] life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him, in glory!

⁵ Therefore, put to death what is earthly in you—sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed—for that is idolatry. ⁶ Because of such things God's wrath is coming upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ At one time you also walked in these ways, when you used to live in these ways. ⁸ But now, set them all aside—anger, rage, malice, slander, and foul language out of your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another. ^{‡†} After all, you have taken off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self that is being renewed in knowledge, according to the image of the One who created him. ^{‡††11} Here there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, savage, ^{‡††} slave and free; but Messiah is all, and in all.

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves in tender compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience— ¹³ bearing with one another and forgiving each other, if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord pardoned you, so also you must pardon others. ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfect harmony. ¹⁵ Let the *shalom* of Messiah rule in your hearts—to this *shalom* you were surely called in one body. Also be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Messiah dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with all wisdom in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord *Yeshua*, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Orderly, Mutual Relationships

¹⁸ Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not become harsh toward them.

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in every respect, for this is pleasing to the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they will not become discouraged.

²² Slaves, obey your human masters in every respect—not just within your master's sight as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work at it from the soul, as for the

† cf. Ps. 80:15, 17; 89:13; 110:1; 118:15-16. †† cf. Ps. 57:5, 7; 103:11; 115:16; Isa. 40:22; 55:9. ‡ Other mss. read our ‡† cf. Lev. 19:11; Ps. 24:4. ‡† cf. Gen. 1:26-27. ‡†† Lit. Scythian

Lord and not for people. ²⁴ For you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as a reward. It is to the Lord Messiah you are giving service. ²⁵ For the one doing wrong will be paid back for what he did wrong, and there is no favoritism. ^{‡††}

4 Masters, give your slaves what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

Devote Yourselves to Prayer

² Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, keep praying for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the message, to proclaim the mystery of Messiah—for which I am in prison. ⁴ Pray that I may make the mystery clear, as I ought to speak. ⁵ Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. ⁶ Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, to know how you ought to answer everyone.

Further Instructions and Greetings

⁷ Tychicus—a dearly loved brother and trustworthy servant and fellow slave to the Lord—will tell you all the news about me. ⁸ I sent him to you for this very purpose, so you may know about us and he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ With him I sent Onesimus—a faithful and dear brother, who is one of your own. They will tell you about everything here.

¹⁰ My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You received instructions about him—if he comes your way, welcome him.) ¹¹ *Yeshua* who is called Justus also sends his greetings. These are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God that are from among the circumcision—they have been a comfort to me.

¹² Epaphras, who is one of your own, a slave of Messiah *Yeshua*, greets you. He is always laboring in prayer on your behalf, so you may stand complete and fully assured about everything that is God's will. ¹³ For I testify that he has gone to much trouble for you and for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Luke, the dearly loved physician, sends you greetings, and so does Demas.

¹⁵ Greet the brothers and sisters in Laodicea, as well as Nympha and the community that meets in her house. ¹⁶ When this letter has been read among you, make sure that it is also read in Messiah's community of Laodicea. In turn, you should read my letter coming from Laodicea.

¹⁷ Tell Archippus, "See to it that you complete the service you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."

¹⁸ This greeting is in my own hand—Paul's. Remember my chains!

Grace be with you.

‡†† cf. Deut. 10:17.

1 Thessalonians

Introduction

One of Paul's earliest letters, 1 Thessalonians was written around the year 50 C.E. from the city of Corinth. His readers were largely non-Jewish, as we gather from his remark in 1:9 that they had "turned from idols" to the true God. The letter is a mix of personal, ethical, and pastoral material.

Paul speaks well of the Thessalonians and their faith, especially commending how they initially "welcomed" the message of the Good News (1:4). Several times Paul speaks of "imitating" himself (1:5), God (1:5 also), and other believers (2:14), and says that the Thessalonians have become a "model" of faith to others (1:7). Paul then describes his own behavior while in Thessalonica—sincere, seeking to please God, sharing his own life with them.

The theme of imitation and modeling is a key to the life of the believer. Though we primarily seek to imitate , we also learn how to imitate Him by modeling the lives of mature and godly believers. Paul then moves on to specific ways to imitate God, by showing what ethical, godly living means in the first part of chapter four.

A word about 2:14-16. This passage has sometimes been taken as an example of anti-Semitism in the New Covenant. The same Greek word can be translated as "Jewish" or "Judean," but the use of "Judeans" rather than "Jews" in verse 14 highlights Paul's parallel. The Thessalonians were persecuted by non-believing Thessalonians just like Messiah's communities in Judea were persecuted by non-believing Judeans. The persecution took the form of preventing the preaching of the Good News to Gentiles. In speaking of "heaping up sins to the limit" and "the wrath of God has come upon them at last," Paul is not speaking of the Jewish people, but of opponents of the Good News, Jewish or Gentile, employing ideas taken from the .

The last part of the letter is devoted to helping the Thessalonians work through their thoughts on fellow believers who have recently died. It appears they thought that those who had already passed on would "miss out" on the return of the Lord in some way. Paul comforts them with a word of "hope" (4:13), then reminds them further to live godly lives in light of 's return. The beautiful benediction of 5:23, coming near the end of the letter, is an encouragement to all believers.

A Look Inside 1 Thessalonians

Greetings

Good News with Power

Cherishing Spiritual Children

Longing to Visit and Reassure

Thanks, Joy, and Love before God

Walking in Sanctification

The Call of Messiah's Return

Keep Watch for the Day of the Lord

Instructions for Community Life

Closing Greetings

Greetings

1 Paul, Silvanus, [†] and Timothy,
To the community of the Thessalonians in God
the Father and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah:
Grace to you and *shalom* .

Good News with Power

² We always give thanks to God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers—continually ³ remembering, before our God and Father, your work of faith and labor of love and steadiness of hope in our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ⁴ We know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that you are chosen, ⁵ because our Good News did not come to you in word only, but also in

[†] Or *Silas*

power, and in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, and with complete certainty—just as you know what kind of men we proved to be while among you for your sake.

⁶You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having accepted the message in much tribulation, with the joy of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ⁷So you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord rang out from you—not just in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faithfulness toward God has gone out, so that we have no need to say anything. ⁹For they themselves bring news about what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead— *Yeshua*, the One delivering us from the coming wrath.

Cherishing Spiritual Children

2 For you yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not in vain. ²On the contrary, after we had first suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, [†]we had boldness in our God to tell you the Good News of God—even in the midst of much opposition. ³For our urging is not out of deceit or impure motives or trickery. ⁴But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News, so we declare it—not pleasing men but rather God, who examines our hearts. ^{††}

⁵For as you know, and God is witness, we never came with a word of flattery or a motive of greed—⁶or seeking glory from people, whether from you or from others, ⁷even though we could have thrown our weight around as emissaries of Messiah. Rather, we proved to be infants [‡]among you. Like a nursing mother ^{‡†}cherishes her children, ⁸in this way we were yearning for you. We were delighted to share with you not only the Good News of God but also our very souls, because you had become dear to us.

⁹For you recall, brothers and sisters, our labor and hardship—working night and day, so as not to burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the Good News of God. ¹⁰You are witnesses, along with God, of how devoutly and righteously and blamelessly we behaved toward you who believe. ¹¹For you know how, as a father with his own children, ¹²we exhorted and encouraged and urged each one of you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

¹³For this reason, we also thank God constantly that when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it truly is—the Word of God, which does its work in you who believe. ¹⁴For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's communities in Messiah *Yeshua* that are in Judea—for you suffered the same

things at the hands of your own countrymen as they did from the Judean leaders, ¹⁵who killed both the Lord *Yeshua* and the prophets and drove us out. ^{‡‡}They are not pleasing to God and hostile to all people, ¹⁶hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they might be saved. As a result, they constantly fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last.

Longing to Visit and Reassure

¹⁷But brothers and sisters, after we were orphaned by separation from you for a short time (in person, not in heart), we were all the more eager in our great longing to see you face to face. ¹⁸For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—but *satan* thwarted us. ¹⁹For who is our hope or joy or crown of boasting ^{‡‡†}before our Lord *Yeshua* at His coming? Is it not you? ²⁰For you are our glory and joy!

3 So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind alone in Athens. ²We sent Timothy, our brother and co-worker for God in proclaiming the Good News of Messiah, in order to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, ³so that no one would be shaken by these afflictions. For you yourselves know we are destined for this. ⁴For even when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer persecution—just as has happened, as you know. ⁵For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faithfulness, for fear that the tempter had tempted you and that our labor might be in vain.

⁶But now that Timothy has come to us from you and brought us the good news of your faithfulness and love, and that you always have good memories of us, longing to see us just as we long to see you—⁷because of this, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and trouble, we were comforted about you by your faithfulness. ⁸For now we live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. ⁹For what thanks would be enough to offer to God, in return for all the joy we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night time and day time we keep praying more than ever to see you face to face, ^{‡‡‡}and mend any shortcomings in your faith.

Thanks, Joy, and Love before God

¹¹Now may our God and Father Himself and *Yeshua* our Lord direct our way to you. ¹²May the Lord also cause you to increase and overflow in love for one another and for all people, just as we also do for you, ¹³in order to strengthen your hearts as blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord *Yeshua* with all His *kedoshim*. Amen.

† cf. Acts 16:19-40 †† cf. Ps. 17:3; Prov. 21:2. ‡ Some mss. read gentle ‡† cf. Deut. 22:6.

‡‡ cf. Acts 17:5-10. ‡‡† cf. Jer. 9:23-24; Rom. 5:1-2; 15:17. ‡‡‡ Lit. to see your face

Walking in Sanctification

4 Finally then, brothers and sisters, we ask you and appeal in the Lord *Yeshua*—just as you received from us the way you ought to walk and please God (as in fact you are walking)—that you keep progressing more and more. ^{†2} For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord *Yeshua*. ³ For this is the will of God—your sanctification: ^{††} to abstain from sexual immorality;

⁴ to know, each of you, how to gain control over his own body [‡] in holiness and honor— ⁵ not in the passion of lust like the pagans who do not know God;

⁶ and not to overstep his brother and take advantage of him in this matter—because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, as we told you before and solemnly warned you. ⁷ For God did not call us to impurity, but in holiness. ⁸ Consequently, the one who rejects this is not rejecting man, but God, who gives His *Ruach ha-Kodesh* to you.

⁹ Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need for anyone to write you—for you yourselves are taught by God ^{††} to love one another. ¹⁰ In fact, you even practice it toward all your brothers and sisters throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to keep progressing more and more ¹¹ and aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, just as we directed you— ¹² so you may behave properly toward outsiders and not have need of anything.

The *Shofar* Call of Messiah's Return

¹³ Now we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that *Yeshua* died and rose again, so with Him God will also bring those who have fallen asleep in *Yeshua*. ^{††15} For this we tell you, by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the blast of God's *shofar*, ^{††} and the dead in Messiah shall rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left behind, will 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, encourage one another with these words.

Keep Watch for the Day of the Lord

5 Now concerning the times and seasons, ^{†††} brothers and sisters, you have no need for anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord [§] comes like a thief in the night. ³ When they are saying, "*Shalom* and safety," ^{§†}

sudden destruction comes upon them like a woman having birth pains in the womb—there is no way they will escape. ⁴ But you, brothers and sisters, are not in the dark, so that the Day might overtake you like a thief. ^{§††5} For you all are sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night or of darkness— ⁶ so then, let us not sleep as the others do, but let us remain on the alert and sober-minded. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night; and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. ⁸ But since we are of the day, let us be sober-minded—putting on the breastplate of faithfulness and love, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ^{§†9} For God did not destine us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹⁰ He died for us so that, whether we may be awake or asleep, ^{§††} we may live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up—just as you in fact are doing.

Instructions for Community Life

¹² Now, we ask you, brothers and sisters, to recognize those who work hard among you and are over you in the Lord and correct ^{§†} you, ¹³ and to esteem them beyond all measure in love because of their work. Keep *shalom* among yourselves.

¹⁴ We urge you, brothers and sisters, correct the unruly, comfort the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. ¹⁵ See that no one repays evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all.

¹⁶ Rejoice always,

¹⁷ pray constantly,

¹⁸ in everything give thanks;

for this is God's will for you in Messiah *Yeshua*.

¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit,

²⁰ do not despise prophetic messages,

²¹ but test all things, hold fast to what is good,

²² keep away from every kind of evil.

²³ Now may the God of *shalom* Himself make you completely holy; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept complete, blameless at the coming of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ²⁴ Faithful is the One who calls you—and He will make it happen!

Closing Greetings

²⁵ Brothers and sisters, pray for us.

²⁶ Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss.

²⁷ I charge you under oath, by the Lord, that this letter be read to all the brothers and sisters.

²⁸ The grace of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah be with you. ^{§†}

† cf. *John* 15:8. †† cf. *Lev.* 19:2. ‡ Lit. possess his own vessel
 †† cf. *Isa.* 54:13. ††† cf. *1 Cor.* 15:20. †††† cf. *Exod.* 19:16(19:16

LXX). ††† cf. *Dan.* 2:21; *Acts* 1:7. § cf. *Isa.* 13:6, 9; *Ezek.* 30:3; *Joel* 1:15, 2:1, 11; *Obad.* 15; *Zeph.* 1:14; *Mal.* 3:23(4:5). §† cf. *Jer.* 6:14; 8:11; *Ezek.* 13:10. §†† cf. *Job* 24:13-17. §‡ cf. *Isa.* 59:17.
 §†† Or whether we may be alive or dead §† cf. *1 Cor.* 4:14.
 §‡ Some mss. add Amen

2 Thessalonians

Introduction

Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians was written not long after the first one, about 50-51 C.E. The focus this time is on suffering and persecution (1:5), put into perspective by the thought of 's return and judgment on evil. This gives believers a second way to think about the return of the Lord. In 1 Thessalonians, His return was an encouragement to live a godly life; here, it is an encouragement that in the end God will right all wrongs. A second focus of the letter concerns some matters that may be connected to the persecution the Thessalonians were experiencing. First, some believed the Day of the Lord—the time of God's final judgment—had already come (2:2), possibly because that Day would be accompanied by great turmoil (such as their persecution) in the world. Paul reminds them that certain things must take place first; this is not yet the end. Second, there were some in the community who had quit their jobs, probably also because they thought the end of the world was happening now. Paul exhorts them all to work, and as in the first letter, holds himself up as a model of behavior (3:7). Though the Thessalonians were healthy in their faith and even an example for others, that did not mean they were a perfect community. Wrong teaching (concerning the Day of the Lord) and wrong behavior (failing to work for a living) had made inroads. The problem was that some of the Thessalonians had misinterpreted what their sufferings meant. It did not mean the end of the world was upon them. Rather, it meant that they were following and suffering for the kingdom of God (1:5). But on the whole, most of the Thessalonians continued to do well, so that Paul could say that "among God's communities we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring" (1:4). What a wonderful commendation!

A Look Inside 2 Thessalonians

Greetings

Troubles from an Eternal Perspective

The Man of Lawlessness

Firstfruits of Salvation

No Time to Be Lazy

Final Words

Greetings

1 Paul, Silvanus, † and Timothy,
To the community of the Thessalonians in God
our Father and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah:

² Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father and
the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah!

Troubles from an Eternal Perspective

³ We ought to always thank God for you, brothers
and sisters, as is appropriate, because your faithful-
ness grows wonderfully, and the love of each one of
you for one another continually increases. ⁴ Therefore,
we ourselves boast of you among the communities of
God—about your perseverance and faithfulness
through all the persecutions and troubles that you en-
dure. ⁵ This is evidence of the righteous judgment of

God, so that you may be considered worthy of the
kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.

(⁶ For after all, it is right in the sight of God to pay
back trouble to those who trouble you, ⁷ and relief to
you who suffer trouble along with us. At the revelation
of the Lord *Yeshua* from heaven with His mighty an-
gels ⁸ in flaming fire, ^{††} He will command judgment on
those who do not know God and do not heed the
Good News of our Lord *Yeshua*. ^{‡9} They will pay the
price of eternal ruin, away from the presence of the
Lord and the glory of His power ^{‡†}— ¹⁰ on that Day
when He comes to be glorified among His *kedoshim*
and marveled at by all who have believed, ^{‡‡} because
our testimony to you was believed.)

¹¹ With this in mind, we pray for you constantly, that
our God may consider you worthy of the calling, and
fulfill with power every good desire and work of faith,

†† cf. Exod. 3:2, 19:18; Isa. 66:15; Ezek. 1:13; Dan. 7:9. ‡ cf. Ps. 79:6; Isa. 66:15; Jer. 10:25. ‡† cf. Isa. 2:10, 19, 21(LXX). ‡‡ cf. Isa. 24:15, 49:3, 66:5; Mal. 1:11.

† Or Silas

¹² so the name of our Lord *Yeshua* may be glorified in you, and you in Him, in keeping with the grace of our God and the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah.

The Man of Lawlessness

2 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, concerning the coming of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah and our gathering together to Him, ² not to get shaken out of your mind or disturbed—either by a spirit or a word or a letter as if through us—as though the Day of the Lord † has come. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way, for the Day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the one destined to be destroyed. ††⁴ He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in the Temple of God, proclaiming himself that he is God. ‡

⁵ Don't you remember that when I was still with you I was telling you these things? ⁶ And you know what now holds you back, for him to be revealed in his own time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already operating; only there is one who holds back just now, until he is taken out of the way. ⁸ Then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord *Yeshua* will slay him with the breath of His mouth and wipe him out with the appearance of His coming. ††⁹ The coming of the lawless one is connected to the activity of *satan*, with all power and signs and false wonders, ¹⁰ and with every kind of wicked deception toward those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a delusional force, to lead them to believe what is false, ††¹² so that they may be judged—all those who did not believe the truth but delighted in wickedness. †††

Firstfruits of Salvation

¹³ But we should always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits for salvation ††† through sanctification by the *Ruach* and belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this salvation through our proclaiming the Good News, for you to gain the glory of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹⁵ So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold on to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by our letter.

† cf. Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11. †† Lit. son of destruction
‡ cf. Isa. 14:14; Ezek. 28:2. †† cf. Isa. 11:4, 30:28; Job 4:9. †† cf. 1 Kings 22:22-23. ††† cf. Exod. 10:1-2; Rom. 9:22.
††† cf. 1 Cor. 15:20-23.

¹⁶ Now may our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good deed and word.

3 Finally, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread quickly and be glorified—just as it is with you. ² Also pray that we may be rescued from perverse and evil people, for not all are trustworthy. ³ But the Lord is trustworthy—and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. ⁴ We have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will keep doing what we command. ⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Messiah.

No Time to Be Lazy

⁶ Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, to keep away from every brother who behaves irresponsibly and not according to the tradition they received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, for we did not behave inappropriately among you. ⁸ And we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but worked night and day with labor and hardship, so as not to burden any of you. ⁹ It wasn't that we had no right, but rather to offer ourselves as an example for you to imitate.

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we would give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. ¹¹ For we hear that some among you are behaving irresponsibly—not busy, but busybodies. ¹² Now such people we command and urge in the Lord Messiah *Yeshua* to work in a quiet demeanor, so they may eat their own bread. ¹³ But as for you, brothers, do not grow weary of doing good.

¹⁴ If anyone does not obey our message in this letter, take special note of him and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame. ¹⁵ Yet do not consider him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Final Words

¹⁶ Now may the Lord of *shalom* Himself give you *shalom* at all times and in every way. The Lord be with you all!

¹⁷ The greeting is in my own hand—Paul's. It is a sign in every letter—in this way I write. §

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah be with you all. §†

§ cf. 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; Gal. 6:11; Philemon 19. §† Some mss. add Amen

1 Timothy

Introduction

Timothy was a young leader (4:12), who it seemed, had a timid or introverted side. Paul often entrusted him with a mission (see 1 Thessalonians 3:2, Philippians 2:20), trusted him completely as a fellow worker (see 1 Thessalonians 3:2), saw him as a spiritual son (1 Timothy 1:18), and in many letters brings greetings to Messiah's community from Timothy as well as from himself.

In this letter, Paul addresses Timothy personally in order to encourage him. 1 Timothy is one of Paul's final letters written in the 60s C.E. not long before he died. At this point Timothy is in Ephesus (1:3) overseeing the community there. The letter therefore gives us insight into the life of a community in which we might see our own reflection. Some are teaching falsehoods or arguing over unessential matters (1:3), and Timothy is to tell them to cease. On the positive side, Timothy is to encourage prayer (2:10). Paul also sets out the qualification for community leaders (chapter 3), and the implication is that Timothy is to utilize these criteria in overseeing the selection of those leaders (5:22). Treatment of older people, widows, and elders is included; and since it is a personal letter, Paul also addresses Timothy's diet! (5:23).

The letter contains some well-known exhortations and "trustworthy sayings" (1:15), such as: "Messiah came into the world to save sinners" (1:15), "fight the good fight" (1:18; 6:12), and "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil" (6:10—note, not money in itself, as it is often misquoted). A poem appears in 3:16 summarizing the amazing nature of the Good News. Above all, Timothy is to "guard" his commission (6:20). Paul over and over encourages Timothy to be the man of God he has been called to be, overcoming his natural timidity by God's gifts, a timidity which perhaps allowed him to be too easily influenced by others (6:20).

The enduring value of the letter is to encourage both men and women, especially those young and a bit uncertain, to live up to their calling and exercise their gifts. All should seek to live a godly life in the sight of the Lord, "who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light" (6:16). 1 Timothy paints a picture of what a healthy community looks like in its leadership, its treatment of members, and its focus on and godliness (6:6).

A Look Inside 1 Timothy

Greeting

Beware of False Teachers

Mercy to the Worst of Sinners

Fight the Good Fight

Godliness in Prayer and Worship

Qualifications for Oversight and Service

Advice to a Young Leader

Giving Honor in the Community

Finding True Riches

Greeting

¹ Paul, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* by the command of God our Savior and Messiah *Yeshua*, our hope.

² To Timothy, a true child in faith:
Grace, mercy, and *shalom* from God the Father and Messiah *Yeshua*, our Lord!

Beware of False Teachers

³ As I urged you, when I was leaving for Macedonia, stay in Ephesus to direct certain people not to pass on different instruction, ⁴ or to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies. These give rise to useless speculation rather than God's training which is in faithfulness. ⁵ Now the goal of this command is love from a pure heart and a clear conscience and a genuine faith. ⁶ Some, having missed the mark, have turned away to fruitless discussion— ⁷ wanting to be teachers of

Torah, even though they do not understand what they keep saying or what they so dogmatically assert.

⁸ But we know that the *Torah* is good if one uses it legitimately, ⁹ knowing that the *Torah* is not given for a *tzaddik* but for the lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinful, for the unholy and worldly, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ the sexually immoral, homosexuals, slave-traders, liars, perjurers, and for anything else that opposes sound teaching— ¹¹ in keeping with what was entrusted to me, the glorious Good News of the blessed God.

Mercy to the Worst of Sinners

¹² I thank Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, appointing me to service— ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. Yet I was shown mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord overflowed with the faith and love that are in Messiah *Yeshua*. ¹⁵ Trustworthy is the saying and deserving of complete acceptance: “Messiah *Yeshua* came into the world to save sinners”—of whom I am foremost. ¹⁶ Yet, for this reason I was shown mercy—so that in me as the foremost, Messiah *Yeshua* might demonstrate His complete patience, as an example for those about to put their trust in Him for eternal life. ¹⁷ Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, [†] be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Fight the Good Fight

¹⁸ This charge I entrust to you, Timothy my son, in keeping with the prophecies once spoken about you, so that by them you fight the good fight, ¹⁹ holding on to faith and a good conscience. By rejecting these, some have suffered shipwreck regarding their faith. ²⁰ Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander—whom I have handed over to *satan* to be disciplined not to blaspheme.

Godliness in Prayer and Worship

² Therefore, first of all I urge that requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made on behalf of all people— ² for kings and all who are in authority ^{††}—so we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and respectfulness. ³ This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior. ⁴ He desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God ^{††} and there is one Mediator between God and men ^{‡‡}—a human, Messiah *Yeshua*, ⁶ who gave Himself as a ransom for all ^{‡‡‡}—the testimony at the proper time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a herald and an emissary (I am telling the

truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faithfulness and truth.

⁸ So I desire all men to pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, ^{‡‡‡} without anger and argument. ⁹ Likewise, women are to adorn themselves in appropriate clothing with modesty and sound judgment—not in seductive hairstyles [§] and gold or pearls or costly clothing, ¹⁰ but what is suitable for women claiming godliness, through good deeds. ¹¹ Let a woman receive training in a quiet demeanor with complete respect for order. ¹² But I do not allow a woman to train or dictate to a man, but to be in a quiet demeanor. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ^{§†14} Also Adam was not deceived but the woman—being deceived, she fell into transgression. ^{§††15} Nevertheless, she will be sustained through childbearing ^{§††}—if they continue in faithfulness and love and holiness, with sound judgment.

Qualifications for Oversight and Service

³ Trustworthy is the saying: “If any man aspires to the office of overseer, ^{§††} he desires a good work.” ² An overseer, then, must be beyond criticism—the husband of one wife, clear-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not addicted to wine, not violent but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money, ⁴ managing his own household well, keeping his children under control with all respectfulness. ⁵ (But if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s community?) ⁶ He must not be a new believer, ^{§†} or he may become puffed up and fall into the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ Furthermore, he must have a good reputation with those outside, so that he will not fall into disgrace and the devil’s trap.

⁸ Servant-leaders likewise must be dignified, not double-speaking, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ Also let them first be tested—then let those who are blameless serve as servant-leaders. ¹¹ Women likewise must be dignified, not backbiting, clear-minded, and trustworthy in every respect. ¹² Let servant-leaders be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³ For those who have served well as servant-leaders gain for themselves a good standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Messiah *Yeshua*.

¹⁴ These things I write to you, hoping to come to you shortly. ¹⁵ But if I delay, I write so you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God—which is the community of the living God, a pillar and foundation of truth. ¹⁶ Now beyond question, great is the mystery of godliness:

He was revealed in the flesh,

† Some mss. read the only wise God †† cf. Ezra 6:10. ‡ cf. Ezek. 18:23, 32. †† cf. Deut. 6:4. ‡‡ cf. Isa. 41:14; 49:7. ‡‡‡ cf. Mark 10:45.

‡‡‡ cf. Ps. 63:4. § Lit. braided hair §† cf. Gen. 2:7, 22. §†† cf. Gen. 3:6. §‡ cf. Gen. 3:16. §†† cf. Num. 4:16(LXX); 31:14(LXX). §† Lit. newly planted neofutos

vindicated in the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
trusted throughout the world,
taken up in glory.

Advice to a Young Leader

4 Now the *Ruach* clearly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, following deceitful spirits and teachings of demons ² through the hypocrisy of false speakers—whose own conscience has been seared. ³ They forbid people to marry; they command people to abstain from foods that God created for the faithful to share with thanksgiving, having come to know the truth. ⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵ for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer.

⁶ In pointing out these things to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Messiah *Yeshua*, nourished in the words of the faith and the sound teaching that you have been following. ⁷ But avoid godless myths and old wives' tales; instead, train yourself in godliness. ⁸ For physical exercise has some benefit; but godliness is beneficial for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the one to come. ⁹ Trustworthy is the saying and deserving of complete acceptance ¹⁰ (for to this end we work hard and strive): "We have set our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially those who trust." ¹¹ Insist on these things and teach them.

¹² Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but become an example of the faithful—in speech, in conduct, in love, in faithfulness, and in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to encouragement, and to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the spiritual gift [†] within you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands of the elders. ¹⁵ Practice these things—be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be clear to all. ¹⁶ Give attention to yourself and your teaching. Persevere in these things, for in doing so you will save yourself ^{††} and those who hear you.

Giving Honor in the Community

5 Never speak harshly to an older man [‡] but appeal to him as a father; to younger men as brothers; ² older women as mothers; and younger women as sisters—with complete purity.

³ Honor widows who are really widows— ⁴ but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to show devotion to their own home and give back to their parents, for this is pleasing before God. ⁵ Now she who is really a widow and has been left alone, has put her hope in God and continues in petitions and prayers night and day. ⁶ But she who is self-

indulgent is dead even while she lives. ⁷ Insist on these things, so that they might be beyond criticism. ⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his own, especially those in his own house, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹ Let a widow be listed only if she is at least sixty, was the wife of one husband, ¹⁰ well known for good deeds, if she raised children, if she showed hospitality, if she washed the feet of the *kedoshim*, if she helped those in trouble, and if she devoted herself to every good work.

¹¹ But refuse younger widows; for when their sensual desires draw them away from the Messiah, they want to get married— ¹² facing judgment because they have set aside their previous pledge. ¹³ And at the same time, they also learn to be idle, going around from house to house—and not just idle, but also gossipers and busybodies, saying things they should not.

¹⁴ Therefore, I want the younger widows to get married, have children, manage a household, and give no opportunity to the enemy for slander. ¹⁵ For some have already gone astray after *satan*. ¹⁶ If any woman of faith has widows in need, let her help them and not let the community be burdened, so it may help the real widows.

¹⁷ The elders who lead well are worthy of honor and honorarium ^{‡‡}—especially those who work hard in the word and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," ^{‡‡} and, "The worker is worthy of his wage." ^{‡‡††} Do not accept an accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ^{‡‡‡} Correct those who continue sinning in the presence of everyone, so that the rest also may fear. [§]

²¹ I solemnly charge you—before God and Messiah *Yeshua* and the chosen angels—to observe these things without taking sides, doing nothing out of favoritism. ²² Do not lay hands on anyone hastily or take part in the sins of others—keep yourself pure. ²³ (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach and for your frequent ailments.)

²⁴ The sins of some people are obvious, going before them into judgment; but for others, their sins follow. ²⁵ Likewise, good deeds are obvious, and the others cannot stay hidden.

6 Let all who are under the yoke as slaves consider their own masters worthy of full respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered. ² And let those who have believing masters not disrespect them because they are brothers, but serve them even more, since those who share in the benefit are believers and loved. Teach and encourage these things.

^{††} *Lit. double honor* ^{‡‡} *Deut. 25:4. ‡‡† Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15; cf. Luke 10:7. ‡‡‡ cf. Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16. § cf. Matt. 18:17.*

[†] *Greek charisma* ^{††} *cf. 2 Tim. 4:18. ‡ cf. Lev. 19:32.*

Finding True Riches

³ If anyone passes on a different teaching and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, and with the instruction in keeping with godliness, ⁴ he is prideful, understanding nothing. Instead, he is obsessed with arguments and disputes about words—out of which come envy, strife, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction between people corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

⁶ Now godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into this world, so we cannot take anything out of it. ^{††8} But having food and clothing, with these things we shall be content. ⁹ But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and a trap, and many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ^{††10} For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil—some, longing for it, have gone astray from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

¹¹ But you, O man of God, flee from these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, perseverance, and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight

† cf. Ps. 37:16; Prov. 15:16; 16:8. †† cf. Job 1:21; Ps. 49:17; Eccl. 5:15. ‡ cf. Prov. 30:8. †† cf. Prov. 15:27; 23:4; 28:20.

of faith! Take hold of the eternal life—you were called to it, and you made the good confession for it in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you before God who gives life to all things and Messiah *Yeshua* who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹⁵ This He will reveal in His own time—the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, ^{††16} who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or is able to see. ^{††} To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

¹⁷ Direct those who are rich in this present age not to be proud or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, ^{††} but rather on God—who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ Direct them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous, sharing, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so they might take hold of the true life.

²⁰ O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, turning away from pointless chatter and the contradictions of so-called knowledge— ²¹ by professing it, some have missed the mark concerning the faith.

Grace be with you.

†† cf. Deut. 10:17; Ps 136:2-3. ††† cf. Exod. 33:20. ††† cf. Ps. 62:10.

2 Timothy

Introduction

Paul wrote 2 Timothy in the 60s C.E., a short time after 1 Timothy, and in the knowledge that he would soon be executed by Rome (4:6). As in other letters, Paul's own attitude is a model for anyone undergoing persecution or even martyrdom—a situation not common in the West but well known to believers in many other countries. From this letter, we learn that Timothy is a third-generation Jewish believer on his mother's side (1:5; cf. Acts 16:1, 3). As in the first letter, Paul encourages Timothy to use the gifting God has given him, not giving in to his natural timidity but being bold in the Lord (1:6-8).

In the end, Paul focuses not on Timothy's own gifts and personality, but on what God has done in the Messiah. "I know in whom I have trusted," Paul says (1:12), Timothy is to guard the good entrusted to him (1:14) so that it can be passed along to others in a kind of chain of proclamation (2:2). Paul describes the life of a believer with powerful images: we are like soldiers who need to endure hardship and obey our superior; we are like athletes in a spiritual contest who need to follow the rules; we are like farmers who work hard to see a harvest of crops (2:3-6). In other words, the believing life takes work and endurance; it takes obedience to the Lord; it takes following the "rules"—by which Paul means not a list of things to do but the basic unshakeable reality of the Good News which alone can bring us to the "finish line" of life.

Some of Paul's admonitions repeat what he said in the first letter: avoid needless controversies (2:14, 23), false teaching (2:17), and ungodly behavior (2:22). But here in 2 Timothy is also found the well-known verses: "All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness, so that the person belonging to God may be capable, fully equipped for every good deed" (3:16-17). The believer's life is one of fighting for what is right (4:7), enduring hardships (4:5), and suffering (1:8); but above all, looking to God and "the salvation that is in Messiah with eternal glory" (2:10).

A Look Inside 2 Timothy

Greeting

Stir up God's Charisma in You

Suffer with Me—for the Good News!

Disciples from Generation to Generation

A Workman with the Word

Opposition in the Last Days

All Scripture Equips God's People

Finishing the Fight, Receiving the Crown

Final Greetings

Greeting

¹ Paul, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* through the will of God, according to the promise of life in Messiah *Yeshua*.

² To Timothy my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and *shalom* from God the Father and Messiah *Yeshua* our Lord!

Stir up God's Charisma in You

³ I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience as my forefathers did, when I continually remember you in my prayers night and day. ⁴ I remember your

tears, and I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I recall the genuine faithfulness within you, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure it is within you as well. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift [†] of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of timidity but of power and love and self-discipline.

Suffer with Me—for the Good News!

⁸ Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but share in suffering

[†] *Greek charisma*

for the Good News according to the power of God.

⁹ He has saved us and called us with a holy calling—not because of our deeds but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Messiah *Yeshua* before time began, ¹⁰ but now has been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Messiah *Yeshua*. Indeed, He nullified the power of death and brought life and immortality to light through the Good News.

¹¹ For this Good News I was appointed a herald and an emissary and a teacher. ¹² For this reason I also am suffering these things—but I am not ashamed, for I know in whom I have trusted and I am convinced He is able to safeguard what I have entrusted to Him until that Day.

¹³ Keep the standard of sound words you have heard from me, in the faithfulness and love that are in Messiah *Yeshua*. ¹⁴ Guard the good that has been entrusted to you through the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* who dwells in us.

¹⁵ You are aware that everyone in Asia has turned away from me—including Phygelus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my imprisonment. ¹⁷ On the contrary, when he was in Rome he zealously searched for me and found me. ¹⁸ May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord in that day! You know very well how much he served in Ephesus.

Disciples from Generation to Generation

2 Therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Messiah *Yeshua*. ² And what you have heard from me among many witnesses, entrust to faithful people who will be capable to teach others also. ³ Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Messiah *Yeshua*. ⁴ No one serving as a soldier entangles himself in the activities of everyday life, so that he might please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned victorious unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ The hard-working farmer ought to receive the first share of the crops. ⁷ Consider what I am saying, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

⁸ Remember *Yeshua* the Messiah, raised from the dead, from the seed of David—according to my Good News. ⁹ For this I suffer hardship as a criminal, even to the point of chains—though the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the chosen, so they might obtain the salvation that is in Messiah *Yeshua* with eternal glory.

¹¹ Trustworthy is the saying:

If we died with Him,
we will also live with Him;

¹² if we endure, we will also reign with Him;
if we deny Him, He will also deny us;

¹³ if we are faithless, He remains faithful,
for He cannot deny Himself.

A Workman with the Word

¹⁴ Remind them of these things and solemnly charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which is useless—to the ruin of those who are listening.

¹⁵ Make every effort to present yourself before God as tried and true as an unashamed worker cutting a straight path with the word of truth. ¹⁶ But avoid godless chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness ¹⁷ and their words will spread like cancer. Among them are Hymeneaus and Philetus— ¹⁸ men who have missed the mark concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection has already taken place. They are overturning the faith of some. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” ^{††} and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord keep away from unrighteousness.” ^{‡‡} ²⁰ Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay—some for honor and some for common use. ²¹ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor—sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

²² Now flee from youthful desires; instead, pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and *shalom*, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. ²³ But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they produce quarrels. ²⁴ The Lord’s slave must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, tolerant. ²⁵ Let him give guidance with humility to those who are in opposition—perhaps God may grant them a change of mind, leading to the knowledge of truth. ²⁶ Then they may regain their senses and escape the devil’s snare, in which they had been held captive by him to do his will.

Opposition in the Last Days

3 But understand this, that in the last days ^{††} hard times will come— ² for people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ hard-hearted, unforgiving, backbiting, without self-control, brutal, hating what is good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to an outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid these people! ⁶ For among these are those who slip into households and deceive weak women weighed down with sins, led away by various desires, ⁷ always learning yet never able to come to the knowledge of truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, ^{‡‡} so do these people oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and worthless concerning the faith. ⁹ But these people will not make any more progress—for their folly, like that of Jannes and Jambres, will be obvious to everyone.

† cf. Isa. 40:3, 9. †† cf. Num. 16:5. ‡ cf. Num 16:26. †† Hebrew *acharit ha-yamim* ‡‡ cf. Exod. 7:11-12 (Aramaic, Targum Jonathan)

¹⁰ You, however, closely followed my teaching, manner of life, purpose, faithfulness, patience, love, perseverance—¹¹ as well as persecutions and sufferings that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! And the Lord rescued me from them all! ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Messiah *Yeshua* will be persecuted. ¹³ But evil men and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

All Scripture Equips God's People

¹⁴ You, however, continue in what you have learned and what you have become convinced of. For you know from whom you have learned, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to make you wise, leading to salvation through trusting in Messiah *Yeshua*. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God † and useful for teaching, for reproof, for restoration, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the person belonging to God may be capable, fully equipped for every good deed.

4 I solemnly charge you—in the presence of God and Messiah *Yeshua*, who is about to judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His Kingdom—² proclaim the Word! Be ready when it is convenient or inconvenient. †† Confront, rebuke, encourage—with complete patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come when they will not put up with sound instruction, but they will pile up for themselves teachers in keeping with their own desires, to have their ears tickled. ⁴ And they will turn away from hearing the truth and wander off to myths. ⁵ You, however, keep a clear mind in all things, withstand hardship, do the work of proclaiming the Good News, and fulfill your service.

Finishing the Fight, Receiving the Crown

⁶ For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I

† Or God-breathed †† Lit. in season, out of season

have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. ⁸ In the future there is reserved for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not to me only, but also to everyone who has longed for His appearing.

⁹ Do all you can to come to me quickly—¹⁰ for Demas, having loved this world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Luke is the only one with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. ¹² I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring the cloak which I left with Carpus in Troas, along with the scrolls, and especially the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm—the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. ¹⁵ Be on guard against him too, for he vehemently opposed our message.

¹⁶ At my first defense, no one stood by me; instead, they all deserted me—may it not be counted against them! ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be proclaimed in full measure, and all the nations might hear—and I was rescued from the lion's mouth! ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will deliver me safely into His heavenly Kingdom. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

¹⁹ Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus. ²¹ Do all you can to come before winter. Eubulus sends you greetings, as do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters. ²² The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

‡ cf. Ps. 7:3(2); Dan. 6:21(20), 28(27).

Titus

Introduction

Titus is another personal letter of Paul, again probably from the mid-60s C.E., this time written to Titus, who was a Gentile and a longtime co-worker of Paul (Galatians 2:1-3, 2 Corinthians 8:23). Paul had left Titus on the island of Crete to straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every city. Presumably Paul's unfinished business included putting leadership in place in the various communities, a task now entrusted to Titus.

Much of the letter repeats what we have seen in 1 and 2 Timothy: the criteria for being an elder, the problem of ungodly people insisting on false teaching and useless debates, relationships between young and old. One contrast with Timothy's situation is that the communities in Crete were recently formed, with leadership not even in place. The description of the inhabitants of Crete as "always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons," while sounding harsh to us in the 21st century, reminds us that the Good News can radically transform anyone no matter what their background; and once again we find false teachers, this time belonging to the circumcision group (1:10-12). Perhaps there were some who still insisted that Gentiles needed to become Jews to be saved—but Titus was a case in point that they did not need to.

One of the most well-known biblical phrases to be found in this letter is in 2:13: the "blessed hope," described as the appearing of , who is here called both God and Savior. Until that wonderful day, we are to live according to God's will, both elders Titus is to appoint and the average, everyday person (some of whom were liars and gluttons). Whether leader or follower, it is only God's grace that saves us and sustains us (2:11; 3:7).

A Look inside Titus

Greetings

Setting the Community in Order

Advice for Behavior in Community

Be Ready for Good Deeds

Final Words

Greetings

1 Paul, a slave of God and an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua*, for the faith of God's chosen and the knowledge of truth that is in keeping with godliness, ² based on the hope of eternal life. God—who cannot lie [†]—promised this before the beginning of time. ³ But in His own time He made His message known, through a proclamation with which I was entrusted, by the command of God our Savior.

⁴ To Titus, a true child of our common faith:

Grace and *shalom* from God the Father and Messiah *Yeshua*, our Savior!

Setting the Community in Order

⁵ The reason I left you in Crete was so that you would set in order the things that remain and appoint elders in every city as I directed you— ⁶ if anyone is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children of faith

[†] cf. Num. 23:19.

with no charge of wild living or rebellion. ⁷ For the overseer must be blameless as God's administrator—not arrogant, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not violent, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁸ Rather he must be hospitable, loving what is good, self-controlled, upright, devout, disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message in keeping with the teaching, so he can both encourage by instruction what is sound and convict those who speak against it.

¹⁰ For there are many who are rebellious, vain talkers and deceivers, especially those from the circumcision.

¹¹ They must be silenced—those who upset entire households by teaching what they should not, for the sake of dishonest gain. ¹² One of them, one of their own prophets, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." ¹³ This testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, so they might be sound in the faith, ¹⁴ not paying attention to Judaic myths and commands of men who turn away from the truth. ¹⁵ To the pure all things are pure; but to those who are de-

filed and unbelieving, nothing is pure. Both their mind and conscience are defiled. ¹⁶ They claim to know God but their deeds deny Him. They are despicable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

Advice for Behavior in Community

² But as for you, speak things that are fitting for sound instruction. ² Older men are to be clear-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, in patience. ³ Likewise, older women are to be sanctified in demeanor—not backbiting or enslaved to much wine. Let them be teachers of what is good, ⁴ so that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be self-controlled, pure, managing their household, kind, submitted to their own husbands, so that God’s word may not be dishonored.

⁶ Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled, ⁷ in all things showing yourself to be an example of good deeds—integrity in instruction, dignity, ⁸ sound speech beyond criticism—so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

⁹ Urge slaves to submit themselves to their own masters in all things, well-pleasing and not back-talking, ¹⁰ not stealing but showing all good faithfulness, so that they may do credit to the teaching about God our Savior in everything.

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² training us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live in a manner that is self-controlled and righteous and godly in the present age. ¹³ We wait for the blessed hope and appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior, Messiah *Yeshua* .

¹⁴ He gave Himself for us so that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and so that He might purify for Himself a chosen people, zealous for good deeds. ¹⁵ So communicate these things, and encourage and correct with complete authority. Let no one look down on you.

Be Ready for Good Deeds

³ Remind the people to be submitted to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, ² to slander no one, without fighting, gentle, showing every courtesy to all people. ³ For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deluded, enslaved to various desires and pleasures, spending our lives in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared—

⁵ not by deeds of righteousness which we had done ourselves, but because of His mercy—

He saved us through the *mikveh* of rebirth

and renewing of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* ,

⁶ whom He abundantly poured out on us through Messiah *Yeshua* our Savior,

⁷ so that being set right by His grace, we might become heirs

with the confident hope of eternal life!

⁸ Trustworthy is the saying, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have put their trust in God may be careful to devote themselves to good deeds. These things are good and beneficial for people.

⁹ But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about *Torah* , for they are unprofitable and useless. ¹⁰ Dismiss a quarrelsome person after a first and second warning, ¹¹ knowing that such a person is twisted and is sinning—he is self-condemned.

Final Words

¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, hurry to come to me in Nicopolis, for I have decided to winter there. ¹³ Send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey with great care, so that nothing is lacking for them. ¹⁴ And let our people learn to devote themselves to doing *mitzvot* to meet urgent needs, so they will not be unfruitful.

¹⁵ All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all.

† cf. *Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 26:18.*

Philemon

Introduction

Philemon is a very personal letter, yet one that has application to all believers. In Paul's time, slavery was common, though quite different than the racially-based slavery of in modern times, and it had even less in common with the "human trafficking" of slaves in many countries today. Household slaves—there were other kinds—could work for their freedom and even do well for themselves after freedom. Onesimus, a runaway slave of Philemon, has come to faith in through Paul's ministry. Paul is now returning Onesimus to Philemon. In his letter, Paul asks Philemon, a believer, to receive Onesimus as a brother in the faith, and suggests that he might even free Onesimus to serve in ministry with Paul. At the time of this letter Paul was in prison, most likely in Rome in the early 60s of the first century C.E.

In Philemon, Paul sets an example of godly behavior for all believers. Paul appeals to Philemon to receive back Onesimus—not with a heavy hand but as brother to brother. Paul's hope is that Philemon will act towards Onesimus out of the love of God, not simply out of obedience to authority. All three men must make a personal sacrifice: Paul in giving up Onesimus as a useful partner in ministry; Philemon in giving up his pride and rights as a master and receiving Onesimus back, and perhaps even releasing him from slavery; and Onesimus in risking returning to his master with whatever consequences that would entail.

Then there is the question of slavery. Although different from the slavery of modern America, it was not always humane. How then could Paul not call for its abolition? Some think that it was such a part of life that it could not have been abolished at that time, and so Paul does not speak against it. He is more concerned with the personal relationship between Philemon and Onesimus than with an institution he could not do anything about. It is also possible that a situation, in which a master treated his slaves well and his slaves obeyed without rebelling, could be a picture of what our own relationship of serving God should be like. Philemon certainly stimulates discussion on this subject, while at the same time stressing that love and self-sacrifice should characterize all our relationships in life.

A Look Inside Philemon

Greetings to a House Group
 Thanks for Love and Comfort
 Request for Philemon's Runaway
 Added Request and Farewell

Greetings to a House Group

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Messiah *Yeshua*, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow worker.

² To Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the community that meets in your house:

³ Grace to you and *shalom* from God our Father and the Lord Messiah *Yeshua*!

Thanks for Love and Comfort

⁴I thank my God always when mentioning you in my prayers, ⁵hearing of your love and the trust you have toward the Lord *Yeshua* and all the *kedoshim*. ⁶May the fellowship of your faith become effective, with the recognition of all the good that is ours in Messiah.

⁷For I've received much joy and comfort in your love, brother, because the hearts of the *kedoshim* have been refreshed through you.

Request for Philemon's Runaway

⁸Therefore, though I have plenty of boldness in Messiah to order you to do what's right, ⁹yet for love's sake I appeal to you instead. I, Paul, am an old man and now also a prisoner belonging to Messiah *Yeshua*. ¹⁰I beg you for my child Onesimus—for whom I became a spiritual father while in chains. ¹¹He once was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and me. ¹²I sent him back to you—he is my very heart. ¹³I really wanted to keep him with me, so that on your behalf he might serve me while I am in chains for the Good News. ¹⁴But I didn't want to do anything without your

consent, so that your goodness wouldn't be by force but by free will.

¹⁵ For perhaps he was separated from you for a while in order that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but more than a slave—as a beloved brother, especially to me but even more so to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷ So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸ But if he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay. (Not to mention that you owe me your very

self.) ²⁰ Yes, brother, let me have some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Messiah.

Added Request and Farewell

²¹ Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than what I say. ²² At the same time also, prepare a guest room for me—for I hope that through your prayers I will be given back to you. ²³ Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Messiah *Yeshua*, greets you. ²⁴ So do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. ²⁵ May the grace of our Lord Messiah *Yeshua* be with your spirit. Amen.

Hebrews

Introduction

The Letter to the Hebrews—though the title is not original to the book—is written to Jewish believers in of the first century, as we can tell from the content. At one time the author, who is not named, was thought to be Paul; but scholars today agree that the author is unknown. Whoever he is, he is thoroughly skilled in his handling of the Greek language, the Septuagint, and Jewish thought—particularly with reference to the Temple service. The date, though not firmly known, appears to be before 70 C.E. We can conclude this from remarks that the old covenant is “close to vanishing” (8:13) and the question “Would they not have ceased to be offered (10:2), which suggest that the Temple sacrificial system was still operative.

More important than the author or date is the situation of the Jewish believers being addressed. Despite their maturity and sophistication, some were on the road to abandoning their faith altogether and returning to a Judaism minus . They were being treated as outsiders or even traitors to the Jewish people (13:13) and undergoing trials and persecution (12:3, 7)—though apparently no one had yet become a martyr (12:4). Others were following strange teachings (13:9) and had even stopped meeting with other believers for worship (10:25). But returning to traditional Judaism would also mean laying aside the faith that had opened a way into the heavenly sanctuary, allowing for direct access to God and face-to-face prayer (10:19-22).

The author of Hebrews is quite concerned for the faith of these Jewish followers of . Much of the letter is given to showing that , the incarnate God of Israel, is greater than anyone else—greater than the angels, greater than Moses, the bringer of a greater covenant, with a greater priesthood than before and a greater sacrifice that fully atones for our sins. Since this is true, abandoning is equivalent to turning away from the God of Israel. Along with the emphasis on come several passages illustrated from the , warning that turning from trust in will bring consequences. But the author wants to encourage, not scold. He points in chapter 11 to a “hall of fame” of Jewish heroes who followed God despite obstacles and even persecution, setting an example for us today. To those who persevere, a Sabbath rest with the Lord is promised (4:8). And how does perseverance come? By “focusing on , the initiator and perfecter of faith” (12:2). Amen!

A Look Inside Hebrews

Superiority of the Son

Warning Not to Drift Away

Greater than Angels

Greater than Moses

Listen and Obey, or Harden and Fall Away

Make Every Effort to Enter God’s Rest

, Our Compassionate

Moving on to Maturity

The Promise and the Oath

Melchizedek, a Forever

, Our Forever

, Mediator of a Better Covenant

Messiah Enters the Heavenly Holies

Perfect Pardon in the New Covenant

Let Us Pray Boldly in God’s Presence

Suffering Perfects ’s Followers

The Faithful See from Afar

Running the Race with Discipline

Entering the Unshakable Kingdom

Brotherly Love in the Community

Closing Blessing

Final Greetings

Superiority of the Son

1 At many times and in many ways, God spoke long ago to the fathers through the prophets. ²In these last days He has spoken to us through a Son, [†]whom He appointed heir of all things and through whom He created the universe. ³This Son is the radiance of His glory and the imprint of His being, upholding all things by His powerful word. ^{††}When He had made purification for our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. ^{‡‡}Thus, He became as far above the angels as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are My Son.

Today I have become Your Father"? ^{‡‡}
And again,

"I will be to Him a Father,
and He will be to Me a Son"? ^{‡‡}

⁶And again, when He brings the firstborn into the world, He says,

"Let all the angels of God worship Him." ^{‡‡‡}

⁷And regarding the angels He says,

"He makes His angels winds,
and His servants a flame of fire." ^{‡‡‡}

⁸But regarding the Son He says,

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,
and a scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness;

therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions." [§]

¹⁰And,

"In the beginning, *ADONAI*,
You laid the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the works of Your hands.

¹¹They shall pass away, but You remain.

And they will all wear out like clothing. ^{§†}

¹²And like a robe You will roll them up,
and like clothing they will be changed;
but You are the same,

and Your years shall never end." ^{§††}

¹³But to which of the angels has He ever said,

"Sit at My right hand,
until I make Your enemies a footstool ^{§‡}
for Your feet"? ^{§††}

[†] cf. Matt. 21:37. ^{††} Lit. the word of His power [‡] cf. Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX). ^{‡‡} Ps. 2:7. ^{‡‡‡} 2 Sam. 7:14; 1 Chron. 17:13. ^{‡‡‡†} Deut. 32:43(LXX); cf. Ps. 96:7(LXX). ^{‡‡‡‡} Lit. He who makes... [§] Ps. 45:6-7(6-7)(44:7-8 LXX). ^{§†} cf. Isa. 50:9; 51:6. ^{§††} Ps. 102:26-28(25-27); 101:26-28(LXX). ^{§‡} cf. Isa. 66:1; Mt. 5:35. ^{§††} cf. Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX).

¹⁴Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out for service to those about to inherit salvation?

Warning Not to Drift Away

2 For this reason it is necessary for us to pay especially close attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. ²For if the word spoken through angels proved to be firm, and every violation and disobedience received a just payback, ³how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was first spoken through the Lord and confirmed to us by those who heard. ⁴At the same time, God was testifying by signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, according to His will.

Yeshua Greater than Angels

⁵For it is not to angels that God has subjected the *olam ha-ba*—about which we speak. ⁶But somewhere someone has testified, saying,

"What is man, that You are mindful of him,
or the son of man, that You care for him?"

⁷For a little while, You made him lower than the angels.

You crowned him with glory and honor.

⁸You put all things in subjection underneath his feet." ^{§†}

For when He put all things in subjection to him, He left nothing outside his control. But for now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. ⁹But we see One who was made for a little while lower than the angels—namely, *Yeshua*. He is now crowned with glory and honor, because of the death He suffered so that, by the grace of God, He might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰For it was fitting for God—for whom and through whom all things exist—in leading many sons to glory, to perfect through sufferings the initiator of their salvation. ¹¹For both He who sanctifies and those being sanctified are all from one—so He is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ^{§†12} saying,

"I will proclaim Your name
to My brothers and sisters.

In the midst of the congregation
I will sing praise to You." ^{§§†}

¹³And again,

"I will put My trust in Him." ^{§§‡}

And again,

"Here am I and the children God has given Me." ^{§§§}

¹⁴Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared the same humani-

^{§†} Ps. 8:4-6 (5-7 LXX); cf. Gen. 1:26-30. ^{§‡} Lit. brothers

^{§§†} Ps. 22:23(22) (21:23 LXX); cf. Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Heb. 11:16. ^{§§‡} Isa. 8:17; 12:2(LXX). ^{§§§} Isa. 8:18(LXX).

ty—so that through death He might break the power of the one who had the power of death (that is, the devil) ¹⁵ and free those who by fear of death were in bondage all their lives. ¹⁶ For surely He is not concerned about angels, but about the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore, He had to be made like His brothers in all things, so He might become a merciful and faithful *Kohen Gadol* in matters relating to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because He Himself suffered when put to the test, He is able to help those being tested.

Yeshua Greater than Moses

3 Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, partners in a heavenly calling, take notice of *Yeshua*—the Emissary and *Kohen Gadol* we affirm. ² He was faithful to the One who appointed Him in His house—as was Moses also. ^{†3} For He has been considered worthy of more glory than Moses, even as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. ⁵ Now Moses surely was faithful in all God's house as a servant, for a witness of things to be spoken later. ⁶ But Messiah, as Son, is over God's house—and we are His house, if we hold firm to our boldness and what we are proud to hope.

Listen and Obey, or Harden and Fall Away

⁷ Therefore, just as the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* says, "Today if you hear His voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, [‡] on the day of testing ^{‡†} in the wilderness. ⁹ There your fathers put Me to the test, though they saw My works for forty years. ¹⁰ Therefore, I was provoked by this generation, and I said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.' ¹¹ As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" [‡] ¹² Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief that falls away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another day by day—as long as it is called "Today"—so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partners of Messiah, if we hold our original conviction firm until the end. ¹⁵ As it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." ^{‡‡} ¹⁶ Now which ones heard and rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt with Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was He provoked for 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilder-

ness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest? Was it not to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were not able to enter in because of lack of trust.

Make Every Effort to Enter God's Rest

4 Let us fear then! Though a promise of entering His rest is left open, some of you would seem to have fallen short. ² For we also have had Good News proclaimed to us, just as they did. But the word they heard did not help them, because they were not unified with those who listened in faith. ³ For we who have trusted are entering into that rest. It is just as God has said, "So in My wrath I swore, 'They shall never enter My rest,'" ^{‡‡} even though His works were finished since the foundation of the world. ⁴ For somewhere He has spoken about the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works," ^{§5} and again in this passage: "They shall never enter My rest." ^{§†} ⁶ So then it remains for some to enter into it; yet those who formerly had Good News proclaimed to them did not enter because of disobedience. ⁷ Again, God appoints a certain day—"Today"—saying through David after so long a time, just as it has been said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." ^{§††} ⁸ For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. ⁹ So there remains a *Shabbat* rest for the people of God. ¹⁰ For the one who has entered God's rest has also ceased from his own work, just as God did from His. ¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through the same pattern of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword—piercing right through to a separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³ No creature is hidden from Him, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. ^{§‡}

Yeshua, Our Compassionate Kohen Gadol

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great *Kohen Gadol* who has passed through the heavens, *Yeshua Ben-Elohim*, let us hold firmly to our confessed allegiance. ¹⁵ For we do not have a *kohen gadol* who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all the same ways—yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore, let us draw near to the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help in time of need.

† cf. Lev. 4:20, 26, 31; 5:10; 16:16, 33-34; Dan. 9:24. †† cf. Num. 12:7. ‡ Meribah ‡† Massah ‡‡ Ps. 95:7c-11. ‡‡† Meribah

‡‡ Ps. 95:11(94:11 LXX). § Gen. 2:2; Exod. 20:11; 31:17. §† Ps. 95:11b(94:11b LXX). §†† Ps. 95:11. §‡ cf. Job 26:6; 34:21; Ps. 33:13-15.

5 For every *kohen gadol* taken from among men is appointed to act on behalf of people in matters relating to God, † so that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. † He is able to empathize with the ignorant and deluded, since he himself also is subject to weakness. † For this reason he has to make offerings for sins—just as for the people, so also for himself. †† And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when he is called by God, as Aaron was. †

‡ So also Messiah did not glorify Himself to be made *Kohen Gadol*; rather, it was God who said to Him, “You are My Son;

today I have become Your Father.” ††

¶ And He says in a different passage, “You are a *kohen* forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.” ††

‡ In the days of His life on earth, ††† *Yeshua* offered up both prayers and pleas, with loud crying and tears, to the One able to save Him from death; and He was heard because of His reverence. † Though He was a Son, He learned obedience from what He suffered. † And once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him— † called by God *Kohen Gadol* “according to the order of Melchizedek.” †††

Moving on to Maturity

‡ About this subject there is much for us to say, and it is hard to explain since you have become sluggish in hearing. † For although you ought to be teachers by this time, again you need someone to teach you the basics of God’s sayings. You have come to need milk, not solid food. † For anyone living on milk is inexperienced with the teaching about righteousness—he is an infant. †† But solid food is for the mature, who through practice have their senses trained to discern both good and evil.

6 Therefore, leaving the basic teaching of the Messiah, let us move on toward maturity—not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of trust in God, † of teaching about immersions, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. † Now this we will do, if God permits.

‡ For it is impossible for those who once were enlightened—having tasted of the heavenly gift and become partakers of the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, † and having tasted the good word of God and the powers of the *olam ha-ba*, † and then having fallen away—to renew again to repentance, since they are again crucifying *Ben-Elohim* for themselves and publicly disgracing Him. † For the earth—having soaked up the rain frequently falling on it—brings forth vegetation †† useful to those for whom it is farmed; and it shares in God’s blessing. † But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is

† cf. Exod. 28:1. †† cf. Lev. 9:7; 16:6. † cf. Num. 16:40; 18:7; 2 Chron. 26:18. †† Ps. 2:7. †† Ps. 110:4(109:4 LXX). ††† Lit. in the days of His flesh ††† Ps. 110:4(109:4 LXX). § cf. Isa. 7:15. †† cf. Deut. 11:11-15; Gen. 13:10.

worthless and near to being cursed—its end is to be burned over. ††

‡ But even though we speak like this, loved ones, concerning you we are convinced of better things †—things coming with salvation. † For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love that you showed for His name, in having served and continuing to serve the *kedoshim*. † But we long for each of you to show the same eagerness for the certainty of hope to the very end— † so you will not be sluggish, †† but imitators of those inheriting the promises through trust and perseverance.

The Promise and the Oath

‡ Now when God made His promise to Abraham—since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, † saying, “Surely I will bless you, and surely I will multiply you.” †† And so after waiting patiently, Abraham reached the promise. ††† For people swear by someone greater; and the oath, as confirmation, is an end to all their disputing. † In the same way God, determining to point out more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchanging nature of His purpose, guaranteed it with an oath. † So by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, †† we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. † We have this hope as an anchor of the soul, both firm and steady—a hope that enters the inner place behind the curtain. ††† *Yeshua* has entered there as a forerunner on our behalf, having become *Kohen Gadol* “forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.” †††

Melchizedek, a *Kohen* Forever

7 For this Melchizedek was king of Salem, *kohen* of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, †† and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth of everything. First, by the translation of his name, he is “king of Righteousness” †; and then also king of Salem, which is “king of *Shalom*.” † Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life but made like *Ben-Elohim*, he remains a *kohen* for all time.

‡ Now see how great this man is! Even Abraham the patriarch gave him a tenth out of the plunder. † Indeed, those sons of Levi who receive the priesthood have, according to *Torah*, a command to collect a tithe from the people †—that is, from their kin, although they have come out of the loins of Abraham. † But this one—who did not have their genealogy—has collected

††† cf. Deut. 11:16-17, 26-28; Gen. 19:24-26; Deut. 28:15-68; 30:7. †† Deut. 30:1-6. ††† cf. Heb. 2:1; 4:1-2; 5:11. †† Gen. 22:17. †† cf. Gen. 21:5. ††† cf. Num. 23:19. ††† Hebrew *parokhet* ††† Ps. 110:4(109:4 LXX); Heb. 5:6, 10, 18. See Gen. 14:17-20. †† Hebrew *Malki-Tzedek* †† cf. Num. 18:21-32.

tithes from Abraham and has blessed him, the one holding the promises. ⁷ Now it is beyond dispute that the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸ In one case, dying men receive tithes; but in the other, one about whom it is testified that he lives on. ⁹ Through Abraham even Levi, the one receiving tithes, has paid the tithe, so to speak— ¹⁰ for he was still in his father's loins when Melchizedek met him.

Yeshua , Our Kohen Gadol Forever

¹¹ Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for based on it the people had been given the *Torah* †), what further need was there for a different *kohen* to arise—designated according to the order of Melchizedek, not according to the order of Aaron?

¹² For whenever the priesthood is altered, out of necessity an alteration †† of law also takes place. ¹³ For the one about whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is clear that our Lord has sprung forth ‡ from Judah—concerning this tribe, Moses said nothing about *kohanim* . ¹⁵ And it is even more evident, if another *kohen* arises like Melchizedek— ¹⁶ one made not by virtue of a *Torah* requirement of physical descent, †† but by virtue of the power of an indestructible life.

¹⁷ For it is testified,

“You are a *kohen* forever,

according to the order of Melchizedek.” ††

¹⁸ For on the one hand, a former requirement is set aside because of its weakness and ineffectiveness—

¹⁹ for *Torah* made nothing perfect. But on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

²⁰ Moreover, it was not without a sworn oath. (Others indeed have become *kohanim* without a sworn oath, ²¹ but He with an oath—sworn by the One who said to Him, “ *ADONAI* has sworn and will not change His mind, ‘You are a *kohen* forever.’” †††) ²² How much more then has *Yeshua* become the guarantee of a better covenant.

²³ Now on the one hand, many have become *kohanim* , who through death are prevented from continuing in office. †††²⁴ But on the other hand, the One who does remain forever has a permanent priesthood.

²⁵ Therefore, He is also able to save completely those who draw near to God through Him, always living to make intercession for them.

²⁶ For such a *Kohen Gadol* was fitting for us: holy, guiltless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need to offer up sacrifices day by day like those other *kohanim g'dolim* —first for their own sins and then for the sins of the people. [§] For when He offered up Himself, He did this

once for all. ²⁸ For the *Torah* appoints as *kohanim g'dolim* men who have weakness; but the word of the oath, ^{§†} which came after the *Torah* , appoints a Son—made perfect forever.

Yeshua , Mediator of a Better Covenant

8 Now here is the main point being said. We do have such a *Kohen Gadol* , who has taken His seat at the right hand ^{§††} of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. ² He is a priestly attendant of the Holies and the true Tent—which *ADONAI* set up, not man. ³ For every *kohen gadol* is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, so it is necessary for this One also to have something to offer. ^{§†4} Now if He were on earth, He would not be a *kohen* at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the *Torah* . ⁵ They offer service in a replica ^{§††} and foreshadower of the heavens—one that is just as Moses was instructed by God when he was about to complete the tabernacle. For He says, “See that you make everything according to the design that was shown to you on the mountain.” ^{§†6} But now *Yeshua* has obtained a more excellent ministry, insofar as He is the mediator of a better covenant which has been enacted on better promises.

⁷ For if that first one had been faultless, there would not have been discourse seeking a second. ⁸ For finding fault with them, He says, “Behold, days are coming,”

says *ADONAI* ,

“when I will inaugurate a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

⁹ It will not be like the covenant

I made with their fathers

on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt.

For they did not remain in My covenant, and I did not care for them,” says *ADONAI* .

¹⁰ “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” says *ADONAI* .

“I will put My *Torah* into their mind, and upon their hearts I will write it.

And I will be their God,

and they shall be My people. ^{§†}

¹¹ And no more will they teach,

each one his fellow citizen

and each one his brother, saying,

‘Know *ADONAI* ,’

because all will know Me,

from the least of them to the greatest.

¹² For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and their sins I will remember no more.” ^{§§†}

† cf. Exod. 19:5-6; 20ff. †† Lit. transposition metathesis
‡ cf. Isa. 11:1. †† cf. Exod. 30:30; 32:25-29;
Num. 3:9-12. †† Ps. 110:4(109:4 LXX). ††† Ps. 110:4(109:4 LXX).
††† cf. Exod. 40:15; Num. 25:13; Dan. 6:27(26). § cf. Lev. 6:9-13;
16:11, 15.

§† cf. Ps. 110:4(109:4 LXX). §†† cf. Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX). §†
cf. Exod. 23:15; 34:20. §†† cf. Exod. 25:9; 26:30; 27:8; Num. 8:4.
§† Exod. 25:40. §† cf. Jer. 7:22-23. §§† Jer. 31:30-33(31-34);
38:31-34(LXX).

¹³ In saying “new,” He has treated the first as old; but what is being made old and aging is close to vanishing.

Messiah Enters the Heavenly Holies

9 Now even the first one had regulations for worship and the earthly sanctuary. ¹² For a tent was prepared: in the outer ^{††} part were the *menorah*, the table, and the presentation of the bread [‡]—this is called the Holy Place. ³ Beyond the second curtain [‡] was a dwelling called the Holy of Holies. ^{‡‡} It held a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant, completely covered with gold. In the ark was a golden jar holding the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant ^{‡‡}— ⁵ and above it, cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. ^{‡‡‡} But it is not now possible to speak in detail about these things.

⁶ Now with these things prepared this way, the kohanim do continually enter into the outer tent [§] while completing the services; ⁷ but into the inner, ^{§†} once a year, the *kohen gadol* alone ^{§††}— and not without blood which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins ^{§†} of the people. ⁸ By this the *Ruach ha-Kodesh* makes clear that the way into the Holies has not yet been revealed while the first tent is still standing. ⁹ It is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly, gifts and sacrifices are being offered that cannot make the worshiper perfect with respect to conscience. ¹⁰ These relate only to food and drink and various washings ^{§††}—regulations for the body imposed until a time of setting things straight.

¹¹ But when Messiah appeared as *Kohen Gadol* of the good things that have now come, passing through the greater and more perfect Tent not made with hands (that is to say not of this creation), ¹² He entered into the Holies once for all—not by the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls ^{§†} and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled ^{§†} sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Messiah—who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God—cleanse our ^{§§†} conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, ^{§§†} in order that those called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—since a death has taken

† cf. Exod. 25:8, 23-29. †† Lit. first ‡ cf. Lev. 24:5-9. ††† cf. 10:20. Hebrew parokhet ‡‡ cf. Exod. 26:31-33; 40:3. ‡‡† cf. Exod. 25:10-16; 1 Kings 8:7. ‡‡‡ cf. Exod. 25:18-19. § Lit. first tent §† Lit. second §†† cf. Exod. 30:10; Lev. 16:15, 34. §‡ cf. Num. 15:22, 30. §†† cf. Lev. 11; Num. 6:3; 19:13. §† cf. Lev. 16:14-15. §‡ cf. Num. 19:9, 17-18. §§† Some mss. read your §§‡ Hebrew brit hadashah

place that redeems them from violations under the first covenant. ¹⁶ For where there is a covenant, the death of the one who made it must be established. ^{§§§17} For a covenant is secured upon the basis of dead bodies, since it has no strength as long as the one who made it lives. ¹⁸ That is why not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the *Torah*, he took the blood of the calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and he sprinkled both the book itself and all the people. ²⁰ He said, “This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.” ¹⁸²¹ And in the same way, he sprinkled the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. ¹⁹²² And nearly everything is purified in blood according to the *Torah*, and apart from the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. ²⁰

²³ Therefore, it was necessary for the replicas of these heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices—but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴ For Messiah did not enter into Holies made with hands—counterparts of the true things—but into heaven itself, now to appear in God’s presence on our behalf. ²⁵ And He did not offer Himself again and again—as the *kohen gadol* enters into the Holy of Holies year after year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ For then He would have needed to suffer again and again from the foundation of the world. But as it is, He has been revealed once and for all at the close of the ages—to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this judgment, ²¹²⁸ so also Messiah, was offered once to bear the sins of many. ²² He will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those eagerly awaiting Him for salvation. ²³

Perfect Pardon in the New Covenant

10 The *Torah* has a shadow of the good things to come—not the form itself of the realities. For this reason it can never, by means of the same sacrifices they offer constantly year after year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers—cleansed once and for all—would no longer have consciousness of sins? ³ But in these sacrifices is a reminder of sins year after year— ⁴ for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

⁵ So when Messiah comes into the world, He says, “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You prepared for Me.

⁶ In whole burnt offerings and sin offerings You did not delight.

§§§ cf. Exod. 24:8(LXX); Ps. 50:5(49:5 LXX); Luke 22:29. 18 Exod. 24:8. 19 cf. Exod. 29:12; Lev.8:15. 20 Lit. pardon, cancellation, removal 21 cf. Gen. 3:19; Dan. 12:2. 22 cf. Isa. 53:12. 23 cf. Matt. 1:21; Rom. 11:26-27.

⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I come to do Your will, O God (in the scroll of the book it is written of Me).'[†]

⁸ After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sin offerings You did not desire, nor did You delight in them" (those which are offered according to *Torah*), ⁹ then He said, "Behold, I come to do Your will." He takes away the first to establish the second. ¹⁰ By His will we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Messiah *Yeshua* once for all.

¹¹ Indeed, every *kohen* stands day by day serving and offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. ^{††12} But on the other hand, when this One offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God—¹³ waiting from then on, until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. ^{†14} For by one offering He has perfected forever those being made holy. ¹⁵ The *Ruach ha-Kodesh* also testifies to us—for after saying,

¹⁶ "This is the covenant that I will cut with them:

'After those days,' says *ADONAI*,

'I will put My *Torah* upon their hearts,

and upon their minds I will write it,'" ^{††} then He says,

¹⁷ "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." ^{††}

¹⁸ Now where there is removal of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Let Us Pray Boldly in God's Presence

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have boldness to enter into the Holies by the blood of *Yeshua*. ²⁰ He inaugurated a new and living way for us through the curtain—that is, His flesh. ²¹ We also have a *Kohen Gadol* over God's household.

²² So let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and body washed with pure water.

²³ Let us hold fast the unwavering confession of hope, for He who promised is faithful.

²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds.

²⁵ And do not neglect our own meetings, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another—and all the more so as you see the Day ^{†††} approaching.

²⁶ For if we keep on sinning willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but only a terrifying expectation of judgment and a fury of fire about to devour the enemies of God. ^{†††28} Anyone who rejected the *Torah* of Moses dies without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses. ^{§29} How much more severe do you think the punishment will be for the one who

[†] *Ps. 40:7-9(6-8); Ps. 39:6-8(LXX); cf. Gen. 22:16-18. †† cf. Mic. 6:6-8. ‡ cf. Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX). †† Lit. I will put My laws upon their hearts, and upon their mind I will write them*

^{†††} *Jer. 31:33(34)(38:34LXX). ††† cf. 1 Cor. 3:13; 1 Thes. 5:4; 2 Pet. 3:18. ††† cf. Zeph. 1:18; Isa. 26:11(LXX). § cf. Deut. 17:6; 19:15.*

has trampled *Ben-Elohim* underfoot, and has regarded as unholy the blood of the covenant by which he was made holy, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know the One who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay," and again, " *ADONAI* will judge His people." ^{§†31} It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Suffering Perfects *Yeshua*'s Followers

³² But remember the former days when, after you were enlightened, you endured a great struggle with sufferings. ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to abuses and afflictions, and other times you became partners with those who were treated this way. ³⁴ For you suffered along with the prisoners and joyfully accepted the plundering of your possessions, knowing that you have for yourselves a better and lasting possession. ³⁵ Therefore, do not lose your boldness, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you need perseverance so that, after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise. ³⁷ For yet,

"in a very little while, ^{§††}

the Coming One will come,

and He will not delay. ^{§‡}

³⁸ But My righteous one shall live by *emunah*;

and if he shrinks back,

My soul takes no pleasure in him." ^{§††}

³⁹ But we are not among the timid ones on the path to destruction, but among the faithful ones on the path to the preservation of the soul.

The Faithful See from Afar

11 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of realities not seen. ² For by it the elders received commendation. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the Word of God, so that what is seen did not come from anything visible.

⁴ By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain. Through faith he was commended as righteous ^{§†} when God approved of his gifts. And through faith he still speaks, although he is dead.

⁵ By faith Enoch was taken so as not to see death, and he was not found because God took him. ^{§†} For before he was taken, he was commended as pleasing to God. ⁶ Now without faith it is impossible to please God. For the one who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

⁷ By faith Noah, when warned about events not yet seen, in holy fear prepared an ark for the safety of his household. Through faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

^{§†} *Deut. 32:35a, 36a. §†† Isa. 26:20(LXX). §‡ Hab. 2:3(LXX). §†† Hab. 2:4(LXX). §† cf. Matt. 23:35. §‡ cf. Gen. 5:24(5:24 LXX); Greek metathesis transposition, a change in location*

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place he was to receive as an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he migrated to the land of promise as if it were foreign, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob—fellow heirs of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was waiting for the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹ By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive [†] when she was barren and past the age, since she considered the One who had made the promise to be faithful. ¹² So from one—and him as good as dead—were fathered offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and as uncountable as the sand on the seashore. ^{††}

¹³ These all died in faith without receiving the things promised—but they saw them and welcomed them from afar, and they confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth. ^{†††} ¹⁴ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If indeed they had been thinking about where they had come from, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they yearn for a better land—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 Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. Yes, he who had received the promises was offering up his one and only son— ¹⁸ the one about whom it was said, “Through Isaac offspring shall be named for you.” ^{††††} ¹⁹ He reasoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead—and in a sense, he did receive him back from there.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even concerning things to come. ²¹ By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and he bowed in worship while leaning on the top of his staff. ²² By faith Joseph, when his end was near, made mention of the exodus of *Bnei-Yisrael* and gave instructions about his bones.

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was an extraordinary child and they were not afraid of the king’s decree. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. ²⁵ Instead, he chose to suffer mistreatment along with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered the disgrace of Mes-siah [‡] as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt—because he was looking ahead to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger—for he persevered as if seeing the One who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the smearing of the blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch them. ²⁹ By faith they passed

through the Red Sea as if on dry ground. When the Egyptians tried it, they were swallowed up.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were circled for seven days. ³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she welcomed the spies with *shalom*.

³² And what more shall I say? For time would fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets. ³³ By faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, and made foreign armies flee.

³⁵ Women received their dead raised back to life; and others were tortured, after not accepting release, so they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others experienced the trial of mocking and scourging—yes, and even chains and prison.

³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawed in two, they were murdered with the sword. They went around in sheepskins and goatskins; they were destitute, afflicted, mistreated. ³⁸ The world was not worthy of them! They wandered around in deserts and mountains, caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹ And all these, though commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised— ⁴⁰ because God had provided something better for us, so that only with us would they reach perfection.

Running the Race with Discipline

12 Therefore, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also get rid of every weight and entangling sin. Let us run with endurance the race set before us, ² focusing on *Yeshua*, the initiator and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame; and He has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of God. ^{†††} Consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary in your souls and lose heart.

⁴ In struggling against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of bloodshed. ⁵ Have you forgotten the warning addressed to you as sons?

“My son, do not take lightly the discipline of *ADONAI* or lose heart when you are corrected by Him, ⁶ because *ADONAI* disciplines the one He loves and punishes every son He accepts.” ^{†††}

⁷ It is for discipline that you endure. God is treating you as sons—for what son does a father not discipline? ⁸ But if you are without discipline—something all have come to share—then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Besides, we are used to having human fathers as instructors—and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ Indeed, for a short time they disciplined us as seemed best to them; but He does so for our benefit,

[†] cf. Gen. 18:11-14; 21:2. Some mss. add and she bore a child

^{††} cf. Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 32:12. [‡] cf. Gen. 23:4; 47:9. ^{†††} Gen. 21:12(LXX). ^{††††} cf. Ps. 89:50-51.

^{†††} cf. Ps. 110:1(109:1 LXX). ^{††††} Prov. 3:11-12.

so that we may share in His holiness. ¹¹ Now all discipline seems painful at the moment—not joyful. But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble! ¹³ And make straight paths for your feet, ^{††} so that what is lame will not be pulled out of joint but rather be healed. ¹⁴ Pursue *shalom* with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God; and see to it that no bitter root springs up and causes trouble, and by it many be defiled. ¹⁶ Also see to it that there is no immoral or godless person—like Esau, who sold his birthright for one meal. ¹⁷ For you know that later, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected. He found no chance for repentance, though he begged for it with tears. ^{††}

Entering the Unshakable Kingdom

¹⁸ For you have not come to a mountain ^{††} that can be touched, and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and storm, ¹⁹ and to the blast of a *shofar* ^{†††} and a voice whose words made those who heard it beg that not another word be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not bear what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” ^{†††21} So terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am quaking with fear.” [§]

²² But you have come to Mount Zion—to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, ^{§†} and to myriads of angels, a joyous gathering, ²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn ^{§††} who are written in a scroll in heaven, ^{§†} and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous ones made perfect, ²⁴ and to *Yeshua*, the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks of something better than the blood of Abel.

²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse the One who is speaking! For if they did not escape when they refused the One who was warning them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject the One who warns us from heaven. ²⁶ His voice shook the earth then, ^{§††} but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens.” ^{§†27} Now this phrase, “Yet once more,” shows the removal of those things that are shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. ^{§†28} Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude—through this we may offer worship in a manner pleasing to God, with reverence and awe. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

† cf. Isa. 35:3; Job 4:3-4. †† cf. Prov. 4:26. ‡ cf. Gen. 25:33-34. †† cf. Gen. 27:34-38. †† Lit. something

††† Greek *salpigx* *shofar*

††† Exod. 19:12-13. § Deut. 9:19.

§† cf. Deut. 12:11. §†† cf. Exod. 4:22. §‡ cf. Luke 10:20. §†† cf. Exod. 19:18. §† Hag. 2:6. §‡ cf. Isa. 34:4; 54:10; 65:17.

Brotherly Love in the Community

13 Let brotherly love continue. ² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers—for in doing so, some have entertained angels without knowing it. ³ Remember the prisoners as if you were fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you also were suffering bodily. ⁴ Let marriage be held in honor among all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers. ⁵ Keep your lifestyle free from the love of money, and be content with what you have. For God Himself has said, “I will never leave you or forsake you,” ^{§§†6} so that with confidence we say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What will man do to me?” ^{§§†}

⁷ Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸ *Yeshua* the Messiah is the same yesterday, today, and forever. ⁹ Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace—not by foods that have not benefited those occupied by them. ¹⁰ We have an altar from which those serving in the tabernacle have no right to eat. ¹¹ For the bodies of those animals—whose blood is brought into the Holies by the *kohen gadol* as an offering for sin—are burned outside the camp. ^{§§§12} Therefore, to make the people holy through His own blood, *Yeshua* also suffered outside the gate. ¹³ So let us go to Him outside the camp, bearing His disgrace. ¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come. ¹⁵ Through *Yeshua* then, let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips giving thanks to His name. ¹⁶ Do not neglect doing good and sharing, ¹⁸ for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as ones who must give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no benefit to you.

¹⁸ Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a clear conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things. ¹⁹ I especially urge you to do this, so that I may be restored to you sooner.

Closing Blessing

²⁰ Now may the God of *shalom*, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep by the blood of an everlasting covenant, ¹⁹ our Lord *Yeshua*, ²¹ make you complete in every good thing to do His will, accomplishing in us what is pleasing in His sight, through Messiah *Yeshua*. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

§§† cf. Deut. 31:6, 8. §§‡ Ps. 118:6 (117:6 LXX). §§§ cf. Lev. 16:27 (LXX). 18 Hebrew *gemilut chasadim koinonia* 19 cf. Zech. 9:11 (LXX); Isa. 63:11-14 (LXX); Jer. 32:40(39:40 LXX).

Final Greetings

²² But I urge you, brothers and sisters, listen patiently to this word of exhortation, for in fact I have written to you in few words. ²³ Know that our brother Timothy

has been released. If he comes soon, I will visit you with him.

²⁴ Greet all your leaders and all the *kedoshim*—those from Italy greet you.

²⁵ Grace be with you all.

Jacob

Introduction

This book often goes by the name “James.” The Greek name of the book, however, is not “Demetrios” which translates as “James,” but “Iacobos” which translates as “Jacob” or “Ya’akov” in Hebrew. Some say the book was renamed to honor King James for funding in 1611 the English translation widely known as the “Authorized Version.”

There are several people named “Jacob” in the New Covenant, but the likely author of this letter is Jacob the brother of , who probably wrote this letter in the 40s C.E.—about the same time his community hosted the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). He wrote to Jewish believers in , as we gather from the address to the “twelve tribes in the Diaspora” (1:1), and the mention of the synagogue (2:2). These may even have been the believers mentioned in Acts 11:19 who were scattered at the time of persecution following Stephen’s martyrdom. Jacob focuses on ethics—how to live out the life of faith. This resonates with the emphasis of many modern Jews for whom ethics is often at the front of the agenda. The difference is that Jacob says that our life flows from our faith in (2:1). He speaks to such issues as dealing with suffering; handling temptation; treating people fairly rather than playing favorites; showing the reality of one’s faith through deeds; and using one’s tongue properly (avoiding what modern Judaism calls , hurtful speech or gossip).

Jacob does not just “lecture” his readers on these things. Reminiscent of the way the book of Proverbs teaches, Jacob uses vivid images. “The one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind” (1:6). Our tongues are like wild animals that cannot be tamed, like springs of water that have both fresh and salt water (which is never found in nature), like the tiny rudder that can steer a huge ship, like a miniscule spark that manages to burn up an entire forest.

Some wonder if there is a conflict between Jacob and Paul: Paul teaches that we are set right before God, justified by our faith, while Jacob says that this happens from our works (2:24). Actually, Paul and Jacob complement each other. God declares us to be righteous because of our faith, while our faith witnesses to others through our deeds. A true faith will show itself in how we live—Paul and Jacob would both be quick to agree to that. We say we have faith in ; now, let’s live like it!

A Look Inside Jacob

Greetings

Rejoice in Trials

Quick to Listen, Slow to Anger

Honor the Poor Person

Show Faith with Works

Dangerous Tongue

Gentle Wisdom from Above

Resist Pride and Evil

If the Lord Wills, We Will

Rotten Riches

Be Patient for His Coming

Praying for the Sick

Greetings

1 Jacob, a slave of God and of the Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah,
To the twelve tribes in the Diaspora:
Shalom!

Rejoice in Trials

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, [†] when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and

complete, lacking in nothing. ⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, [†] who gives to all without hesitation and without reproach; and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, without any doubting—for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord— ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ But let the brother in humble circumstances boast in his high position— ¹⁰ and the rich person in his humble position, because like the flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun arises with a scorching heat and withers the grass, and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed. ^{††} So also the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will wither away.

¹² Happy is the one who endures testing, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to those who love Him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”—for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is full grown, it brings forth death. ^{‡16} Do not be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸ By His will, He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created. [‡]

Quick to Listen, Slow to Anger

¹⁹ Know this, my dear brothers and sisters: let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger [‡]— ²⁰ for human anger doesn't produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ So put away all moral filth and excess of evil and receive with humility the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror— ²⁴ for once he looks at himself and goes away, he immediately forgets what sort of person he was. ²⁵ But the one who looks intently into the perfect *Torah*, the *Torah* that gives freedom, and continues in it, not becoming a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts—he shall be blessed in what he does.

²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and yet does not bridle his tongue ^{‡‡} but deceives his heart, this per-

son's religion is futile. ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, ^{‡‡‡} and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Honor the Poor Person

2 My brothers and sisters, do not hold the faith of our glorious Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah while showing favoritism. ^{§2} For if a man with a gold ring and fine clothes comes into your synagogue, and a poor person in filthy clothes also comes in; ³ and you pay special attention to the one wearing the fine clothing and you say, “Sit here in a good place”; and you say to the poor person, “Stand there,” or “Sit by my footstool”; ⁴ haven't you made distinctions between yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵ Listen, my dear brothers and sisters. Didn't God choose the poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom that He promised to those who love Him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor person. Isn't it the rich who oppress you and drag you into court? ⁷ Don't they blaspheme the good name by which you were called? ⁸ If, however, you fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well. ⁹ But if you show favoritism, you are committing sin and are convicted by the *Torah* as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole *Torah* but stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. ¹¹ For the one who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not commit murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the *Torah*. ^{§†12} So speak and act as those who will be judged according to a *Torah* that gives freedom. ¹³ For judgment is merciless to the one who does not show mercy. ^{§††} Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Show Faith with Works

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith, but does not have works? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in *shalom*, keep warm and well fed,” but you do not give them what the body needs, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself.

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith without works and I will show you faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe—and shudder! ²⁰ But do you want to know, you empty person, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Wasn't Abraham our father proved righteous by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith worked together with his works, and by the works his

† Or brethren adelphoi brothers

† cf. 1 Kings 3:9-12; Prov. 2:3-6. †† cf. Isa. 40:7-8. ‡ cf. Ps. 7:14; Isa. 59:4. ‡† cf. Jer. 2:3. ‡‡ cf. Prov. 10:19; 17:27; 16:32; Eccl. 7:9. ‡‡† cf. Ps. 39:1; 141:3.

‡‡‡ cf. Deut. 14:29; Job 31:16-17; Ps. 146:9; Isa. 1:17, 23. § cf. Lev. 19:15; Job 34:19. §† Exod. 20:13-14; Deut. 5:17-18. §†† cf. Prov. 21:13.

faith was made complete. ²³ The Scripture was fulfilled that says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness” [†]—and he was called God’s friend. ^{††24} You see that a man is proved righteous by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ And likewise, wasn’t Rahab the prostitute also proved righteous by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out another way? ^{‡26} For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Dangerous Tongue

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, since you know that we will receive a stricter judgment. ² For we all stumble in many ways. If someone does not stumble in speech, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. ³ And if we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole body as well. ⁴ See also the ships—though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small member—yet it boasts of great things. [‡] See how so small a fire sets ablaze so great a forest! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire. [‡] The tongue is a world of evil placed among our body parts. It pollutes the whole body and sets on fire the course of life—and is set on fire by Gehenna.

⁷ For every species of beasts and birds, reptiles and sea creatures, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸ But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ^{‡‡9} With it we bless our *ADONAI* and Father, and with it we curse people, who are made in the image of God. ^{‡‡10} From the same mouth comes blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, these things should not be. ¹¹ A spring doesn’t pour out fresh and bitter water from the same opening, does it? ¹² My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Neither can salt water produce fresh water.

Gentle Wisdom from above

¹³ Who among you is wise and understanding? By his good conduct let him show his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, not hypocritical. ¹⁸ And the fruit of righteousness is sown in *shalom* by those who make *shalom*. [§]

[†] Gen. 15:6; cf. Gal. 3:6. ^{††} cf. Isa. 41:8. [‡] cf. Josh. 2:4ff. ^{‡†} cf. Ps. 12:3-4; Prov. 26:20-21. ^{‡‡} cf. Prov. 16:27. ^{‡‡†} cf. Ps. 140:3. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Gen. 1:26. [§] cf. Hos. 10:12.

Resist Pride and Evil

4 Where do quarrels and conflicts among you come from? Don’t they come from this, namely your passions that battle within your body parts? ² You crave and have not. You murder and you envy, yet you cannot get it. You fight and you wage war. You do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives so you may spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulteresses! ^{§†} Don’t you know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that in vain the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit which He made to dwell in us”? ⁶ But He gives greater grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” ^{§††}

⁷ Therefore submit to God. But resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded! ^{§†9} Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of *ADONAI*, and He shall lift you up. ^{§††11} Do not speak evil against one another, brethren. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the *Torah* and judges the *Torah*. But if you judge the *Torah*, you are not a doer of the *Torah*, but a judge. ¹² There is only one lawgiver and judge ^{§†}—the One who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you who judges your neighbor?

If the Lord Wills, We Will

¹³ Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. What is your life? For you are a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ^{§†15} Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” ¹⁶ But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, whoever knows the right thing to do and does not do it—for him it is sin.

Rotten Riches

5 Come now, you rich, weep and wail over the miseries that are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and your silver have rusted and their rust will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up treasure in the last days. ⁴ Behold, the wages of the workers who mowed your fields—which you kept back by fraud—are crying

^{§†} cf. Ezek. 16:32. ^{§††} Ps. 138:6; Prov. 3:34. ^{§‡} cf. Isa. 1:16; Ps. 24:3-4; Ps. 119:113. ^{§††} cf. Job 5:11; Ezek. 21:26. ^{§†} cf. Isa. 33:22. ^{§‡} cf. Prov. 27:1; Job 7:7; Ps. 39:5; 144:4.

out against you. And the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts. ^{†5} You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts for a day of slaughter. ^{††6} You have condemned, you have murdered the righteous person [‡]—he does not resist you.

Be Patient for His Coming

⁷ So be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient for it until it receives the early and late rain. ^{††8} You also be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be judged. Behold, the judge is standing at the doors. ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

¹¹ Behold, we consider blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, [‡] and you have seen the outcome of *ADONAI*—that *ADONAI* is full of compassion and mercy. ^{‡‡}

¹² But above all, my dear brothers and sisters, do not swear—either by heaven, or by the earth, or by any

† *Isa. 5:9 (LXX); cf. Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15; Jer. 22:13.* †† *cf. Amos 6:1; Jer. 12:3; 25:34.* ‡ *Or the righteous One* †† *cf. Deut. 11:14; Jer. 5:24; Hos. 6:3; Joel 2:23.* ‡‡ *cf. Job 1:21-22.* ‡‡† *cf. Exod. 34:6; Ps. 103:8.*

other oath. But let your “yes” be “yes,” and your “no” be “no”—so that you may not fall under judgment.

Praying for the Sick

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. ^{‡‡} Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of Messiah’s community, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ So confess your offenses to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous person is very powerful. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain. And it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. ^{§18} He prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

¹⁹ My brothers and sisters, if any among you strays from the truth and someone turns him back, ²⁰ let him know that the one who turns a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. ^{§†}

‡‡‡ *cf. Ps. 50:15. § cf. 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1* §† *cf. Prov. 10:12.*

1 Peter

Introduction

Peter, one of 's original twelve disciples, wrote this letter around 62-63 C.E. from Rome, to believers living in what today is Turkey. Eusebius, a historian from the fourth century, believed that the letter addressed an audience of Jewish people living in exile. Jewish people in the Diaspora would relate to being addressed as strangers and sojourners (1:1; 2:11). When Peter, writing from Rome, says that "Babylon" sends greetings (5:13), this covert reference to Rome would seem normal to Jewish people living in scattered communities. Peter was known as the emissary to the Jewish people, but perhaps that was not his only audience. In 2:12, exactly who should keep their conduct honorable among the Gentiles? Jewish readers in Diaspora who have contact with non-Jewish people? Gentile believers within the communities? Much of Peter's letter does seem to address Gentiles who have joined the believing community, with talk about the futile way of life (1:18) and advice to stop past pagan lifestyles (1:14; 4:3-5).

Peter includes Gentiles in the people of God by applying to them the language of the . His readers in 1:4 have an inheritance; in 1:15 they are called as to be holy; in 2:9 they are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; in 4:17 they are the family of God. This is not the church Israel; it is the of Israel to now include Gentiles according to God's plan. It is the same idea we find in Paul's letter to the Ephesians (2:12-13). At the time Peter wrote, these believers were experiencing persecution—if not officially, then certainly in their daily interactions with the pagan world around them. What hope it must have brought them to be included in the promises of God! Peter over and over emphasizes that these promises have come to them through what has done for them. He has brought blessings through His death (1:19) and resurrection (1:3), and His return will be a time of hope fulfilled (1:7). In fact, 's example in the face of His own sufferings encourages us to do the same. Today's readers can first of all rejoice that God has chosen to expand His kingdom to include non-Jews among His people. Secondly, all believers can take hold of that same "living hope" (1:3) in the face of whatever opposition they encounter.

A Look Inside 1 Peter

Greetings

A Message of Living Hope

A Call to Be Holy

Living Stones

Respect and Order

Suffering for Doing Good

How to Live in the Last Days

Shepherds Lead by Example

Final Greetings

Greetings

1 Peter, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* ,
To the sojourners of the Diaspora in Pontus,
Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia—chosen ² ac-
cording to the foreknowledge of God the Father, set
apart by the *Ruach* for obedience and for sprinkling
with the blood [†] of *Yeshua* the Messiah:

May grace and *shalom* be multiplied to you.

[†] *cf. Exod. 24:3-8.*

A Message of Living Hope

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord *Yeshua*
the Messiah! In His great mercy He caused us to be
born again to a living hope through the resurrection
of Messiah *Yeshua* from the dead. ⁴ An incorruptible,
undefiled, and unfading inheritance has been re-
served in heaven for you. ⁵ By trusting, you are being
protected by God's power for a salvation ready to be
revealed in the last time. ⁶ You rejoice in this greatly,
even though now for a little while, if necessary, you

have been distressed by various trials. ⁷ These trials are so that the true metal [†] of your faith (far more valuable than gold, which perishes though refined by fire) may come to light in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Messiah *Yeshua*. ⁸ Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. And even though you don't see Him now, you trust Him and are filled with a joy that is glorious beyond words, ⁹ receiving the outcome of your faith—the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ The prophets, who spoke about the grace that was to be yours, searched for this salvation and investigated carefully. ¹¹ They were trying to find out the time and circumstances the *Ruach* of Messiah within them was indicating, when predicting the sufferings in store for Messiah ^{††} and the glories to follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were providing these messages not to themselves but to you. These messages have now been announced to you through those who proclaimed the Good News to you by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*, sent from heaven. Even angels long to catch a glimpse of these things.

A Call to Be Holy

¹³ So brace your minds for action. Keep your balance. And set your hope completely on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of *Yeshua* the Messiah. ¹⁴ Like obedient children, do not be shaped by the cravings you had formerly in your ignorance. ¹⁵ Instead, just like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in everything you do. ¹⁶ For it is written,

“*Kedoshim* you shall be, for I am *kadosh*.” [‡]

¹⁷ If you call on Him as Father—the One who judges impartially according to each one's deeds—then live out the time of sojourning in reverent fear.

¹⁸ You know that you were redeemed from the futile way of life handed down from your ancestors—not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with precious blood like that of a lamb without defect or spot, the blood of Messiah. ²⁰ He was chosen before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. ²¹ Through Him you are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your trust and hope are in God.

²² Now that you have purified your souls in obedience to the truth, ^{‡†} leading to sincere brotherly love, love one another fervently from a pure heart. ²³ You have been born again—not from perishable seed but imperishable—through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For,

“All humanity is like grass,

And all its glory like a wildflower.

The grass withers, and the flower falls off,

²⁵ But the word of the Lord endures forever.” [‡]

[†] Lit. without alloy; mettle, genuineness, proof ^{††} cf. Luke 24:26-27. [‡] Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7. ^{††} Some mss. insert

And this is the word that was proclaimed as Good News to you.

Living Stones

² So get rid of all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all *lashon ha-ra*. ² As newborn babes, long for pure spiritual milk, ^{‡†} so that by it you may grow toward salvation— ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. ^{‡‡‡} As you come to Him, a living stone [§] rejected by men but chosen by God and precious, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house—a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Messiah *Yeshua*. ⁶ For it says in Scripture,

“Behold, I lay in Zion a stone,
a chosen, precious cornerstone.

Whoever trusts in Him
will never be put to shame.” ^{§†}

⁷ Now the value is for you who keep trusting; but for those who do not trust,

“The stone which the builders rejected—
this One has become the chief cornerstone,” ^{§††}
⁸ and

“a stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense.” ^{§‡}

They stumble because they are disobeying the word—to this they were also appointed. ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. ^{§††}

¹⁰ Once you were “not a people,”
but now you are “God's people.”

You were shown “no mercy,”

but now you have been shown “mercy.” ^{§†}

¹¹ Loved ones, I urge you as strangers and sojourners to keep away from the fleshly cravings that war against the soul. ¹² Keep your conduct honorable among the Gentiles. Then while they speak against you as evildoers, they may—from noticing your good deeds—glorify God in the day of visitation.

Respect and Order

¹³ For the Lord's sake, submit yourselves to every human authority—whether to a king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors sent by him for the punishment of those who do evil and the praise of those who do good.

¹⁵ For this is God's will, that you silence the ignorance of foolish men by doing good. ¹⁶ Live as free people, but not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil. Rather, live as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

through the Spirit ^{‡‡} cf. Isa. 40:6, 8; the word of our God
^{‡‡†} Or the pure milk of the word *logikos* ^{‡‡‡} cf.
Ps. 34:8(34:8 LXX). [§] cf. Ps. 118:22; Isa. 28:16. ^{§†} Isa. 28:16.
^{§††} Ps. 118:22. ^{§‡} Isa. 8:14. ^{§††} cf. Exod. 19:5-6; Isa. 42:6.
^{§†} Hos. 1:10; 2:23.

¹⁸ Slaves, with all respect submit yourselves to your masters—not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are harsh. ¹⁹ For this finds favor if, for the sake of conscience toward God, someone endures grief from suffering undeservedly. ²⁰ For what credit is there if, when you sin and get a beating, you endure? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this finds favor with God. ²¹ For you were called to this, because Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you might follow in His footsteps:

²² “He committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth.” †

²³ When He was abused, He did not return the abuse. †† While suffering, He made no threats. Instead, He kept entrusting Himself to the One who judges righteously. ²⁴ He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we, removed from sins, might live for righteousness. “By His wounds you were healed.” ‡

²⁵ For you like sheep were going astray, †† but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

3 Likewise, wives, be submitted to your own husbands so that—even if some do not obey the message—by the wives’ conduct, without a word they may be won over ² as they observe your pure, reverent conduct. †† Don’t let your beauty †† be external—braiding the hair and wearing gold jewelry or fine clothes. †† Instead, let it be in the hidden person of the heart, with the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious. ⁵ For this is the way the holy women, who put their hope in God, used to beautify themselves long ago—being submitted to their own husbands ⁶ just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. ⁵ You have become her daughters by doing what is good and not fearing intimidation. ⁷ In the same way, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Though they are weaker partners, honor them as equal heirs of the grace of life. In this way, your prayers will not be hindered.

Suffering for Doing Good

⁸ Finally, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, tenderhearted, humble-minded. ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or insult for insult, but give a blessing instead—it is for this reason you were called, so that you might inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For,

“The one who loves life,
wanting to see good days,
must keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit.

¹¹ He must turn away from evil and do good.

He must seek *shalom* and pursue it.

¹² For the eyes of *ADONAI* are on the righteous

and His ears open to their prayer,

but the face of *ADONAI* is against those who do evil.” ††

¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. Do not be afraid or worry about their threats. †† Instead sanctify Messiah as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, ¹⁶ yet with humility and reverence—keeping a clear conscience so that, whatever you are accused of, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Messiah may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good (if it is God’s will) than for doing evil.

¹⁸ For Messiah once suffered for sins also—the righteous for the unrighteous ††—in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the *Ruach*. ¹⁹ Through the *Ruach* He also went and preached to the spirits in prison. ²⁰ Long ago they disobeyed while God kept waiting patiently, in the days of Noah as the ark was being built. In that ark a few (that is, eight souls) were brought safely through water.

²¹ Corresponding to that, immersion now brings you to safety—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but a pledge to God of a good conscience—through the resurrection of Messiah *Yeshua*. ²² He has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels and authorities and powers subjected to Him.

How to Live in the Last Days

4 Therefore, since Messiah suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same attitude. For the one who has suffered in the flesh is finished with sin. ² As a result, he lives the rest of his time in the flesh no longer for human desires, but for God’s will. ³ For the time that has passed was sufficient for you to carry out the desire of the pagans—living in indecency, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, wild parties, and lawless idolatries. ⁴ They are surprised that you do not run with them into the same riot of recklessness, and they vilify you. ⁵ But they will have to give an account to the One who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this was the reason the Good News was proclaimed even to those now dead, so that though they are judged in the flesh before humans, they might live in the *Ruach* before God.

⁷ Now the end of all things is near. So be self-controlled and sober-minded for prayer. ⁸ Above all, keep your love for one another constant, for “love covers a multitude of sins.” †† Be hospitable one to another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of the many-sided grace of God. ¹¹ Whoever speaks, let it be as one speaking the utterances of God. Whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies. So in all things may God be glorified through Messiah

† *Isa. 53:9*. †† *cf. Isa. 53:7*. ‡ *Isa. 53:5*. †† *cf. Isa. 53:6*; *Ps. 119:176*. †† *cf. 1 Pet. 1:17*; *2:17-18*. ††† *Lit. adornment* ††† *cf. 1 Tim. 2:9*. § *cf. Gen. 18:12*(*LXX kurios ADONAI*)

†† *Ps. 34:12-16*. ††† *Isa. 8:12-13*. §† *cf. Isa. 53:11-12*. ††† *Prov. 10:12*.

Yeshua—all glory and power to Him forever and ever! Amen.

¹² Loved ones, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal taking place among you to test you—as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ Instead, rejoice insofar as you share in the sufferings of Messiah, so that at the revelation of His glory you may also rejoice and be glad. ¹⁴ If you are insulted for the name of Messiah, † you are fortunate, for the Spirit of glory †† and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ For let none of you suffer as a murderer or thief or evildoer or as a troublemaker. ¹⁶ But if anyone suffers for following Messiah, ‡ let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name. ¹⁷ For the time has come for judgment to begin with the house of God. †† If judgment begins with us first, what will be the end for those who disobey the Good News of God?

¹⁸ Now, “if it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what shall become of the ungodly and the sinner?” ††

¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God’s will—let them trust their souls to a faithful Creator while continuing to do good.

Shepherds Lead by Example

5 Therefore I appeal to the elders among you—as a fellow elder and witness of Messiah’s sufferings, and a partaker also of the glory about to be revealed—² shepherd God’s flock among you. Watch over it not under compulsion but willingly before God, not for dishonest gain but eagerly. ³ Don’t lord it over ††† those apportioned to you, but become examples to the

† *cf. Ps. 89:50-51.* †† *Many mss. insert here and of power*
 ‡ *Lit. as a Christian* *Christianos* *Messianic*
M’shichi †† *cf. Jer. 25:29; Ezek. 9:6; Amos*
3:2. †† *Prov. 11:31 (LXX).* ††† *cf. Ezek. 34:4.*

flock. ⁴ When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. ⁵ Likewise, you younger ones, submit yourselves to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for

“God opposes the proud,
 but gives grace to the humble.” †††

⁶ Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may lift you up at the appropriate time. ⁷ Cast all your worries on Him, ⁸ for He cares for you. ⁸ Stay alert! Watch out! Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, searching for someone to devour. ⁹ Stand up against him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being laid upon your brothers and sisters throughout the world. ¹⁰ After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace—who has called you into His eternal glory in Messiah—will Himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ All power to Him forever! †† Amen.

Final Greetings

¹² Through Silvanus, ††† whom I consider our faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! ¹³ Messiah’s community in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings. So does my son Mark. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Shalom to you all who are in Messiah.
 Amen.

††† *Prov. 3:34.* § *cf. Ps. 55:23(22).* †† *Some mss. read All glory and power to Him forever and ever* ††† *Or Silas*

2 Peter

Introduction

While 1 Peter focuses on believers who are undergoing persecution—an external problem—Peter’s second letter addresses an internal one, namely false teaching. This letter was written shortly before 65 C.E., not long before Peter was killed in Emperor Nero’s persecution of Roman believers. Probably he wrote to the same mostly Gentile believers as in 1 Peter.

Second Peter tells us two things about the false teachers. First, they denied the reality of’s return (3:3-4) in judgment. Second, and probably because of this doctrinal error, they led lives of immorality (2:10-20). After all, if is never coming back and if there is no final judgment, why not just live as we please?

2 Peter 2:19 describes these false teachers as promising freedom while really promoting a form of slavery. This remains relevant today when we consider that there are many people who seek personal freedom by pursuing such goals as wealth, pleasure, or fame apart from God. Without Him, though, it is all too easy to end up enslaved to our ambitions. Peter’s second letter reminds us that doctrine and behavior are interconnected. What we believe affects how we live, and how we live can affect what we believe—for sometimes people can change their beliefs to justify an improper lifestyle and, on the other hand, living according to Scripture can strengthen our faith.

Peter often encourages his readers to “remember” what he has taught them (1:12-15; 3:1, 5, 8)—a very Jewish concept. In Scripture, when God “remembers” his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 2:24), it means that He takes action to deliver His people. At the Passover, we remember what God has done for our people to encourage us to worship and live for Him. Peter’s call for his readers to “remember” certain things and “not forget” others is a call not just to bring certain things to mind, but to actively live a godly life in the hope of’s return. The return of the Lord is an encouragement to live a godly life now. How do we do that? By following what Peter says in his final verse: growing “in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior the Messiah.”

A Look inside 2 Peter

Greetings

Qualities for Living Forever

Distinguishing True Testimony from Tales

False Teachers Condemned

The Day of the Lord Is Coming

Final Advice

Greetings

1 Simon Peter, a slave and emissary of Messiah *Yeshua*,

To those who have received a faith equal to ours through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Messiah *Yeshua*:

² May grace and *shalom* be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of *Yeshua* our Lord.

Qualities for Living Forever

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue. ⁴Through

these things He has given us His precious and magnificent promises, [†] so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, since you have escaped the corruption that evil desires have brought into the world. ⁵ Now for this very reason, making every effort, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, patience; and to patience, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, love. ^{††8} For if these qualities are in you and increasing, they keep you from becoming idle and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah. ⁹ But anyone who lacks these qualities is blind—nearsighted

[†] cf. *Josh. 21:4; 1Kings 8:56; Jer. 33:14.* ^{††} *Greek philadelphia agape*

because he has forgotten his cleansing from past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers and sisters, make all the more effort to make your calling and election certain—for if you keep doing these things, you will never stumble. ¹¹ For in this way entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Messiah *Yeshua*, will be richly provided for you.

¹² Therefore, I intend to keep reminding you of these things, even though you know them and are well-grounded in the truth that you have. ¹³ I think it right to stir you up with a reminder, as long as I remain alive in this “tent” of a body [†]—¹⁴ knowing that my death ^{††} is soon, as our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah has made clear to me. ¹⁵ And I will make every effort for you to always remember these things even after my departure.

Distinguishing True Testimony from Tales

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly concocted tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, a voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory: “This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased!” ^{†††} And we ourselves heard this voice come out of heaven, when we were with Him on the holy mountain. ^{††††} Furthermore, we have the reliable prophetic word. You do well by paying attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ^{†††††} Above all understand this: no prophecy of Scripture comes about from a person’s own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever brought forth by human will; rather, people spoke from God as they were moved by the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ^{†††}

False Teachers Condemned

2 But false prophets also arose among the people, ^{†††} just as there will also be false teachers among you. They will secretly bring in destructive heresies. They will even deny the Master who bought them [§]—bringing swift destruction upon themselves. ² Many will follow their immoral ways, and as a result the way of the truth will be maligned. ³ In their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

⁴ For God did not spare angels when they sinned, but threw them into *Sheol*. ^{§†} He put them in chains of gloomy darkness, to be held until the judgment. ^{§††} He did not spare the ancient world. He preserved only Noah, a proclaimer of righteousness, along with seven

others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly. ⁶ He devastated the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, reducing them to ashes ^{§†}—making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly. ⁷ He rescued Lot, a righteous man deeply troubled by the shameless immorality of the wicked. ^{§†††} (For that righteous man, while living among them, was tormented in his righteous soul day after day by lawless deeds he saw and heard.) ⁹ Therefore, the Lord certainly knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and how to keep the unrighteous being punished until the Day of Judgment—¹⁰ especially those who follow after the flesh in its unclean desires and who despise the Lord’s authority. ^{§†}

Brazen and arrogant, these people do not tremble while slandering glorious beings; ¹¹ yet even angels, though stronger and more powerful, do not bring a slanderous charge against them before the Lord. ^{§††} But these people are like irrational animals—creatures of instinct born to be captured and killed. They malign what they don’t understand, and in their destruction they will be utterly destroyed. ¹³ They will be paid back for what they have done—evil for evil. ^{§††} They consider carousing in broad daylight a pleasure. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceitful pleasures while feasting together with you. ¹⁴ They have eyes full of adultery that never stop sinning, enticing unstable souls. They have hearts trained in greed—a cursed brood! ¹⁵ They have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam the son of Beor, ^{§§†} who loved the wages of wickedness. ¹⁶ But he received a rebuke for his own wrongdoing. A dumb donkey spoke with a man’s voice and put a stop to the prophet’s madness. ^{§§§}

¹⁷ These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. The gloom of utter darkness has been reserved for them. ¹⁸ For by mouthing grandiosities that amount to nothing, they entice in sensual fleshly passions those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹ They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption—for a person is a slave to whatever has overcome him. ²⁰ For if—after escaping the world’s pollutions through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, *Yeshua* the Messiah—they again become entangled in these things and are overcome, the end for them has become worse than the beginning. ²¹ For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after learning about it, to turn back from the holy commandment passed on to them. ¹⁹²² What has happened to them confirms the truth of the proverb, “A dog returns to its vomit,” ²⁰ and “A scrubbed pig heads right back into the mud.”

† cf. 2 Cor. 5:1. †† Lit. the laying aside of my tent † Matt. 17:5; (note also Matt. 3:17). ††† cf. Matt. 17:1, 5; Mark 9:2-7. †††† cf. Num. 24:17. ††††† cf. 2 Sam. 23:2; 2 Tim. 3:16. †††††† cf. Deut. 13:1-2; Jer. 14:14; Lam. 2:14; Ezek. 13:9; 22:28. § cf. 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23. §† Lit. hold captive in Tartarus
§†† cf. Ezek. 26:20; Judah 6.

§† cf. Gen. 19:24. §†† cf. Gen. 19:1-2, 16. §† Or lordship
§† cf. Judah 9. §§† cf. Judah 12. §§†† Lit. Bosor
basar §§§
cf. Num. 22:21-35. 18 cf. Judah 13. 19 cf. Ezek. 18:24. 20 Prov. 26:11.

The Day of the Lord Is Coming

3 Loved ones, this is now the second letter that I am writing to you. In both I am trying to stir you up by way of a reminder to wholesome thinking—² to remember the words previously proclaimed by the holy prophets and the commandment of our Lord and Savior through your emissaries. ^{†3} First of all, understand that in the last days, scoffers will come scoffing, following after their own desires ^{††4} and saying, “Where is this promise of His coming? [‡] Ever since the fathers died, ^{‡†} everything goes on just as it has from the beginning of creation.” ⁵ For in holding to this idea, it escapes their notice that the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God. ^{‡‡6} Through these, the world of that time was destroyed by being flooded with water. ^{‡‡†7} But by the same word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire—kept until the Day of Judgment and the destruction of ungodly people. ^{‡‡††}

⁸ But don’t forget this one thing, loved ones, 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 in keeping His promise, as some consider slowness. ^{§†} Rather, He is being patient toward you—not wanting anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. ^{§††} On that day the heavens will pass away with a roar, and

† cf. Judah 17. †† cf. Judah 18. ‡ cf. Isa. 5:19; Jer. 17:15; Ezek. 11:3; 12:22, 27; Mal. 2:17. ‡† Lit. fell asleep. ‡‡ cf. Gen. 1:2, 6-10; Ps. 24:1-2; 33:6-7; 136:5-6; Prov. 8:24-29. ‡†† cf. Gen. 7:11-12 ‡‡‡ cf. Isa. 66:15-16; Amos 7:4; Zeph. 1:18; Mal. 4:1 § cf. Ps. 90:4. §† cf. Hab. 2:3. §†† Some mss. add in the night

the elements will melt and disintegrate, and the earth and everything done on it shall be exposed. ¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? Live your lives in holiness and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God. In that day the heavens will be dissolved by fire, and the elements will melt in the intense heat. ^{§†13} But in keeping with His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. ^{§††}

Final Advice

¹⁴ Therefore, loved ones, while you are looking for these things, make every effort to be found in *shalom*, spotless and blameless before Him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that the patience of our Lord means salvation—just as our dearly loved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom given to him. ¹⁶ He speaks about these matters in all of his letters. Some things in them are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist (as they also do with the rest of the Scriptures)—to their own destruction.

¹⁷ Since you already know all this, loved ones, be on your guard so that you are not led astray by the error of the lawless and lose your sure footing. ¹⁸ Instead, keep growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior *Yeshua* the Messiah. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity!

Amen.

§‡ cf. Mic. 1:4. §†† cf. s. 65:17; 66:22; 32:16; 65:25.

1 John

Introduction

These three brief letters were written by the same author as the gospel of John, but at a later time. The recipients are local communities. 1 John does not state the addressee(s) explicitly; 2 John is written to a “lady,” which is really a community (reporting greetings from “your sister,” another community); while 3 John is sent to one “Gaius.” However, all three address growing problems within the body of Messiah which were beginning to gain ground in the Ephesus area (modern Western Turkey), the likely location from and to which these letters were written.

The three letters encourage believers in their faith, urging them to guard against false teachers who denied: that the human was also divine, that God had really become man, and that their immoral behavior constituted sin. It is hard to pin down one particular heresy, but it could have been an early form of Gnosticism, Docetism, or Cerinthianism. 1 John warns against this false teaching; 2 John advises a community not to welcome teachers peddling false doctrine; while 3 John speaks about a divisive man named Diotrephes, “who loves to be first.” John’s letters show how God’s Word must always be the test of both teaching and behavior. John especially emphasizes love, faith, and obedience, which work out in the lifestyle of believers in their understanding of . 1 John remains a beloved classic of the spiritual life, articulating themes of fellowship with God and assurance of forgiveness of sins.

A Look Inside 1 John

God’s Manifested Word of Life
 God’s Light Dispels Darkness
 Cleansing Begins with Confessing
 Atoned for Our Sin
 Loving God Means Obedience
 Haters Stumble in Darkness
 Fellowship with God Conquers Evil
 The Fleeting World Opposes Eternal God
 Anointed People Cling to the Anointed One
 Father and Son Come as One
 Live in the Anointed One
 Righteous Children Treasure His Purity
 Loving Children Emulate His Actions
 , the of Truth
 God’s Life-Giving Spirit of Love
 God’s Fulfilling Love
 Love God—Love God’s Family
 Love God—Live God’s Word
 Believe God’s Own Testimony of
 Walk Now in Eternal Privileges

God’s Manifested Word of Life

1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of life— ²the life was revealed, and we have seen and testify and declare to you the eternal

life that was with the Father and was revealed to us. ³What we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so you may have fellowship with us. Indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and His Son, *Yeshua* the Messiah. ⁴These things we write so our joy may be full.

God's Light Dispels Darkness

⁵ Now this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you—that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say we have fellowship with Him and keep walking in the darkness, we are lying and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of His Son *Yeshua* purifies us from all sin.

Cleansing Begins with Confessing

⁸ If we say 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 righteous to forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ^{††10} If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

Yeshua Atoned for Our Sin

2 My children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Intercessor with the Father—the righteous Messiah *Yeshua*. ² He is the atonement for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the whole world. ‡

Loving God Means Obedience

³ Now we know that we have come to know Him by this—if we keep His commandments. ⁴ The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God is truly made perfect. We know that we are in Him by this— ⁶ whoever claims to abide in Him must walk just as He walked.

Haters Stumble in Darkness

⁷ Loved ones, I am not writing a new commandment for you, but an old commandment—one you had from the beginning. This old commandment is the word you have heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing a new commandment for you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is fading and the true light is already shining.

⁹ The one who says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ The one who loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. ¹¹ But whoever hates his brother ^{‡†} is in the darkness and walks in the darkness. He doesn't know where he is going, because the darkness has made his eyes blind.

† cf. Prov. 2:12-13; Isa. 9:2; 50:10. †† Ps. 32:5; 103:3; Prov. 28:13; Jer. 31:31-32, 34. ‡ Lev. 16:30; 17:11; Isa. 53:11-12. ‡† Lev. 19:17.

Fellowship with God Conquers Evil

¹² I am writing to you, children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of His name. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known the One who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. ¹⁴ I have written to you, children, because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known the One who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

The Fleeting World Opposes Eternal God

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 desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, ^{‡‡} and the boasting of life—is not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away along with its desire, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

Anointed People Cling to the Anointed One

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour. Just as you heard that the anti-messiah is coming, even now many anti-messiahs have come—by this we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They left us, but they didn't really belong to us. If they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But they left us so it became clear that none of them belongs to us.

²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. ²¹ I have not written you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

Father and Son Come as One

²² Who is the liar, if not the one who denies that *Yeshua* is the Messiah? This one is the anti-messiah—the one who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father; the one who acknowledges the Son also has the Father.

Live in the Anointed One

²⁴ As for you, let what you heard from the beginning remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, you also will continue to live in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ Now this is the promise that He Himself has promised us—eternal life. ²⁶ I have written

‡‡ cf. Prov. 27:20.

you these things about those who are trying to mislead you. ²⁷ As for you, the anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about all things—and it is true and not a lie—and just as it has taught you, abide in Him. ²⁸ And now, children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we will have confidence and not be ashamed in His presence at His coming.

Righteous Children Treasure His Purity

²⁹ If you know that He is righteous, you also know that everyone who does what is right is born of Him.

3 See how glorious a love the Father has given us, that we should be called God's children—and so we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. ² Loved ones, now we are God's children; and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. But we do know that when it's revealed, we shall be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

⁴ Everyone practicing sin also practices lawlessness—indeed, sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that *Yeshua* appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who sins has seen Him or known Him. ⁷ Children, let no one mislead you! The one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as *Yeshua* is righteous. ⁸ The one who practices sin is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. *Ben-Elohim* appeared for this purpose—to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ No one born of God practices sin, because God's seed remains in him. He cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Loving Children Emulate His Actions

¹⁰ It is clear who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil by this—anyone who does not act righteously or love his brother is not of God. ¹¹ For this is the message you have heard from the beginning—we should love one another. ¹² Do not be like Cain, who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his deeds were evil, while his brother's were righteous. ^{†13} Do not be surprised, brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers and sisters. The one 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 abiding in him. ¹⁶ We have come to know love by this—*Yeshua* laid down His life for us, and we also ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ But if someone has material possessions and sees his brother in need and closes

† Gen. 4:8; Prov. 29:10.

his heart against him ^{††}, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ Children, let us not love with word or talk, but in deed and truth!

¹⁹ By this we shall know that we are of the truth, and set our heart at rest before Him ²⁰ whenever our heart condemns us. For God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹ Loved ones, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; ²² and whatever we ask, we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do what is pleasing in His sight. ²³ Now this is His commandment—that we should believe in the name of His Son, *Yeshua* the Messiah, and love one another, just as He commanded us. ²⁴ The one who keeps His commandments abides in God, and God in him. We know that He abides in us by this—by the Spirit He has given us.

Yeshua, the *Ruach* of Truth

4 Loved ones, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God. For many false prophets have gone out into the world. ^{†2} You know the *Ruach Elohim* by this—every spirit that acknowledges that Messiah *Yeshua* has come in human flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge *Yeshua* is not from God. This is the spirit of the anti-messiah, which you have heard is coming and now is already in the world. ⁴ You are from God, children, and you have overcome them, because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world, so they speak from the world and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God; whoever knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

God's Life-Giving Spirit of Love

⁷ Loved ones, let us love one another, for love is from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ The love of God was revealed among us by this—that God sent His one and only Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ This is love—not that we have loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atonement for our sins.

¹¹ Loved ones, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God. ^{††} If we love one another, God abides in us and His love is made perfect in us. ¹³ We know that we abide in Him and He in us by this—because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ We have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son as Savior of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that *Yeshua* is *Ben-Elohim*, God abides in him and he abides in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and trust in the love that God has for us. God is love. Now whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

†† Deut. 15:7. ‡ Jer. 14:14; 29:8. †† Exod. 33:20.

God's Fulfilling Love

¹⁷ In this way, love is made perfect among us, so that we should have boldness on the Day of Judgment. For just as He is, so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and the one who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.

Love God—Love God's Family

²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother. †

5 Everyone who believes that *Yeshua* is the Messiah is born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves the one born of Him.

Love God—Live God's Word

² We know that we love God's children by this—when we love God and obey His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God—that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For everyone born of God overcomes the world. And the victory that has overcome the world is this—our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world, if not the one who believes that *Yeshua* is *Ben-Elohim*?

Believe God's Own Testimony of *Yeshua*

⁶ Messiah *Yeshua* is the One who came by water and blood—not by water only, but by water and blood. The Spirit is the One who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify—⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood—and these three are one.

† Lev. 19:18.

††⁹ If we accept men's testimony, God's testimony is greater—for this it is the testimony that God has given about His Son. ¹⁰ The one who trusts in *Ben-Elohim* has the testimony in himself; the one who does not trust in God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given about His Son. ¹¹ And the testimony is this—that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹² The one who has the Son has life; the one who does not have *Ben-Elohim* does not have life.

Walk Now in Eternal Privileges

¹³ I wrote these things to you who believe in the name of *Ben-Elohim*, so you may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴ Now this is the confidence we have before Him—that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have the requests we have asked from Him. ¹⁶ If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he should ask, and God will give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death—I am not saying you should ask about that. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin not leading to death.

¹⁸ We know that anyone born of God does not keep on sinning; rather, the One born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot touch him. ¹⁹ We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. ²⁰ And we know that *Ben-Elohim* has come and given us insight, so that we may know Him who is true—and we are in Him who is true, in His Son *Yeshua* the Messiah. This One is the true God and eternal life.

²¹ Children, guard yourselves from idols. ††

†† A few late mss. read in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit ‡ Num. 15:30; Jer. 7:16. †† Some mss. add Amen

2 John

A Look Inside 2 John
 God's Truth and Blessings Abide Forever
 Lovingly Walk in God's Truth
 Protect Against Messianic Pretenders
 Brotherly Fellowship Is Joyful

God's Truth and Blessings Abide Forever

1 The elder.
 To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth—and not I alone, but also all who have come to know the truth— ² because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:
³ Grace, mercy, and *shalom* be with us, from God the Father and from Messiah *Yeshua*, the Father's Son, in truth and love!

Lovingly Walk in God's Truth

⁴ I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we received as a commandment from the Father. ⁵ Now I ask you, dear lady, that we love one another. It is not as though I am writing you a new command, but the one we have had from the beginning. ⁶ Now this is love: that we walk according to His commands. This is the commandment—just as you heard from the beginning—that you walk in love.

† Lev. 19:18; 19:34.

Protect against Messianic Pretenders

⁷ For many deceivers have gone out into the world—those who do not acknowledge *Yeshua* as Messiah coming in human flesh. This one is a deceiver and the anti-messiah. ⁸ Watch yourselves, so you do not lose what we have worked for but receive a full reward. ⁹ Anyone who goes too far and does not remain in Messiah's teaching does not have God. Anyone who remains in this teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not welcome him into your home or even give him a greeting. ¹¹ For the one greeting him shares in his evil deeds.

Brotherly Fellowship Is Joyful

¹² Although I have much to write to you, I don't want to do it with paper and ink. But I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that our joy may be full.

¹³ The children of your chosen sister send you greetings. ††

†† Some mss. add Amen

3 John

A Look Inside 3 John

The Joys of Walking Out the Truth
 Support Faithful Kingdom Truth Tellers
 The Lust for Power Condemned
 Do Good Like God Does
 Virtue Is Honorable
 Fellowship Is Desirable

The Joys of Walking out the Truth

1 The elder.

To Gaius the loved one, whom I love in truth:

² Loved ones, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul. ³ For I was overjoyed when some brethren came and testified of the truth in you—how you are walking in truth. ⁴ I have no greater joy than this—to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

Support Faithful Kingdom Truth Tellers

⁵ Loved ones, you are acting faithfully in whatever you do for the brethren and especially for strangers. ⁶ They have testified to your love before Messiah's community. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. ⁷ For on behalf of the Name they went out, accepting nothing from the pagans. ⁸ Therefore, we ought to support such people, so we might become co-workers in the truth.

The Lust for Power Condemned

⁹ I wrote something to Messiah's community, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, doesn't

† Lev. 19:34; 25:35.

welcome us. ¹⁰ So if I do come, I will call attention to what he is doing—slandering us with wicked words. Not even content with that, he refuses to welcome the brethren, and even forbids those who want to do so—throwing them out of the community!

Do Good Like God Does

¹¹ Loved ones, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

Virtue Is Honorable

¹² Demetrius has a good testimony from everyone, even from the truth itself. We also vouch for him—and you know that our testimony is true.

Fellowship Is Desirable

¹³ I have much to write you, but I don't want to write to you with ink and pen. ¹⁴ But I hope to see you soon, and we will speak face to face.

¹⁵ *Shalom aleichem*. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.

Judah

Introduction

Two books in this Bible—Judah and Jacob—have Hebrew names rather than their Greek forms—Jude and James. Because both authors are brothers of (Matthew 13:55), it seems only fitting to restore a form that more closely matches the Hebrew— and . Some interpret the Gospels as giving evidence that not even 's brothers understood His deity until after His resurrection and ascension (Mark 6:3; John 7:5; Acts 1:9, 14). Yet later, 's brothers travel abroad, spreading the Good News (1 Corinthians 9:5).

Judah is basically concerned with warning against false teachers. 2 Peter and Judah both share many thoughts in common, describing the false teachers in similar terms. Both books likely date from the same period in the 60s C.E. It is possible that Judah's readers were Jewish believers, since he quotes not only from the but even from Jewish sources not found in the Bible.

As in 2 Peter, these false teachers are living an ungodly lifestyle, using God's grace as an excuse to live as they pleased. In response, Judah's readers are told to "contend for the faith" (verse 3), employing a word that is used to describe athletes in a contest. As in sports, there is a defensive and offensive aspect to the life of faith. Defensively, we need to be on guard against false teaching and the behavior that can result from it. Judah compares the false teachers to the unbelieving generation that died in the wilderness after the Exodus, to the angels who sinned (mentioned in Genesis 6), and to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. In all three cases, it was the behavior of the people that led to their judgment, and their behavior was intertwined with their faith—or lack of faith. As in 2 Peter, lifestyle and beliefs are inseparable. And like his brother Jacob, Judah uses colorful metaphors, describing the false teachers as waterless clouds, fruitless, and wild waves (verses 12-13). Offensively, believers need to contend, applying the same discipline to their spiritual lives as athletes do in preparing for their events. Judah asks his readers to build themselves up spiritually, to pray, to remain in God's love, and to show mercy to others (verses 20-22). At the end, Judah's focus is on the power of God to keep all of us from falling, and he ends with a rousing doxology of praise to God and an enthusiastic "Amen!"

A Look inside Judah

Greeting

Contend for the Faith with the Ungodly

Hymn to God Our Savior

Greeting

1 Judah, a slave of *Yeshua* the Messiah and brother of Jacob,

To those who are called, who are loved in God the Father, and kept safe for *Yeshua* the Messiah:

² May mercy and *shalom* and love be multiplied to you!

Contend for the Faith with the Ungodly

³ Loved ones, though very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I felt it necessary to write to you urging you to continue to contend for the faith that was once for all handed down to the *kedoshim*. ⁴ For certain people have secretly slipped in—those who from long ago have been marked out for this judgment. They are ungodly people, who per-

vert the grace of our God into indecency and deny our only Master and Lord, *Yeshua* the Messiah.

⁵ Now I wish to remind you—though you have come to know all things—that the Lord, [†] once having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And the angels—who did not keep their own position of authority but deserted their proper place—He has kept in everlasting shackles under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day. ^{††7} In the same way as these angels, Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them—having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after a different sort of flesh—are displayed as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire. [‡]

⁸ Yet in the same way these people also, by their visionary dreaming, defile the flesh, reject the Lord's au-

[†] Some mss. say *Yeshua*

^{††} cf. 2 Pet. 2:4.

[‡] cf. Gen. 19:5, 24; Deut. 29:23.

thority, † and defame glorious beings. ⁹ But when Michael the archangel, disputing with the devil, was arguing about the body of Moses, he did not dare to render a judgment against him for slander, but said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" ††¹⁰ But these people slander whatever they do not understand. And whatever they do understand instinctively—like animals without reason—by these things they are destroyed.

¹¹ Woe to them! For they went the way of Cain; they were consumed for pay in Balaam's error; and in Korah's rebellion they have been destroyed. †¹² These people are hidden rocky reefs at your love feasts—shamelessly feasting with you, tending only to themselves. † They are waterless clouds, carried along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, doubly dead, uprooted; ¹³ wild waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; † wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever. ††

¹⁴ It was also about these people that Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with myriads of His *kedoshim*, †††¹⁵ to execute judgment against all. He will convict all the ungodly for all their ungodly deeds that they have done in an ungodly way, and for all of the harsh things ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

¹⁶ These are bellyaching grumblers, following after their own desires. Their mouths speak grandiose

† Or lordship †† cf. Deut. 34:6; Zech. 3:2. † cf. Gen. 4:3-8; Num. 31:16; Num. 16:1-3. †† cf. 2 Pet. 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:20. †† cf. Isa. 57:20. ††† cf. 2 Pet. 2:17. ††† cf. Gen. 5:24; Deut. 33:2; Dan. 7:10.

things, showing favoritism for the sake of gain. ¹⁷ But you, loved ones, ought to remember the words previously proclaimed by the emissaries of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah §— ¹⁸ how they kept telling you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following after their own ungodly desires." §†¹⁹ These are the ones who cause divisions—worldly-minded, not having the *Ruach*.

²⁰ But you, loved ones, continue building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. ²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God, eagerly waiting for the mercy of our Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah that leads to eternal life. ²² And have mercy on those who are wavering— ²³ save them by snatching them out of the fire; §†† but on others have mercy with fear—hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Hymn to God Our Savior

²⁴ Now to the One who is able
to keep you from stumbling,
and to present you blameless
before the presence of His glory
with great joy,

²⁵ to the only God our Savior,
through *Yeshua* the Messiah our Lord,
be glory, majesty, power, and authority,
before all time, §† both now and forever. Amen.

§ cf. 2 Pet. 3:2. §† cf. 2 Pet. 3:3. §†† cf. Amos 4:11; Zech. 3:2. §† Some mss. omit *Yeshua* the Messiah our Lord before all time

Revelations

Introduction

The Book of Revelation is an apocalyptic prophecy—a kind of writing found in many of the prophetic books as well as sections of the New Covenant, in which a supernatural revelation is given through fantastic, symbolic visions. Revelation reads like a waking dream—compare the dreams and visions of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. Revelation uses these symbols to show that in the end, with the return of Messiah in fulfillment of the Scriptures, God will be triumphant over all evil in the world. Meanwhile, He is calling His people to stay alert and ready to come out of the world, to be with Him.

Though the author only states that his name is John, many (though not all) scholars are convinced that he is the apostle John who also wrote the fourth gospel and the letters of 1, 2, and 3 John—sharing themes such as the Lamb, the Word and the glory, eternity, and divinity of . He writes from an island called Patmos, where he was sent into exile at a time of persecution against believers sometime in the late first century C.E. The audience for Revelation included seven communities in the Roman province of Asia, which today is called Asia Minor or Turkey. The book begins with letters to each of these seven communities, commending them for their faithfulness, rebuking them where they fall short, and encouraging them to continue living for the Lord. The rest of the book consists of symbolic visions and unusual symbols that stir the reader's imagination. These visions were written to encourage believers to remain faithful in the face of persecution. The message is that God's kingdom will be victorious over all evil in the world. Revelation begins and ends with the promise of 's return. Through Messiah, God rules over everything that happens—past, present, and future. Those who belong to Him (rather than to the world system of Babylon) can rejoice in the glorious wedding feast of the Lamb. Hallelujah!

A Look Inside Revelation

- 's Revelation to John
- Vision of the Glorious Son of Man
- Ephesus: Return to Your First Love
- Smyrna: Do Not Fear 's Testing
- Pergamum: Beware the Trap of Balaam
- Thyatira: Do Not Tolerate Jezebel
- Sardis: Coming Like a Thief
- Philadelphia: I Have Loved You
- Laodicea: Standing at the Door
- The Heavenly Throne of
- A Scroll with Seven Seals
- Worshiping the Lamb
- Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
- 144,000 Marked with a Seal
- Countless Worshipers before the Throne
- The Seventh Seal and Seven Trumpets
- The Angel with a Little Scroll
- Two Witnesses
- The Seventh Trumpet
- Mother, Child, Dragon, and War
- Two Beasts
- A Song for the 144,000
- Three Angels with Messages
- Time to Harvest the Earth
- Song of Moses to the Lamb

Seven Bowls of God's Wrath
 The Vile Prostitute and the Beast
 Judgment of Babylon
 Victory Songs in Heaven
 Wedding of the Lamb
 Final Battle of this Age
 The First Resurrection
 Judgment after 1000 Years
 A New Heaven and a New Earth
 The New Jerusalem
 Is Coming

Yeshua's Revelation to John

1 The revelation of *Yeshua* the Messiah, which God gave Him to show to His servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John, ² who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of *Yeshua* the Messiah—to everything he saw. ³ How fortunate is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and those who hear and keep what has been written in it—for the time is near.

⁴John,

To Messiah's seven communities in Asia: †

Grace to you and *shalom* from Him who is and who was and who is to come, as well as from the seven spirits who are before His throne, ⁵ and from Messiah *Yeshua*, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, *kohanim* to His God and Father—to Him be glory and power forever! Amen!

⁷"Look, He is coming with the clouds, ††

and every eye shall see Him,
 even those who pierced Him.

And all the tribes of the earth
 shall mourn because of Him. ‡

Yes, amen!"

⁸"I am the Alpha and the Omega," †† says *ADONAI Elohim*, "Who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty!"

⁹I, John, your brother and fellow partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patient endurance that are in *Yeshua*, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of *Yeshua*. ¹⁰I was in the *Ruach* on the Day of the Lord, †† and I heard behind me a loud voice like that of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "Write what you see in a scroll, ††† and send it to Messiah's seven communities—to Ephesus

† The Roman province of Asia, in the western part of Asia Minor (now part of Turkey). †† Dan. 7:13. ‡ Zech. 12:10-14. †† cf. Rev. 21:6; 22:13. cf. Isa. 9:5-6(6-7); 41:4. †† cf. Isa. 13:6, 9; Ezek. 30:3; Joel 2:1; 3:4(2:31); Amos 5:18; Obad. 15; Zeph. 1:7, 14; Mal. 3:17. ††† cf. Isa. 30:8; Jer. 36:2, 4.

and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

Vision of the Glorious Son of Man

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned, I saw seven golden *menorot*. ^{†††13} In the midst of the *menorot*, I saw One like a Son of Man, clothed in a robe down to His feet, with a golden belt wrapped around His chest. ^{§14} His head and His hair were white like wool, white like snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire. ^{§†15} His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, ††† and His voice was like the roar of rushing waters. ^{§†16} In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came forth a sharp, two-edged sword. ††† His face was like the sun shining at full strength. †

¹⁷ When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. †

But He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid! I am the First and the Last, †††18 and the One who lives. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever! Moreover, I hold the keys of death and *Sheol*. ^{§§†19} Therefore, write down what you have seen, what is, and what will happen after these things. ²⁰ As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden *menorot*—the seven stars are the angels of Messiah's seven communities, and the seven menorahs are the seven communities.

Ephesus: Return to Your First Love

2 "To the angel of Messiah's community in Ephesus write: 'Thus says the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks in the midst of the seven golden *menorot*: ²"I know all about your deeds and your toil and your patient endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. You have tested those who call themselves emissaries and are not, and have found them to be liars. ³You have per-

††† cf. Exod. 25:37; 37:23; Zech. 4:2. § cf. Dan 7:13; 10:5; also Exod. 29:5; Lev 8:7. §† cf. Isa. 1:18; Dan. 7:9. §†† cf. Ezek. 1:7; Dan. 10:6. §‡ cf. Ps. 93:4; Ezek. 1:24; 43:2. §†† cf. Isa. 49:2; Heb. 4:12. §† cf. Exod. 34:29. §‡ cf. Dan. 8:17-18; 10:9-10, 15. §§† cf. Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:12. §§‡ cf. Job 38:17; Jn. 5:25-27.

severance and have endured for My name's sake, and you have not grown weary.

⁴ "But this I have against you, that you have forsaken your first love. ¹⁵ Remember then from where you have fallen. Repent and do the deeds you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your *menorah* from its place—unless you repent.

⁶ "Yet you have this going for you, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities. To the one who overcomes, I will grant the right to eat from the Tree of Life, which is in the Paradise of God." †

Smyrna: Do Not Fear *Satan*'s Testing

⁸ "To the angel of Messiah's community in Smyrna write: 'Thus says the First and Last, who was dead and came to life. ⁹ "I know your tribulation and your poverty (yet you are rich), as well as the slander of those who say they are Jewish and are not, but are a synagogue of *satan*. ¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, so that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities. The one who overcomes shall never be harmed by the second death.'"

Pergamum: Beware the Trap of Balaam

¹² "To the angel of Messiah's community in Pergamum write: 'Thus says the One who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³ "I know where you live—where *satan*'s throne is. Yet you continue to hold firm to My name, and you did not deny your faith in Me even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where *satan* resides.

¹⁴ "But I have a few things against you. You have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who was teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before *Bnei-Yisrael*, to eat food sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵ Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. ¹⁶ Repent then! If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of My mouth. ¹⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities. To the one who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna, ¹⁸ and I will give him a white stone—and written on the stone a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it." ††

† cf. Jer. 2:2, 13; Ezek. 16:8, 15. †† Hebrew *Etz ha-Chaim b'Gan-Eden* ‡ cf. Dan. 1:12, 14.
 †† cf. Isa. 49:2. †† cf. Num. 25:1-2; 31:16. ††† cf. Exod. 16:32-34. ††† cf. Isa. 56:5; 62:2.

Thyatira: Do Not Tolerate Jezebel

¹⁸ "To the angel of Messiah's community in Thyatira write: 'Thus says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like polished bronze: ¹⁹ "I know your deeds and your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your last deeds are greater than the first.

²⁰ "But this I have against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, ²¹ who calls herself a prophetess—yet she is teaching and deceiving My servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her immorality. ²² Behold, I will throw her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation—unless they repent of her doings. ²³ I will also strike her children with a deadly disease. Then all of Messiah's communities will know that I am the One who searches minds and hearts, ²⁴ and I will give to each of you according to your deeds.

²⁴ "But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold to this teaching and have not learned the so-called 'deep things' of *satan*—I place on you no other burden. ²⁵ Only hold firm to what you have until I come. ²⁶ To the one who overcomes and guards My deeds until the end,

"I will give him authority over the nations ²⁷ and he shall rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are broken into pieces.' †††

²⁸ "Even as I have received from My Father, so I will give him the morning star. ²⁹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities."

Sardis: Coming Like a Thief

3 "To the angel of Messiah's community in Sardis write: 'Thus says the One having the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your deeds—you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead. ² Wake up, and strengthen what remains that was about to die. For I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of My God. ³ So remember what you have received and heard—keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.

⁴ "But still, you have a few people in Sardis who have not stained their clothes. They will walk with Me in white, because they are worthy. ⁵ The one who overcomes thus will be dressed in white clothes; I will never blot his name out of the Book of Life, ⁶ and will confess his name before My Father and His angels. ⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities."

§ cf. 1 Kings 16:31; 21:25. §† cf. Ps. 7:9; 26:2; Jer. 11:20; 17:10.
 §†† cf. Ps. 2:8-9. §† cf. Exod. 32:32-33; Ps. 69:28; Dan. 12:1-2.

Philadelphia: I Have Loved You

⁷ "To the angel of Messiah's community in Philadelphia write: 'Thus says the Holy One, the True One, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens: ¹⁸ "I know your deeds. Behold, I have set before you an open door that no one is able to shut—because you have little power, but you have kept My word and have not denied My name. ⁹ Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of *satan*—who say they are Jewish and are not, but lie—behold, I will cause them to come and bow down before your feet, ¹¹ so that they acknowledge that I have loved you!

¹⁰ "Because you have kept My word about patient endurance, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is coming upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ I am coming soon—hold on to what you have, so that no one will take away your crown. ¹² The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the Temple of My God, [‡] and he will never leave it. And on him I will write the name of My God and the name of the city of My God—the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God—and My own new Name. ¹³ He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities."

Laodicea: Standing at the Door

¹⁴ "To the angel of Messiah's community in Laodicea write: 'Thus says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Originator of God's creation: ¹⁵ "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. Oh, that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spew you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ For you say, 'I am rich, I have made myself wealthy, and I need nothing.' ¹⁸ But you do not know that you are miserable and pitiable and poor and blind and naked. ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich, and white clothes so that you may dress yourself and so the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed, and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I rebuke and discipline. Therefore, be zealous and repent.

²⁰ "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To the one who overcomes I will grant the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I myself overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. ²² He who has an ear, let him hear what the *Ruach* is saying to Messiah's communities."

† cf. Isa. 22:22. †† cf. Isa. 45:14; 49:23; 60:14. ‡ cf. Jer. 1:18.
 †† cf. Prov. 8:22. †† cf. Hos. 12:8; Zech. 11:5.

The Heavenly Throne of ADONAI

⁴ After these things I looked, and behold, a door was standing open in heaven. ^{‡‡} And the first voice, which I had heard speaking with me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things."

² Immediately I was in the *Ruach*; ^{‡‡} and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One seated on the throne. ^{§§} And the One who was seated was like jasper and carnelian in appearance, and a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. ^{§†4} Around the throne were 24 thrones, and seated on the thrones were 24 elders dressed in white clothes with golden crowns on their heads. ⁵ And out from the throne come flashes of lightning and rumblings and clashes of thunder ^{§††}—and seven torches of fire burning before the throne, ^{§†} which are the seven spirits of God. ⁶ And before the throne was something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

In the middle of the throne and around it were four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind. ^{§††}

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 a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ^{§†}

⁸ The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes all around and within. ^{§†} They do not rest day or night, chanting,

"*Kadosh , kadosh , kadosh*
ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot, ^{§§†}
asher haya v'hoveh v'yavo !
 Holy, holy, holy
 is the *LORD* God of Hosts,
 who was, and who is,
 and who is to come!"

⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the One seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ^{§§†10} the 24 elders fall down before the One seated on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever. And they throw their crowns down before the throne, chanting,

¹¹ "Worthy are You, our Lord and God,
 to receive glory and honor and power,
 For You created all things,
 and because of Your will
 they existed and were created!"

‡‡† cf. Ezek. 1:1. ‡‡† Or spirit § cf. 1 Kings 22:19; Is. 6:1; Ezek. 1:26; Dan. 7:9. §† cf. Ezek. 1:28. §†† cf. Exod. 19:16. §† cf. Exod. 25:37; Zech. 4:2. §†† cf. Ezek. 1:5, 18; 10:22. §† cf. Ezek. 1:10; 10:14. §† cf. Isa. 6:2-3; Ezek. 1:18; 10:12. §§† Greek *Kurios o Theos o Pantokrator LORD*
 §§† cf. Dan. 4:34; 12:7.

A Scroll with Seven Seals

5 And I saw in the right hand of the One seated up on the throne a scroll, written on both the front and the back, sealed with seven seals. ¹²I also saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seals?” ³No one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. ⁴I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

⁵Then one of the elders tells me, “Stop weeping! Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, ^{††}the Root of David, [‡]has triumphed—He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

Worshiping the Lamb

⁶And in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as having been slain—having seven horns and seven eyes, ^{††}which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷He came and took the scroll from the right hand of the One seated on the throne. ⁸When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense—which are the prayers of the *kedoshim*.

⁹And they are singing a new song, ^{‡‡}saying, “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals.

For You were slain,
and by Your blood
You redeemed for God
those from every tribe and tongue
and people and nation. ^{‡‡‡}

¹⁰You have made them for our God
a kingdom and *kohanim*,
and they shall reign upon the earth.”

¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders—their number was myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands. ^{‡‡‡12}They were chanting with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and riches
and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³And I heard every creature in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and everything in them, responding,

“To the One seated on the throne
and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor
and glory and power forever and ever!”

† cf. Ezek. 2:9-10; Isa. 29:11; Dan. 12:4. †† cf. Gen. 49:9. ‡ cf. Isa. 11:1, 10. †† cf. Zech. 3:9; 4:10. †† cf. Ps. 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 149:1; Isa. 42:10. ††† cf. Dan. 3:4; 5:19. †††† cf. Dan. 7:10.

¹⁴And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen!” And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

6 Then I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, “Come!” ^{§2}I looked, and behold, there was a white horse. ^{§†}The one riding on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him. He went out as a conqueror so he might conquer.

³When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come!” ⁴Then another horse came out, fiery red. The one riding on it was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another. He was given a great sword.

⁵When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come!” And behold, I saw a black horse. ^{§††}The one riding on it held a balance scale in his hand. ⁶Then I heard something like a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart ^{§†}of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius—but do no harm to the oil and wine!” ^{§††}

⁷When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living creature saying, “Come!” ⁸Behold, I saw a horse, pale greenish gray. The name of the one riding on it was Death, and *Sheol* was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill by sword and by famine and by plague and by the wild beasts of the earth. ^{§†}

⁹When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those slaughtered ^{§†}for the sake of the Word of God and for the witness they had.

¹⁰And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “O Sovereign Master, holy and true, how long before You judge those who dwell on the earth and avenge our blood?”

¹¹Then a white robe was given to each of them, and they were told to rest a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants was complete—their brothers and sisters who were to be killed as they had been.

¹²I saw when the Lamb opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake. The sun became as black as sackcloth made of goat’s hair, and the full moon became like blood. ¹³The stars of heaven fell to the earth like a fig tree drops unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. ¹⁴The heaven ripped apart like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from their places.

¹⁵Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the military commanders and the rich and the mighty and everyone—slave and free—hid themselves in the

§ Some mss. add and see §† cf. Zech. 1:8; 6:2-3. §†† cf. Zech 6:6. §‡ Lit. choenix
§‡† cf. Ezek. 4:16. §† cf. Jer. 15:2-3, 6-7; 29:17-19; Ezek. 5:17; 14:21. §‡ cf. Exod. 29:12; Lev. 4:7.

caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶ And they tell the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us ^{††} from the face of the One seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. ¹⁷ For the great day of their wrath has come, [‡] and who is able to stand?"

144,000 Marked with a Seal

7 After this, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth [‡] so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or against any tree. ² Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, [‡] having the seal of the living God. He cried out with a loud voice to the four angels who were permitted to harm the earth and the sea, ³ saying, "Do no harm to the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." ^{‡‡}

⁴ Now I heard the number of those marked with the seal:

144,000 from every tribe of *Bnei-Yisrael* —

⁵ 12,000 from the tribe of Judah;

12,000 from the tribe of Reuben;

12,000 from the tribe of Gad;

⁶ 12,000 from the tribe of Asher;

12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali;

12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh;

⁷ 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon;

12,000 from the tribe of Levi;

12,000 from the tribe of Issachar;

⁸ 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun;

12,000 from the tribe of Joseph;

12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin.

Countless Worshipers before the Throne

⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a vast multitude that no one could count—from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues—was standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes, with palm branches ^{‡‡} in their hands ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne, along with the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might belong to our God forever and ever. Amen!"

† cf. Isa. 2:10-12, 19, 21. †† cf. Hos. 10:8. ‡ cf. Isa 13: 9, 13; Ezek. 7:8, 12; Zeph. 1:15, 18. †† cf. Isa. 11:12; Ezek. 7:2; Dan. 7:2; Zech. 6:5. ‡‡ Lit. rising of the sun ‡‡‡ cf. Ezek. 9:4, 6. ‡‡‡ cf. Lev. 23:40; Feast of Sukkot

¹³ Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these dressed in white robes, and where have they come from?"

I said to him, "Sir, you know."

¹⁴ Then he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. ⁵ They have washed their robes and made them white ^{5†} in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His Temple. The One seated on the throne will shelter them.

^{5††16} They shall never again go hungry, nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat. ^{5††17} For the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall shepherd them and guide them to springs of living water, and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." ^{5††}

The Seventh Seal and Seven Trumpets

8 Now when the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets ^{5†} were given to them. ³ Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden incense burner. ^{5†} He was given much incense to offer up along with the prayers of all the *kedoshim* upon the golden altar before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the *kedoshim*, ^{5††} rose before God from the angel's hand. ⁵ Then the angel took the incense burner and filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there were clashes of thunder and rumblings and flashes of lightning and earthquakes. ^{5††}

⁶ Then the seven angels holding the seven trumpets prepared to sound them. ⁷ The first trumpeted, ^{5†††} and there was hail and fire mixed with blood, and they were thrown upon the earth. ¹⁸ A third of the earth burned up, a third of the trees burned up, and all the green grass burned up.

⁸ The second angel trumpeted, and something like a huge mountain ¹⁹ ablaze with fire was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, ⁹ a third of the creatures living in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰ The third angel trumpeted, and a great star fell from the heavens, burning like a torch. It fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. ¹¹ Now the name of the star is Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the waters that were made bitter. ²⁰

¹² The fourth angel trumpeted, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them were darkened. ²¹ A

5 cf. Dan. 12:1. 5† cf. Ps. 51:7; Isa. 1:18; Zech. 3:3-5. 5†† cf. Lev. 26:11; Ezek. 37:27; John 1:14. 5†‡ cf. Isa. 49:10. 5††† cf. Isa. 25:8. 5† Or shofars 5†‡ cf. Exod. 30:1-3. 5††† cf. Ps. 141:2. 5††‡ cf. Exod. 19:16. 5†††† Or sounded

18 cf. Exod. 9:23-26. 19 cf. Jer. 51:25. 20 cf. Exod. 7:17-18. 21 cf. Exod. 10:21-23; Isa. 13:10; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31.

third of the day would not shine, as well as a third of the night.

¹³ Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying out with a loud voice as it flew high in the sky, saying, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpets the three angels are about to sound!"

9 Then the fifth angel trumpeted, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to earth. The key to the bottomless pit was given to him. ² He opened the pit, and smoke rose from the pit like the smoke of a gigantic furnace. [†] The sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.

³ Then from the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given to them like the scorpions have power over the earth. ^{††}

⁴ They were told to do no harm to the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only the people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. [‡] And they were permitted not to kill them, but to torment them for five months—and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a person. [§] In those days, people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them. [¶]

⁷ Now the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. ^{¶¶} On their heads were something like crowns of gold, and their faces were like human faces. [§] They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like those of lions. ^{¶¶¶} They had chests like iron breastplates; and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many horse-drawn chariots rushing into battle. ^{¶¶¶} They have tails like scorpions with stingers; and in their tails is their power to harm people for five months. ^{¶¶¶} They have as king over them the angel of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he has the name Apollyon. [§]

¹² The first woe is past. Behold, two woes are still coming after these things.

¹³ The sixth angel trumpeted, and I heard a single voice from the four horns of the golden altar ^{§†} before God. ¹⁴ It said to the sixth angel, the one holding the trumpet, ^{§††} "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

¹⁵ So the four angels—who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year—were released to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶ The number of mounted troops was two hundred million ^{§†}—I heard their number. ¹⁷ Now here is how I saw the horses and those riding on them: they had breastplates that were fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow. The heads of the horses were as heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire and smoke and brimstone. ^{§††}

† cf. Gen. 19:28; Exod. 19:18. †† cf. Exod. 10:12-15. ‡ cf. Ezek. 9:4, 6. †† cf. Job 3:21; Jer. 8:3. †† cf. Joel 2:4. ††† cf. Joel 1:6. ††† cf. Jer. 47:3; Joel 2:5. § Both names mean Destroyer
§† cf. Exod. 30:2-3. §†† Or shofar §† Lit. two ten thousands of ten thousands
§†† Or sulfur

¹⁸ By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone that came out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads by which they inflict injuries.

²⁰ But the rest of mankind, those not killed by these plagues, did not repent and turn away from the works of their hands—they would not stop worshiping demons and the idols of gold and silver and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. ^{§†} And they did not repent and turn away from their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their stealing.

The Angel with a Little Scroll

10 Then I saw another powerful angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud with a rainbow over his head. His face was like the sun and his feet like pillars of fire. ² He had in his hand a little scroll that was open. He set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, ³ and he cried out with a loud voice, just as a lion roars. When he cried out, the seven thunders spoke. ^{§†}

⁴ And when the seven thunders had spoken, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said. Do not write it down!" ^{§††}

⁵ Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand toward heaven ⁶ and swore ^{§§†} by the One who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay.

⁷ But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel—when he is about to trumpet—the mystery of God is completed, just as He declared to His servants the prophets. ^{§§§} Then the voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land."

⁹ So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little scroll. And he tells me, "Take and eat it. It will be bitter to your stomach, but sweet as honey in your mouth." ¹⁸

¹⁰ So I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth; but when I had swallowed it, my stomach was made bitter. ¹¹ And they tell me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

Two Witnesses

11 Then a measuring rod like a staff was given to me, saying, "Get up and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and count those worshiping in it."

§† cf. Ps. 115:4-7; 135:15-17; Dan. 5:23. §† cf. Ps. 29:3-9.
§§† cf. Dan. 12:4, 9. §§† cf. Gen. 14:22. §§§ cf. Amos 3:7. 18 cf. Ezek. 3:1-3.

¹² But do not measure the court outside the Temple—leave it out, because it has been given to the nations, and they shall trample the holy city for 42 months. ^{†13} And I will grant authority to My two witnesses and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, [‡] dressed in sackcloth.”

⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two *menorot* that are standing before the Lord of the earth. ^{‡15} If anyone wishes to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and consumes their enemies. If anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. ^{‡16} These two have the power to shut the heavens, so that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying. ^{‡‡} And they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish. ^{‡‡‡}

⁷ When they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the abyss will make war on them, and overcome them and kill them. ^{§8} And their corpses will lie in the open street ^{§†} of the great city that figuratively is called Sodom and Egypt—where also their ^{§††} Lord was crucified. ⁹ Some from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their corpses for three and a half days, not allowing them to be placed into a grave. ^{§†10} Those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them. They will celebrate and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

¹¹ But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet; ^{§††} and great fear fell on those who were watching them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies watched them. ^{§†}

¹³ At that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city collapsed. ^{§†} Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴ The second woe is past. The third woe is coming soon.

The Seventh Trumpet

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel trumpeted, and there were loud voices in heaven saying,

“The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord

and of His Anointed One.

And He shall reign forever and ever!” ^{§§†}

¹⁶ And the 24 elders seated on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying, “We thank you, *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot*, ^{§§†}

† cf. Ezek. 40-42; Zech. 2:1. †† cf. Isa. 52:1; Dan. 7:25; 12:7. ‡ cf. Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Zech. 4:2-14. ‡† cf. Zech. 4:3, 11, 14. ‡‡ cf. 2 Kings 1:10-12; Jer. 5:14. ‡‡† cf. 1 Kings 17:1. ‡‡‡ cf. Exod. 7:17-21. § cf. Dan. 7:21. §† cf. Isa. 66:24. §†† Some mss. read our §‡ cf. Ps. 79:2-3. §‡†† cf. Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 37:5, 10. §† cf. 2 Kings 2:11. §‡ cf. Isa. 29:6; Ezek. 38:19. §§† cf. Isa. 37:16; Dan.

who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and begun to reign.

¹⁸ The nations were enraged, but Your wrath has come ^{§§§} and the time for the dead to be judged—to reward Your servants, the prophets and *kedoshim*, and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy the destroyers of the earth.” ¹⁸

¹⁹ Then the Temple of God in heaven was opened, and the Ark of His Covenant appeared in His Temple. And there were flashes of lightning and rumblings and clashes of thunder and an earthquake and heavy hail. ¹⁹

Mother, Child, Dragon, and War

12 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. ²⁰² She is pregnant—crying out in birth pains, in agony to give birth. ²¹

³ Then another sign appeared in heaven: a great fiery red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and seven royal crowns on his heads. ²²⁴ His tail sweeps away a third of the stars of heaven—it hurled them to the earth. ²³ Now the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that whenever she gave birth he might devour her child.

⁵ And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with an iron rod. ²⁴ And her child was snatched away to God and to His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God so they might take care of her for 1,260 days.

⁷ And war broke out in heaven, Michael and his angels making war against the dragon. ²⁵ The dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they were not strong enough, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down—the ancient serpent, called the devil and *satan*, who deceives the whole world. ²⁶ He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ²⁷¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Anointed One, for the accuser of our brothers and sisters—the one who accuses them before our God day and night ²⁸—has been thrown out. ¹¹ They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony,

2:44; 7:14, 27. §§‡ Greek Kurie o Theos o Pantokrator LORD §§§ cf. Ps. 2:5; 110:5. 18 cf. Dan. 7:10; 12:2. 19 cf. Ex 9:23; 19:16. 20 cf. Gen 37:9-10. 21 cf. Isa. 26:17; 66:6-9; Mic. 4:9-10. 22 cf. Isa. 27:1; Dan. 7:7, 20, 24. 23 cf. Dan. 8:10. 24 cf. Isa. 66:7; Ps. 2:9. 25 cf. Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1. 26 cf. Gen. 3:1. 27 cf. Isa. 14:12-15; Dan. 8:10. 28 cf. Job 1:9-11; Zech. 3:1.

and they did not love their lives even in the face of death.

¹²“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great rage, knowing that his time is short.”

¹³Now when the dragon saw that he had been thrown to the earth, he stalked the woman who had given birth to the male child. ¹⁴But the woman was given two wings of the great eagle, [†] so that she might fly away from the presence of the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is taken care of—for a time, times, and half a time. ^{††}

¹⁵And from out of his mouth, the serpent spewed water like a river after the woman, in order to sweep her away with a flood. ¹⁶But the earth came to the aid of the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had spewed from his mouth. ¹⁷So the dragon became enraged at the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring—those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of *Yeshua*. ¹⁸And he stood on the shore of the sea.

Two Beasts

13 Then I saw a beast rising out of the sea, [‡] that had ten horns and seven heads. On his horns were ten royal crowns, and upon his heads were slanderous names. ²Now the beast that I saw was like a leopard, his feet like a bear’s, and his mouth like a lion’s. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. ³One of his heads seemed to have been slain, but the fatal wound was healed. The whole earth was amazed and followed the beast. ⁴And they worshiped the dragon, because he had given authority to the beast. They also worshiped the beast, chanting, “Who is like the beast, and who can make war against him?” ^{‡†}

⁵The beast was given a mouth uttering great boasts and blasphemies. It was given authority to act for 42 months. ⁶Then he opened his mouth with blasphemies against God, to slander His name and His tabernacle—that is, those dwelling in heaven. ⁷He was also permitted to make war against the *kedoshim* and overcome them, and he was given authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. ⁸All who dwell on the earth shall worship him—everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb who was slain.

⁹If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

¹⁰If anyone is meant for captivity,
to captivity he goes.

If anyone is to be killed by the sword,
by the sword he must be killed. [‡]

Here is the perseverance and faith of the *kedoshim*.

[†] cf. Exod. 19:4. ^{††} cf. Dan. 7:25; 12:7. [‡] cf. Dan. 7:3. ^{‡†} cf. Exod. 15:11; Isa. 46:5. ^{‡‡} cf. Jer. 15:2; 43:11.

¹¹Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. He had two horns ^{‡‡} like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹²He exercises all the authority of the first beast before him, and he makes the earth and all those who dwell in it worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. ¹³He performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven in the sight of men.

^{‡‡‡14}And he deceives those who dwell on the earth through the signs he is permitted to perform, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image in honor of the beast who has the sword wound yet lived. ¹⁵The second beast was permitted to give life to the image of the first beast, so that the image of the beast could even speak and cause all who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶He also causes all—the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the free and the slave—to receive a mark on their right hand or upon their forehead. ¹⁷And so no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark—either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

¹⁸Here is wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is a number of a man, and his number is 666. [§]

A Song for the 144,000

14 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, ^{§†} and with Him were 144,000 who had His name and His Father’s name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and the booming of loud thunder. ^{§††} The voice I heard was like harpists playing on their harps. ³And they are singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one is able to learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.

⁴These are the ones who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins.

These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

These have been redeemed from among mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb.

⁵And in their mouth was found no lie—they are blameless. ^{§‡}

Three Angels with Messages

⁶And then I saw another angel flying high in the sky, having a timeless message of good news to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation and tribe and tongue and people. ⁷He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come. Worship the One who made heaven and earth and sea and springs of water.”

⁸Another angel, a second one, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great, ^{§††}—

^{‡‡†} cf. Dan. 8:3. ^{‡‡‡} cf. 1 Kings 18:38. [§] Some mss. say six hundred sixteen. ^{§†} cf. Ps. 2:6. ^{§††} cf. Ezek. 1:24; 43:2. ^{§‡} cf.

she who made all nations drink of the wine of the fury of her immorality.”

⁹ And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying in a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he shall also drink the wine of God’s fury, poured full strength into the cup of His wrath. [†] And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone ^{††} before the holy angels and before the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. [‡] Those who worship the beast and its image and those who receive the mark of his name have no rest day or night.”

¹² Here is the perseverance of the *kedoshim*—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of *Yeshua*.

¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, ^{‡‡}

“Write: How fortunate are the dead—those who die in the Lord from now on!”

“Yes,” says the *Ruach*, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.”

Time to Harvest the Earth

¹⁴ Then I looked, and behold, there was a white cloud—and seated on the cloud was one like a Son of Man. ^{‡‡} He had a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. ¹⁵ Then another angel came out of the Temple, crying out with a loud voice to the One seated on the cloud,

“Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.”

¹⁶ So the One seated 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 he also had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ Then another angel—the one who has authority over fire—came out from the altar; and he called out with a loud voice to the one holding the sharp sickle, saying, “Put in your sickle and gather the grape clusters from the vineyard of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.”

¹⁹ So the angel swung his sickle over the earth and gathered the clusters from the vineyard of the earth and threw them into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was stomped on outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress as high as a horse’s bridle for 1,600 stadia. ^{‡‡‡}

Song of Moses to the Lamb

15 Then I saw another great and wonderful sign in heaven: seven angels who have seven plagues—the last ones, for with them God’s wrath is finished. ² And I saw something like a sea of glass

Zeph. 3:13; Mal. 2:6; some mss. add before the throne of God ^{§†} *cf. Isa. 21:9; Jer. 51:7-8. † cf. Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17; Jer. 25:15-17, 27. †† cf. Gen. 19:24; Ezek. 38:22. ‡ cf. Isa. 34:10. ‡† Some mss. add to me ‡‡ Or the Son of Man ‡‡† cf. Joel 3:13-14. ‡‡‡ About 200 miles; 1 stade*

mixed with fire, and those who had overcome the beast and his image [§] and the number of his name standing by the sea of glass, holding the harps of God. ³ And they are singing the song of Moses ^{§†} the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying,

“Great and wonderful are Your deeds,

ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot! ^{§††}

Just and true are Your ways,

O King of the nations! ^{§‡}

⁴ Who shall not fear and glorify Your name, O Lord?

For You alone are Holy.

All the nations shall come and worship before You, ^{§††} for Your righteous acts have been revealed!”

⁵ After these things I looked, and the Temple of the Tent of Witness in heaven was opened. ⁶ Out of the Temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, dressed in pure bright linen and wearing wide gold sashes around their chests.

⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. ⁸ And the Temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power. ^{§†} No one was able to enter the Temple until the seven angels’ seven plagues were finished.

Seven Bowls of God’s Wrath

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the Temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of God’s wrath.” ^{§†2} So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and foul and painful boils ^{§§†} came upon the people having the mark of the beast and worshiping his image.

³ Next the second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a corpse; and every living thing in the sea died. ^{§§†4} Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. ^{§§§5} Then I heard the angel of the waters saying,

“Righteous are You—the Holy One, who is and who was—

because You have passed these judgments.

⁶ For they have poured out the blood of *kedoshim* and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink ¹⁸—they are deserving!”

⁷ Then I heard the altar saying,

“Yes, *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot*,

true and righteous are Your judgments!” ¹⁹

⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was permitted to scorch people with fire. ⁹ People were scorched with fierce heat, and they cursed

[§] Some mss. add and its mark ^{§†} *cf. Exod. 15:1, 11; Deut. 31:30ff. §†† Or O LORD God the Almighty*

^{§‡} Some mss. read ages ^{§††} *cf. Ps. 86:9; Isa. 66:23. §† cf. Exod. 19:18; 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chron. 5:13-14; Is. 6:4. §‡ cf. Ps. 79:6; Ezek. 22:31; Zeph. 3:8. §§† cf. Exod. 9:9-11. §§‡ cf. Exod. 7:17-21. §§§ cf. Ps. 78:44. 18 cf. Isa. 49:26. 19 cf. Ps. 19:9.*

the name of God—the One who has power over these plagues. But they did not repent, to give Him glory.

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. [†] People gnawed their tongues in pain [‡] and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their boils. But they did not repent of their deeds. ^{††}

¹² The sixth angel poured out his bowl over the great river Euphrates; and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. ¹³ Then I saw—coming from the dragon's mouth and from the beast's mouth and from the false prophet's mouth—three unclean spirits like frogs. ^{‡‡} ¹⁴ For they are demonic spirits performing miraculous signs, who go out to the kings of the whole world—to gather them for battle on the great Day of *Elohei-Tzva'ot*. ^{‡‡}

¹⁵ "Behold, I am coming like a thief! How fortunate is the one who stays alert and keeps his clothes on, lest he walk around naked and they see his shamefulness."^{‡‡}

¹⁶ Then the spirits gathered the kings to the place called in Hebrew *Har-Megiddo*. ^{‡‡}

¹⁷ The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. A loud voice came out of the Temple ^{‡‡‡} from the throne, saying, "It is done!" ^{‡‡‡} ¹⁸ And there were flashes of lightning and rumblings and clashes of thunder and a great earthquake—such as never happened since mankind has been on the earth, so mighty was the quake. [§]

¹⁹ Then the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to force her to drink the cup of the wine of His furious wrath. ^{§†} ²⁰ Every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found.

²¹ Enormous hail—about a hundred pounds each ^{§††}—falls from heaven on the people. And the people cursed God because of the plague of hail—so extreme was that plague. ^{§†}

The Vile Prostitute and the Beast

17 Then one of the seven angels holding the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the sentencing of the great prostitute, ^{§††} who sits on many waters. ² The earth's kings committed sexual immorality with her, and those who dwell on the earth got drunk with the wine of her immorality."

³ So he carried me away in the *Ruach* into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. ^{§†} ⁴ The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious

stones and pearls. ^{§†} She was holding a golden cup ^{§§†} in her hand full of detestable things and the filth of her immorality, ⁵ and on her forehead was written a name, a mystery:

"Babylon the Great, the mother of prostitutes and the detestable things of the earth."

⁶ And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the *kedoshim* and with the blood of the witnesses of *Yeshua*. When I saw her, I was totally astounded.

⁷ But the angel said to me, "Why are you astonished? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns. ⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and yet is about to rise up from the abyss and head for destruction. Those who dwell on the earth—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, and is not, and is to come.

⁹ "This calls for a mind having wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated. They are also seven kings— ¹⁰ five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. ¹¹ The beast that was and is not—he himself is the eighth, and is one of the seven, and is heading for destruction. ¹² The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. ¹³ These kings are of one mind, and they give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ They will make war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them—because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, ^{§§†} and those with Him are called and chosen and faithful."

¹⁵ Then he tells me, "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. ¹⁶ The ten horns that you saw, and the beast—these will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, ^{§§§} and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to do His will, and to be of one mind, and to give their royal power to the beast until the words of God are fulfilled. ¹⁸ And the woman that you saw is the great city exercising kingship over the kings of the earth."

Judgment of Babylon

18 After these things, I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his glory. ² He cried out with a mighty voice, saying:

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! ¹⁸
She has become a den for demons,
a haunt for every unclean spirit
and for every unclean bird

[†] cf. *Exod.* 10:21-22. ^{††} cf. *Exod.* 9:12; 10:20, 27; 11:10. [‡] cf. *Exod.* 8:6. ^{‡†} cf. *Ezek.* 30:3; *Joel* 2:11; *Zeph.* 1:14. ^{‡‡} Mount Megiddo Armageddon ^{‡‡†}
^{‡‡‡} cf. *Ps.* 22:31. [§] cf. *Exod.* 19:16-19; *Zech.* 14:4-5. ^{§†} cf. *Rev.* 14:8, 10. ^{§††} Lit. weighing a Roman talent ^{§‡} cf. *Exod.* 9:23-24. ^{§††} cf. *Isa.* 1:21; *Nah.* 3:4. ^{§†} cf. *Dan.* 7:7,24.

^{§‡} cf. *Ezek.* 28:13. ^{§§†} cf. *Jer.* 51:7. ^{§§‡} cf. *Deut.* 10:17; *Ps.* 136:2-3; *Dan.* 2:47. ^{§§§} cf. *Ezek.* 16:37, 39; 23:35. ¹⁸ cf. *Isa.* 21:9; *Jer.* 51:8.

and for every unclean and detestable beast. †
³ For all the nations have drunk
of the wine of the fury of her immorality.
The kings of the earth have committed
sexual immorality with her,
and the merchants of the earth
grew rich off the power
of her self-indulgence.”
⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,
“Come out of her, my people, ††
lest you participate in her sins
and receive her plagues!
⁵ For her sins have piled up to heaven, ‡
and God has remembered her crimes.
⁶ Pay her back just as she has paid out,
and give her back double for her deeds! ‡‡
In the cup she has mixed—
mix a double dose for her!
⁷ As she has exalted herself and indulged herself in
luxury,
so give her the same measure of torment and grief!
For in her heart she says,
‘I sit as a queen—
I am no widow;
I shall never see grief.’ ‡‡
⁸ For this reason her plagues will arrive in a single
day—
death and grief and famine—
and she shall be burned down with fire. ‡‡‡
For mighty is *ADONAI Elohim* who judges her!”
⁹ Then the kings of the earth, who committed sexual
immorality and indulged in luxury with her shall weep
and wail over her when they see the smoke of her
burning ‡‡— ¹⁰ standing far off because of the terror
of her torment, saying:
“Alas, alas, O great city—
O Babylon, the mighty city!
For in a single hour your judgment has come!”
¹¹ And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn
for her, [§] because no one buys their merchandise any-
more— ¹² shipments of gold, silver, precious stones,
and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk, and scarlet; all kinds
of citron wood; all kinds of ivory products; all kinds of
products made of costly wood, bronze, iron, and mar-
ble; ¹³ cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, and frankin-
cense; wine, oil, fine flour, and wheat; cattle, sheep,
horses, and chariots; and slaves—that is, human souls.
¹⁴ The fruit of your soul’s desire has gone from you,
and all the expensive and beautiful things are lost to
you
—never again will people find them.
¹⁵ The merchants of these things, who became rich
from her, shall stand far off for fear of her torment,
weeping and mourning, ¹⁶ saying,

“Alas, alas, O great city—
clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet,
adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!
¹⁷ For in a single hour so much wealth has been ru-
ined!”
And every ship captain and passenger, sailors and all
who make their living at sea, stood at a distance ¹⁸ and
were crying out, seeing the smoke of her burning, say-
ing, “What city is like the great city?” ¹⁹ And they threw
dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and
mourning,
“Alas, alas, O great city—
in her all who had ships at sea grew rich from her
wealth!
For in a single hour has she been ruined!
²⁰ Rejoice over her, O heaven, ^{§†}
and you *kedoshim*, emissaries and prophets!
For God has judged her condemnation of you!”
²¹ Then a mighty angel picked up a stone like a great
millstone and threw it into the sea, ^{§††} saying:
“So shall Babylon, the great city,
be thrown down with violence,
never to be found again!
²² And the sound of harpists and musicians,
flautists and trumpeters,
shall never be heard in you again! ^{§‡}
And the craftsman of any craft
shall never be found in you again!
And the sound of a mill
shall never be heard in you again!
²³ And the light of a lamp
shall never shine in you again!
And the voice of the bridegroom and bride
shall never be heard in you again! ^{§††}
For your businessmen were the tycoons of the world,
for all the nations were deceived by your sorcery! ^{§†}
²⁴ And in her was found the blood of the prophets
and *kedoshim*
and all those slaughtered on the earth.”

Victory Songs in Heaven

19 After these things, I heard something like the
loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, shout-
ing:
“ *Halleluyah!* ^{§‡}
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.
² For His judgments are true and just. ^{§§†}
For He has judged the great prostitute who corrupt-
ed the earth with her whoring,
and has avenged the blood of His servants caused
by her hand.” ^{§§‡}
³ And a second time they shouted,
“ *Halleluyah!*
The smoke from her goes up forever and ever!” ^{§§§}

† cf. Isa. 34:11-15; Jer. 50:39; 51:37. †† cf. Exod. 5:1; 7:16; 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3; Jer. 50:8; 51:6, 9, 45. ‡ cf. Jer. 51:9. ‡† cf. Ps. 137:8; Jer. 50:15, 29. ‡‡ cf. Isa. 47:7-8; Zeph. 2:15. ‡‡† cf. Isa. 47:9; Jer. 50:31-32. ‡‡‡ cf. Ezek. 26:16-17. § cf. Ezek. 27:27-31.

§† cf. Jer. 51:48. §†† cf. Jer. 51:63-64. §‡ cf. Isa. 24:8; Ezek. 26:13. §†† cf. Jer. 25:10. §† cf. Isa. 23:8; Nah. 3:4. §‡ cf. Ps. 104:35. §§† cf. Ps. 19:9. §§‡ cf. Deut. 32:43; 2 Kings 9:7. §§§ cf. Isa. 34:8-10.

⁴ Then the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, "Amen! *Halleluyah!*" †

⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you His servants and all who fear Him, both the small and the great!" ††

Wedding of the Lamb

⁶ Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude—like the roar of rushing waters ‡ or like the rumbling of powerful thunder—saying, "*Halleluyah!*"

For *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva'ot* reigns!

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready, ††

⁸ She was given fine linen to wear, bright and clean! For the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the *kedoshim*."

⁹ Then the angel tells me, "Write: How fortunate are those who have been invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb!" He also tells me, "These are the true words of God."

¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that—for I am only a fellow servant with you and your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony of *Yeshua*. Worship God! For the testimony of *Yeshua* is the Spirit of Prophecy."

Final Battle of this Age

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, †† and behold, a white horse! The One riding on it is called Faithful and True, and He judges and makes war in righteousness. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and many royal crowns are on His head. He has a name written that no one knows except Himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, ††† and the name by which He is called is "the Word of God."

¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ From His mouth comes a sharp sword—so that with it He may strike down the nations—and He shall rule them with an iron rod, and He treads the winepress of the furious wrath of *Elohei-Tzva'ot*. ††††¹⁶ On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." §

¹⁷ Then I saw a single angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he cried out to all the birds flying high in the sky, "Come, gather for the great banquet of God—¹⁸ to eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of gen-

erals and the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and those riding on them, the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great!" §†

¹⁹ Also I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the One who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and along with him the false prophet who had performed the signs before him by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast, as well as those who had worshiped his image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. §†††²¹ The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the One riding on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh.

The First Resurrection

²⁰ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a great chain. ² He seized the dragon—the ancient serpent, who is the devil and *satan*—and bound him for a thousand years. §†³ He also threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short while.

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and people sat upon them—those to whom authority to judge was given. §†† And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for *Yeshua* and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image, nor had they received his mark on their forehead or on their hand. And they came to life §† and reigned with the Messiah for a thousand years.

⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ How fortunate and holy is the one who has a share in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no authority, but they shall be *kohanim* of God and the Messiah, and they shall reign with Him for a thousand years.

Judgment After 1000 Years

⁷ When the thousand years has ended, *satan* shall be released from his prison, ⁸ and he shall come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for the battle. §† Their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the *kedoshim* and the beloved city—but fire fell from heaven and consumed them. §††

¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and

† cf. Ps. 106:48. †† cf. Ps. 115:13; 135:1. ‡ cf. Ezek. 1:24; 43:2. †† cf. Ex. 19:14; Ps. 45:13. †† cf. Ezek. 1:1. ††† cf. Isa. 63:3. †††† cf. Isa. 49:2; 11:4; Ps 2:9; Isa. 63:3. § cf. Deut. 10:17; Dan. 2:47.

§† cf. Ezek. 39:17-20. §†† cf. Isa. 30:33; Dan. 7:11. §† cf. Isa. 24:22. §†† cf. Dan. 7:9; 7:22; Matt. 19:28. §† cf. Isa. 25:8; 26:19; Dan 12:2; Mal. 3:-16-18. §† cf. Ezek. 7:2; 38:2. §†† cf. Ps. 87:2; Ezek. 38:22; 39:6.

the false prophet are too, and they shall be tortured day and night forever and ever.

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne, and the One seated on it. The earth and heaven fled from His presence, but no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead—the great and the small—standing before the throne. The books were opened, and another book was opened—the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what was written in the books, according to their deeds. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and *Sheol* gave up the dead in them. Then they were each judged, each one of them, according to their deeds.

¹⁴ Then death and *Sheol* were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ^{††}

² I also saw the holy city—the New Jerusalem—coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ I also heard a loud voice from the throne, saying,

“Behold, the dwelling of God is among men,
and He shall tabernacle among them.

They shall be His people,
and God Himself shall be among them
and be their God. [‡]

⁴ He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, ^{‡‡}
and death shall be no more.

Nor shall there be mourning or crying or pain any longer,

for the former things have passed away.”

⁵ And the One seated upon the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new!” Then He said, “Write, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

⁶ Then He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will freely give from the spring of the water of life.

^{‡‡‡7} The one who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ^{‡‡‡8} But for the cowardly and faithless and detestable and murderers and sexually immoral and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars—their lot is in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The New Jerusalem

⁹ Then came one of the seven angels holding the seven bowls full of the seven final plagues, and he

[†] cf. Exod. 32:32; Dan 12:2; Mal. 3:16-18. ^{††} cf. Isa. 65:17; 66:22. [‡] cf. Isa. 61:10. ^{‡‡} cf. Lev. 26:11; Ezek. 37:27; Jer. 31:33(38:33 LXX); Zech. 8:8; some mss. omit and be their God ^{‡‡} cf. Isa. 25:8. ^{‡‡‡} cf. Isa. 55:1; John 7:37-38. ^{‡‡‡} cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 89:26-27.

spoke with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

¹⁰ Then he carried me away in the *Ruach* to a great and high mountain, [§] and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹ having the glory of God—her radiance like a most precious stone, like a jasper, sparkling like crystal.

¹² She had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and above the gates twelve angels. On the gates were inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of *Bnei-Yisrael* — ¹³ three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. ^{§†14} And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve emissaries of the Lamb.

¹⁵ The angel speaking with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city and its gates and walls.

^{§††16} The city is laid out as a square—its length the same as its width. He measured the city with the rod—12,000 stadia. ^{§†} Its length and width and height are equal. ¹⁷ He also measured its wall—144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel’s measurement. ¹⁸ The material of the city’s wall was jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the city wall were 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, yellow topaz; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls—each of the gates was from a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.

²² I saw no temple in her, for its Temple is *ADONAI Elohei-Tzva’ot* and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need for the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God lights it up, and its lamp is the Lamb. ^{§††24} The nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. ^{§†25} Its gates shall never be shut by day, ^{§†} for there shall be no night there! ²⁶ And they shall bring into it the glory and honor of the nations. ²⁷ And nothing unholy ^{§§†} shall ever enter it, nor anyone doing what is detestable or false, ^{§§†} but only those written in the Book of Life.

22 Then the angel showed me a river of the water of life—bright as crystal, ^{§§§} flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the city’s street. On either side of the river was a tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ¹⁸³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in

[§] cf. Ezek. 40:2. ^{§†} cf. Ezek. 48:31-34. ^{§††} cf. Ezek. 40:3. ^{§‡} About 1400 miles; 1 stadia ^{§††} cf. Isa. 24:23; 30:26; 60:19-20; Zech. 14:6-7; ^{§†} cf. Isa. 60:3, 5. ^{§‡} cf. Isa. 60:11. ^{§§†} Lit. common chol ^{§§‡} cf. Isa. 52:1; Ezek. 44:9. ^{§§§} cf. Ps. 46:4; Ezek. 47:1; Zech. 14:8. ¹⁸ cf. Gen. 2:9; Ezek. 47:12.

the city, and His servants shall serve Him. ⁴ They shall see His face, [†] and His name shall be on their foreheads. ^{††5} Night shall be no more, and people will have no need for lamplight or sunlight—for *ADONAI Elohim* will shine on them. [‡] And they shall reign forever and ever!

Yeshua Is Coming

⁶ He said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true! *ADONAI*, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent His angel to show His servants what must happen soon. ^{††7} Behold, I am coming soon! How fortunate is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

⁸ I, John, am the one hearing and seeing these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel showing me these things. ⁹ But he tells me, "See that you do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets and those keeping the words of this book. Worship God!"

¹⁰ Then he tells me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ^{††11} Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do righteousness, and the holy still be holy. ^{††12} Behold, I am coming soon, and My reward is with Me, to pay back each one according to his deeds.

[†] cf. *Exod.* 33:11; *Ps* 17:15; 27:8-10. ^{††} cf. *Exod.* 39:30. [‡] cf. *Isa.* 60:19. ^{††} cf. *Amos* 3:7. ^{‡‡} cf. *Dan.* 8:26; 12:4. ^{†††} cf. *Dan.* 12:10.

¹³ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. ^{†††14} How fortunate are those who wash their robes, [§] so 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 and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. ¹⁶ I, *Yeshua*, have sent My angel to testify these things to you for My communities. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." ^{§††}

¹⁷ The *Ruach* and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come—let the one who wishes freely take the water of life! ^{§†18} I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his share in the Tree of Life and the Holy City, ^{§††} which are written in this book.

²⁰ The One giving testimony to these things says, "Yes! I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord *Yeshua*!

^{§†21} May the grace of the Lord *Yeshua* be with all! ^{§‡}

^{†††} cf. *Isa.* 44:6; 48:12. [§] Some mss. read *do His commandments* ^{§†} cf. *Gen.* 2:9; 3:22; *Prov.* 3:18; 11:30. ^{§††} cf. *Isa.* 11:1. ^{§‡} cf. *Isa.* 55:1. ^{§††} cf. *Deut.* 4:2; 12:32. ^{§†} Some mss. say *Even so, come, Lord Yeshua* ^{§‡} Some mss. add the holy ones *Kedoshim Amen*